

NILO

Written by  
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NILO

TITLE: BOLIVIA 1927

1 - INT. HOUSE IN COCHABAMBA STREET. LIVINGROOM.

The dead body of a baby rests on a table. The Soruco home, also a very humble shoemaker full of books. Ladies in black cry and pray as they assemble arrangements of white flowers. A small coffin with paper wings. On a cardboard, the name of the deceased: Nilo Soruco.

LAURA SORUCO, the mother, is thin with a fair complexion. She prays with all devotion and delicately puts a handkerchief of alcohol on her nose.

DON ONOFRE SORUCO, the father of Nilo; He is a tall, thin man. In tears, he heats coffee in an artisanal pot.

FIRMO SORUCO, the 5-year-old brother, plays sadly in a bucket of warm water, sticking his little hand in and out.

CLOTILDE SORUCO, the 8-year-old sister, cries alone by the front door.

ANTONIO SORUCO, the 7-year-old brother, cries behind a door. He covers his ears.

PANCHA, the grandmother of Nilo, looks for clothes of the little deceased...

Laura murmurs to some neighbors.

LAURA SORUCO

(Crying)

Suddenly, he stopped breathing.  
Onofre added the wings on the  
coffin because he was a little  
angel.

The grandmother takes away the bucket from Firmo.

ABUELA PANCHA

We have to bathe your brother.

2 - INT. HOUSE IN COCHABAMBA STREET. PATIO. MOMENTS LATER.

The family and some early visitors accompany the deceased baby for his last bath.

LAURA SORUCO  
 (Lost in her thoughts)  
 My son was alive two hours ago.

The grandmother prepares the bath with some women.

ABUELA PANCHA  
 Pour the water in the wash bin.

The water pours.

LAURA SORUCO  
 (Whispering to her self)  
 But warm water ... make sure that  
 it is not cold...

Laura hums a typical lullaby from Tarija. The priest begins praying. Pancha very carefully accommodates the baby and pours water on his little body. Suddenly, the child begins to move. Nilo comes back to life, crying out loud. They all gather around the baby. It's a miracle. Laura picks him up and softly kisses his head. Don Onofre walks in and hugs the family. Firmo stares at everyone, trying to understand what's happening. The tears turn into joy and celebration of this miracle.

ABUELA PANCHA  
 Look at him, he's back from the  
 dead!

The grandmother makes the sign of the cross on his little forehead. Nilo cries louder.

ABUELA PANCHA (CONT'D)  
 What a feisty little boy!!

Laura is looking into her son's eyes, almost as if they were alone.

LAURA SORUCO  
 (Whispering)  
 Cry, my son. Cry everything you  
 have to cry. Cry.

The baby cries with all his being.

LAURA SORUCO (CONT'D)  
 He cries so loud! This one is going  
 to be a singer!

Title: Nilo

Music - Instrumental "Chapaco Soy"

3 - EXT. SCHOOL NARCISO CAMPERO. DAY.

Nilo is eight years old. Children run and play during recess. Nilo and his friends feed bread to a street dog. Suddenly a fight begins on the other side of the patio and all the boys run towards it. In the corner of the patio, Marcelito fights with Jorgito. The children form a circle around the fight. The fighters deliver punches and kicks until Marcelito grabs a piece of tin and cuts Jorge's ear.

4 - INT. SCHOOL NARCISO CAMPERO. CLASSROOM. LATER.

The children are scared and disturbed. Marcelito cries. Nilo sees outside his window a woman washing away the blood off the patio.

MARCELITO

(Regretful)

My dad is going to kick me out of the house. Like he did with my brother.

The school's principal enters. Silence.

PRINCIPAL

(Containing his anger)

For the last time! Who was it?  
(Screaming) Someone speaks up, or we expel everyone!

The girls begin to cry. Nilo looks at Marcelito shaking in fear. Finally, Nilo stands up.

NILO

It was me! So what!

The principal's face gets red in anger.

5 - INT. SCHOOL NARCISO CAMPERO. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE.

Nilo sitting in a corner, beats a pencil against the wood floor, creating a melody. The secretary coughs so that Nilo stops making noise. Laura Soruco, Nilo's mother, enters.

LAURA SORUCO

(to Nilo)

Now, what have you done??

6 - EXT. SCHOOL NARCISO CAMPERO. PRINCIPAL'S DOOR. DAY

Mrs. Soruco pulls Nilo through the corridors of the school.

7 - EXT. SAN ROQUE CHURCH. DAY.

Mrs. Soruco, still scolding Nilo, walks to the Church of San Roque's main door and pushes Nilo into the dark cathedral.

LAURA SORUCO

You stay there so that the devil  
comes out of you.

8 - INT. SAN ROQUE CHURCH. DAY.

Nilo is alone in the solemn church. In the surroundings, you see statues of saints and the one that catches his attention is a bloody Christ. In the front pews, there are three crying ladies, all dressed in black. Nilo pretends not to be afraid.

9 - EXT. SAN ROQUE CHURCH. DAY.

Doña Laura tries to sell her homemade matches and candles that she makes for a living. She counts her coins. Nilo comes out.

LAURA SORUCO

Oh, Nilo... any child of your age  
would be crying in that dark  
chapel... with those weeping women.

NILO

I'm hungry.

Doña Laura smiles and hugs her son.

LAURA SORUCO

Now, what are we going to tell your  
father about what happened at  
school?

10 - EXT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. MORNING.

The humble home of the Soruco family is made of adobe. There are plants and vases. It's a shoe repair shop and matches, candles, and cigarettes manufacture.

11 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. MOMENTS LATER.

Don Onofre, Nilo's father, reads a philosophy book while Doña Laura rolls cigarettes. Nilo does math homework copying from an improvised blackboard. In the background, we can see his brothers fixing shoes. Nilo doesn't want to study, but Don Onofre keeps an eye.

NILO

(Voice Over)

My dad Onofre was called "the student". Besides being a cobbler, he taught us to read and write. He also played the guitar and sang.

Nilo smiles. Don Onofre makes sure that Nilo does the homework. Nilo sees his hard-working mother; her hands ache her.

NILO (CONT'D)

(Voice Over)

My mom, Laura. She knows how to make cigarettes and sell in the main square. Sometimes she takes us to the Mass at San Roque at 7 o'clock in the morning.

The camera pans to the siblings. Clotilde, his sister, prays.

NILO (CONT'D)

(Voice Over)

Clotilde is my older sister; her hair is always in two braids. People say she will be a beautiful woman. She is very religious.

Antonio tries to stick on the midsole of a shoe.

NILO (CONT'D)

(Voice Over)

Antonio wants to be a carpenter; he doesn't do well in school.

Jose sleeps in front of the fire.

NILO (CONT'D)

Jose, he's always so relaxed. He's my buddy.

And in the corner is Firmo studying the musical notes: "Do, Re, Mi ..."

NILO (CONT'D)

(Voice Over)

My oldest brother. Firmo, he likes music. He sings in mass at the church of San Roque. I love learning from him.

Instrumental music "El zapatero" by Nilo Soruco.

12 - EXT. PLAZA CENTRAL. MORNING.

Nilo is sitting in the central square of Tarija with a large pile of newspapers. We see a group of workers in the corners looking for work. Miners, peasants, and workers are sitting on the outskirts of the town asking for food. Nilo is tired and angry because he has not sold a newspaper. A group of dogs looks for food in the trash. Nilo is hungry. He approaches the trash can looking for food, and there is nothing. Suddenly he stands up and, very determined, walks towards the square's center.

NILO  
(Starts shouting)  
A murder! A murder! There's been a  
murder! News! A murder!  
(Making it up as it goes)  
The President, the father of the  
country, has died, extra!!

Some ladies stop by and buy the newspaper. Nilo can not believe that his lie has worked. He continues screaming. MOISES NAVAJAS, the richest man in Tarija, approaches.

MOISES NAVAJAS  
I'll take a newspaper!

Nilo gives him a copy and receives some coins. Don Moises Navajas examines the newspaper as the little boy counts. Suddenly Nilo receives a spank.

NILO  
Hey!!!

MOISES NAVAJAS  
(to Nilo)  
You lied!

Nilo lowers his head. Don Moises Navajas smiles.

MOISES NAVAJAS (CONT'D)  
Who taught you to lie?

Nilo does not respond. Don Moises takes a piece of bread from a paper bag. Nilo eats like an animal and shares it with a hungry dog.

MOISES NAVAJAS (CONT'D)  
Even though you lied about the  
news, I'll still pay you for the  
paper and your creativity.

Nilo takes the money.

MOISES NAVAJAS (CONT'D)  
Do you shine shoes?

Nilo nods, "yes".

MOISES NAVAJAS (CONT'D)  
I'm going to pay you now, and on  
Sunday, you'll come to shine shoes  
in my house.

NILO  
OK.

13 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. NIGHT.

Nilo shares the bed with his younger brother Jose. Antonio  
sleeps on a mattress on the floor; he is snoring. Clotilde  
and Firmo play with the light and shadows of the candles  
against the wall.

CLOTILDE  
If you go to that man's house, you  
should carry a crucifix.

FIRMO  
(joking)  
But for your headstone!

CLOTILDE  
(Joking but also trying to  
be serious)  
Shouts are heard from the spirits  
of children that the man has  
sacrificed for his money. He  
tortures his victims and lets them  
run through the corridors until  
they have no way out and ...

Nilo and Jose are traumatized.

CLOTILDE (CONT'D)  
(Imitating children)  
Help me... please get me out of  
here. I have not done anything!

Firmo hits the cot. José and Nilo scream, scared to death.  
Firmo and Clotilde explode in laughter. Doña Laura is upset  
and tells the children to go to sleep.



14 - EXT. GOLDEN HOUSE. MORNING.

A majestic mansion. The front gate is enormous with ornated gold. Nilo, fascinated, touches them. Suddenly the gate opens, and an employee comes out.

EMPLOYEE

There is no hard bread. You can  
come back tomorrow.

Nilo puts his hand in his pocket with shame.

NILO

Don Moises has sent me to polish  
his shoes.

15 - INT. GOLDEN HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo enters through the golden doors. The marble interior shines, reflecting the flowers and vases of the central courtyard, exotic birds around an exquisite fountain.

NILO

How many people live here?

EMPLOYEE

Three.

NILO

All this for three?

The employee points to the main stairs. Nilo reaches the last step and thinks to see another boy down the hallway. Nilo does not realize that it is a mirror.

NILO (CONT'D)

(Furious and whispering)

Who the hell is that crazy boy? He  
has my job too?

Nilo is ready to fight with his reflection.

NILO (CONT'D)

This is MY job! He told me to come  
here!

Nilo realizes that it is his reflection. He smiles.

16 - INT. GOLDEN HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Dozens of beautiful shoes surround Nilo; He whistles a melody that will be one of his first songs.

17 - EXT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. AFTERNOON.

Nilo returns to his home with bags full of luxurious shoes for his brothers to shine. José opens the bag.

JOSÉ SORUCO  
Nilo, they didn't give you food?  
I'm hungry.

INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. NIGHT.

The family counts the coins of all the children that worked during the day. In the back, Don Onofre plays the guitar. Nilo, in the arms of his mom, observes the fire of the candles.

LAURA SORUCO  
Are you starving Nilo?

Nilo nods his head "yes".

LAURA SORUCO (CONT'D)  
(Defeated)  
If your belly hurts, drink a lot of water. Tomorrow we eat chicken.

NILO  
Mom, why are there people who have so much, and we don't even eat?

Laura doesn't have words.

NILO (CONT'D)  
When I am a man I'll change this.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

18 - EXT. GUADALQUIVIR RIVER. MORNING.

Nilo, with all his male siblings, walk towards the water. He undresses and carefully enters with a stick, ready to catch a fish. He tries to catch one and falls in the water. When he comes out, in slow motion we see that **Nilo has become a man.**

19 - EXT. GUADALQUIVIR RIVER. AFTERNOON.

Nilo and his brothers José, Firmo, and Antonio count fish.

20 - EXT. CHURCH OF SAN ROQUE. DAY.

Nilo, sits on his shoe polish box and practices church songs until Firmo enters.

FIRMO

Nilo, stop inventing sounds and practice the song we are getting paid to perform!

NILO

Hey, you're my brother, not my boss!

Firmo plays the piano and sings a religious song for a few seconds. Nilo immediately repeats the same melody.

21 - EXT. GENERAL CEMETERY. NIGHT.

José and Nilo, with a guitar, go from grave to grave, offering to trim the edges of the gravestones. Laura and Clotilde arrange some flowers on a tombstone.

JOSÉ

Let us cut it, clean it, fix it for your dead one. We will even sing for him.

SENORA

How much then?

NILO

Fifty centavos.

Suddenly the owner comes out and screams at them, "I'm going to cut your neck".

22 - INT. IGLESIA DE SAN ROQUE. MOMENTS LATER.

Firmo plays the harmonium in the church of San Roque, and Nilo sings. From the back of the church, Italian Carmelite priests listen very carefully. An elegant woman called Calipsa listens with eyes closed on how Nilo hits different notes.

CALIPSA

(Spanish accent)

He has a spectacular range.

PRIEST CARMELITE

You have to teach them the Gregorian chants.

Firmo stops playing.

FIRMO

Nilo, you have to listen to the piano. You are ahead and behind the beat.

23 - EXT. PROCESSION. DAY.

Nilo, as an altar boy, walks with the Carmelite fathers recording the procession of Gregorian chant in an engraver.

CALIPSA

I see you recording all the processions, do you understand Gregorian?

NILO

No, but it sounds nice.

CALIPSA

Record with your ears. But record the sounds that nobody can hear. Listen to the music and sounds that are hidden in nature.

NILO

What is your name, madam?

CALIPSA

Lady... Calipsa

NILO

Ni...

CALIPSA

I know who you are Nilo.

24 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. LATE AFTERNOON.

Don Onofre and Laura Onofre look older and tired. They count everyone's money on the table.

DON ONOFRE

160 pesos...

Silence.

LAURA SORUCO

That's almost the rent of the shop...

DON ONOFRE

Almost...

CLOTILDE

Nothing left for food...

Silence. The family is defeated.

LAURA SORUCO

(in tears)

How can you survive in this  
depression...

Nilo gets up in anger, grabs a fishing stick, and storms out  
of the house.

LAURA SORUCO (CONT'D)

Nilo is too late to fish. It will  
be dark.

25 - EXT. RÍO GUADALQUIVIR. NIGHT.

Nilo arrives at the river, and there are dozens of hungry  
people trying to catch a fish.

26 - EXT. RÍO GUADALQUIVIR. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo, in his underwear, tries to fish, but it is impossible.  
He stumbles on the stones and is sent sliding. He makes his  
way to shore. He is frustrated and hopeless; he closes his  
eyes. There in silence, he feels the breeze of the wind. The  
leaves hit the ground, the water caress the rocks, some birds  
chirp, and the sun dies on the horizon. This is music to  
Nilo's ears, and as if he were listening to a melody, he hums  
it. Nilo begins to compose "On the banks of the  
Guadalquivir". (A Orillas del Guadalquivir)

NILO

"On the banks of the Guadalquivir,  
my sorrows I come to sing..."

27 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. DAY.

Nilo, with his father's guitar, sings "On the banks of the  
Guadalquivir".

NILO

"On the banks of the Guadalquivir,  
my sorrows I come to sing..."

Firmo enters and listens to the song.

Nilo continues singing.

FIRMO

Dad says we need to stop the music  
and find a real job. Pay is getting  
less, and everything is more  
expensive...

Nilo ignores the painful comment.

FIRMO (CONT'D)

Whose cueca is that? (traditional  
Bolivian song)

Silence.

NILO

Mine...

FIRMO

Don't lie; it can't be yours.

Proud, Nilo continues with the melody, and this becomes an  
instrumental orchestra that continues in the next scene.

28 - INT. IGLESIA DE SAN ROQUE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo continues playing the song for Firmo, Calipsa, and the  
priests. Calipsa and the priests exchange a look.

CALIPSA

"The Cenca" needs to meet him.

29 - EXT. CENCA MARTÍNEZ HOUSE. AFTERNOON.

Firmo and Nilo wait by the door of the house. Calipsa comes  
out and nods them to come in.

NILO

Firmo, where are we?

FIRMO

The Cenca Martínez's house. He's  
the father of cueca's (songs)

30 - INT. CENCA MARTÍNEZ HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

The Cenca Martínez is an older man with a beard and white  
hair, full of wisdom and presence.

He sits in an armchair, like a king on a throne, surrounded by musicians and instruments. Firmo smokes nervously. Calipsa closes the doors and windows.

CALIPSA

Listen to this song, Cenca. Come on  
Nilo, sing!

Nilo gets very nervous; this is the first time he will sing his song in front of a stranger. Nilo sings, "On the banks of the Guadalquivir." We see the magic of his talent. Everyone is immediately transported to another place by the young man's voice.

CENCA

Bravo! You sing from the soul, boy.

CALIPSA

Cenca, isn't this your song?

CENCA

No.

CALIPSA

Whose is it?

FIRMO

Nilo says that he has composed it.

The Cenca can not believe it.

Instrumental music.

Calipsa writes a letter while Cenca dictates.

CENCA

(Voice Over)

Distinguished Chancellor. I am writing this letter to the University of Sucre to personally and professionally recommend Nilo Soruco Arancibia from Tarija's city for admission. He must be considered for the music program. He did not finish his primary studies, but he has an innate gift for music. He could be an extraordinary teacher for his community.

31 - EXT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. DAY.

Nilo screaming with joy, runs home. Calipsa runs behind him, exhausted and sweating.

32 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. NIGHT.

Onofre reads Nilo's acceptance letter. The family, in complete silence awaits their father's reaction.

ONOFRE SORUCO

(To Nilo)

You will have to study a lot  
because you do not have the means  
and preparation of all the nobles  
in Sucre.

Onofre stands by the fire and sees how the flame consumes the wood.

ONOFRE SORUCO (CONT'D)

Son, you have my blessing.

Everyone celebrates.

ONOFRE SORUCO (CONT'D)

Open "the Patero Christmas wine"!

33 - EXT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. DAWN.

The Soruco family says goodbye to Nilo, who leaves with a small suitcase. Clotilde embraces Nilo tightly, crying and holding a crucifix. Onofre gives Nilo his guitar, and both embrace.

LAURA SORUCO

(Pointing at Nilo's heart)

Listen to this, and everything will  
be fine.

MUSIC: "Life is beautiful - Instrumental version."

34 - EXT. CUESTA DE SAMA. CAMIÓN. AFTERNOON.

Nilo looks at the clouds and the landscape that passes.



35 - EXT. THE UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. DAY.

A luxurious building. Some students say goodbye to their parents; others drag suitcases and furniture to the dorms. Calipsa dressed up as a professor comes out to welcome Nilo.

36 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. HALLWAYS.

Nilo enters with his luggage, and some students greet him.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
Adrián Moreno.

NILO  
Nilo Soruco.

The other young men introduce themselves very politely. Everyone continues to gather their belongings.

37 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. CLASS.

The students warm up their voices, following their teacher, who sits in front of the piano. Calipsa with other peers walk among the students, arranging some postures, relaxing others' jaws, and always reminding them to breathe. Finally, Calipsa arrives at Nilo and has to correct everything.

CALIPSA  
With a smile... and like biting an apple. Lift the soft palate. This is the typical way of setting the voice. Relax your jaw. Elongating the neck and removing tension.

38 - EXT. THE UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. BASKETBALL GAME.

All the students have gathered to watch the game. Nilo sees OLGA VERDUN, the woman of his dreams. The world stops, and Nilo's heart beats fast. Nilo is absorbed in this beautiful young woman.

NILO  
(Voice Over)  
Olga Verdún: Her beauty was very particular. She had dark and wavy hair. Light complexion, delicate features, and black eyes.

Olga shakes hands with all the professors, surprising them with her charisma and confidence.

NILO (CONT'D)

(voice-over)

She had a firm, strong character,  
was very determined to achieve her  
goals... the spirit of fire but  
still feminine and fragile.

Nilo is staring with his mouth open.

ADRIÁN MORENO

Hey! Close your mouth; you are  
going to drool.

NILO

Who is she?

ADRIÁN MORENO

Olga ... one of the first women in  
Tarija to perform military service  
in the artillery section. She was  
champion in target shooting. She is  
an outstanding basketball player  
and athlete. She comes from a well-  
off family. Best you forget about  
her, she's out of your league.

Nilo is in love.

39 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. BAMBALINA THEATER.

Between costumes and masks, students are reviewing their play  
and singing scenes throughout the theater. Nilo is studying  
the musical notes and trying hard to read the sheet music.  
Suddenly, he sees Adrián Moreno appear and then disappear  
behind the scenes. Nilo approaches and finds him giving a  
kiss to a girl in one of the theater's corners. The girl  
disappears between the curtains, and Adrián walks up to Nilo.

NILO

(Winking)

Is that part of the scene?

ADRIÁN MORENO

Yes. You have to practice to be a  
natural.

NILO

I'll serenade again for you if you  
lend me one of your suits.

Adrian and Nilo shake hands in agreement.

40 - INT. ADRIAN MORENO'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Adrián takes out one of his many tuxedos and gives it to Nilo. Nilo takes the tuxedo and is very excited. It's the first time in Nilo's life that he's held something so luxurious.

41 - EXT. SUCRE. COLONIALES STREET. MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

Nilo wears Adrián's tuxedo and nervously walks with his guitar under the light of the moon. In the colonial streets, couples kiss in the mist, music of canteens, and some drunkard shouts. Nilo stops at a window to see his reflection, combs his hair, and smells his breath.

42 - EXT. HOTEL SUCRE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo throws a stone at the window. Olga opens the window, she was combing her hair before sleeping. Some of her friends come out the windows and cause a scene. Nilo sings a song with all his soul, and we see that his talent moves Olga. Suddenly, several windows open, and more women come out. The song concludes with a dog in the distance howling. Everyone applauds.

NILO  
I would like to have the pleasure  
of talking with you.

The girls giggle.

OLGA  
I don't talk to strangers...

NILO  
Nilo... My name is Nilo Soruco. Now  
we are not strangers anymore.

More giggles.

NILO (CONT'D)  
And your name?

OLGA VERDÚN  
Olga... Olga Verdún.

Nilo smiles as all the girls push Olga to come down.

43 - EXT. HOTEL SUCRE. PATIO. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo and Olga sit at the fountain, having a drink.

OLGA

I liked the feeling I got when you were singing.

NILO

I like the feeling you give me when I look at you and your incredible body.

OLGA

(With a smile)

You are talking to a lady.

NILO

Sorry...

Silence.

NILO (CONT'D)

Let's play the game "something." You ask me something, and then I ask something.

OLGA

Only if we promise always to tell the truth.

The two cross their fingers. Silence.

NILO

You first.

OLGA

What will you do with your music when you graduate?

NILO

Teach rural high schools... the poor.

OLGA

Teach? With such an advanced degree?

NILO

(Talking Nonsense. In Love)

For children to do something great, you have to teach them.

Olga lets out a smile. Nilo takes the opportunity to hug her and tries to kiss her.

OLGA

You are cheeky!

NILO  
You're making fun of me, right?

OLGA  
Look at you, suave...

Like a Charlie Chaplin scene: Olga moves away. Nilo follows her. Olga moves further, and Nilo, almost falling, follows her. Nilo, madly in love, has a smile from ear to ear.

NILO  
Olga, will you kiss me?

OLGA  
Is that your question?

Nilo tries to steal a kiss, and Olga looks down mischievously. Olga's friends are nearby, watching and laughing. Olga looks up to get lost in Nilo's eyes. Their connection is real. She nods her head and suddenly pushes Nilo into the fountain. They both laugh.

NILO  
(from the fountain)  
Kiss?

OLGA  
Good night Nilo.

NILO  
I'll see you in my dreams.

Olga leaves with her friends, and Nilo in love splashes the water.

44 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. CLASS. DAY.

On the blackboard is the anthem of Bolivia. The teacher emphasizes the stanza "Dying before being slaves." Calipsa is grading some notebooks in the back of the classroom.

MAESTRO 2  
"Dying before being slaves." the most repeated phrase in the national anthem. Our Liberator Simón Bolívar said, "I want to live free and die a citizen." For the attainment of freedom, it has always been essential to go through sacrifices.

Nilo looks up; the message moves him deeply.

MAESTRO 2 (CONT'D)  
 He, who abandons everything to be  
 useful to his country, loses  
 nothing and earns whatever he  
 consecrates.

Students take notes.

MAESTRO 2 (CONT'D)  
 Thoughts about this, Mr. Muñoz?

MUÑOZ  
 The only thing history teaches us  
 is that she has not taught us  
 anything.

They all laugh.

MAESTRO 2  
 History is the effort of the spirit  
 to achieve freedom.

Adrián raises his hand.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 I interpret that as: the most  
 talented men are those who know the  
 people's spirit and act for it.

MAESTRO 2  
 Mr. Soruco.

Nilo is entirely distracted.

NILO  
 What?

MAESTRO 2  
 What did you think?

The students laugh.

NILO  
 Music is the art of feeling.  
 Clearly, the one who wrote the song  
 knew what it was like to be hungry  
 and not be free.

Calipsa looks at Nilo. His eyes hold the pain of his people.

45 - EXT. PLAZA OF SUCRE. DAY.

Olga and Nilo share an ice cream. Olga's friends are next to them. Olga jumps on her bicycle.

NILO  
I thought the bicycle was for men.

OLGA  
Well, you see, that's not the case.  
I even wear pants.

All the girls laugh.

NILO  
Do you also all go to the bathroom  
together, or do you do that on your  
own?

They all laugh again. Olga motions with her eyes for the girls to move away.

OLGA  
What books do you read?

NILO  
Lately, I am reading "Ideologies of  
Change." You?

OLGA  
"Les Miserables" by Víctor Hugo and  
the poems of José María Vargas  
Vila.

Nilo smiles.

NILO  
Controversial books.

OLGA  
Essential, I would say.

NILO  
Ah... Right. (a beat) Kiss Me?

They both smile and stare into each other's eyes.

NILO (CONT'D)  
You have the eyes of a warrior.

Olga reads Nilo's eyes.

OLGA  
You're sad. Why?

NILO  
 (Laughs)  
 What are you talking about? I'm  
 happy!

OLGA  
 I can see you, Nilo.

Nilo remains silent.

46 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. MUSIC HALL.

Nilo performs a lyrical song in front of the class. The  
 emotion is so intense that some notes are off.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC  
 Stop, please.

Nilo stops singing.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC (CONT'D)  
 What is singing for you, young  
 Soruco?

NILO  
 For me... singing is my way of  
 escaping to another world. My  
 Expression. My journey.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC  
 "My" experience, "My" way of  
 expressing, I, I, I, I sing for  
 "my" delirium...for "my" Ego.

NILO  
 (Offended)  
 I do not sing as if I was in the  
 shower. I live the song.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC  
 Exactly young Soruco, "You" live  
 the song, not "us."

Silence. The students pay a lot of attention to this dispute.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC (CONT'D)  
 The singer who truly inspires does  
 not sing for himself. Young men, we  
 must throw out the Ego and remind  
 us that artists are here to serve.  
 Serve the people... for the ones  
 who don't have a voice.  
 (MORE)



PROFESSOR OF MUSIC (CONT'D)  
That's when they will hear your  
singing. That's when it matters.

Nilo listens to this message with an open heart.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC (CONT'D)  
One can put a singer in a cage but  
never catch his voice.

The students comment on each other.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC (CONT'D)  
Once again, young Soruco. But less  
emotion and more emphasis on  
technique. Enunciate. Diction.  
Diaphragm breathing!

The piano plays again, and Nilo prepares to sing again.

47 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. HALLWAYS.

The students wait to receive parcels and letters from their  
relatives. Nilo gets a letter with a package of buns.

48 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. NILO'S ROOM.

Instrumental melody - "The Tragedy of Chapaco"

When Nilo reads the letter from his mother, we see images of  
his family. The brothers selling fish on the market. Jose  
shines shoes at the plaza. Onofre Soruco has become an  
alcoholic.

LAURA SORUCO  
(V.O)  
Dear Son, I am so at peace knowing  
that you are in a safe place  
studying and become the man you are  
meant to be... The world is crazy  
out here...the country is going  
through inflation. Bolivia is going  
through inequality and abuses of  
power: military taking over lands  
and animals, violation of human  
rights, sick miners, children  
looking for food in the garbage  
dumps, people fleeing to  
Argentina... I want you to know  
that your sister is immigrating...

IMAGES - Among the crowd of immigrants, we see Clotilde,  
Nilo's sister, trying to enter Argentina.

She is tired, skinny, and with swollen eyes from having cried so much. Shots are heard in the crowd, and some men who try to cross by force fall dead.

49 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. NILO'S ROOM.

Candles burn, and everyone is asleep. Nilo sits with a pen and inkwell, writing musical notes. They become the instrumental melody of the scene.

50 - EXT. THE UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. THEATER. NIGHT.

Nilo is very nervous waiting for Olga; he combs his hair repeatedly. Finally, Olga appears in the darkness and scares Nilo, who screams like a girl.

NILO  
And your army of nuns?

OLGA  
They are looking for us.

They find a secretly open window. They enter the theater.

51 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. THEATER.

Nilo walks into the dark theater. Rays of moonlight through the dust. Olga stops for a moment.

NILO  
Do not be afraid. Do you trust me?

OLGA  
Yes.

Olga and Nilo walk in darkness until they reach the stage. They kiss.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
First time I've ever kissed my tongue.

Nilo kisses her again. Olga stops him.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
And you?

NILO  
I...I... I've kissed a lot.

Olga punches him softly.

NILO (CONT'D)  
But it has never felt this nice.

Music. They kiss passionately. Nilo kisses every inch of Olga's skin. They get completely naked and make love on stage.

52 - INT. THEATER. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo and Olga lay on the stage, wrapped in sheets. Candles surround them.

NILO  
Do you believe in marriage?

OLGA  
I don't believe in marriage. I believe in the word and trust of two people.

Olga kisses Nilo gently.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
That's a real family... a bond.

Olga caresses Nilo. He is lost in his thoughts.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
You got sad again.

Nilo looks at the flame of the candle. His eyes fill with tears.

NILO  
It's my family, Olga. I miss them. We are very poor. And I'm here enjoying buffets, parties, games... I am a student at the University of Sucre with high society. This is not my life out there.

Olga hugs him tightly.

NILO (CONT'D)  
Has your belly ever hurt from hunger? It is the deepest pain. You feel this animal instinct that takes over you completely and realizes that you can kill to survive.

Olga dries his tears, and for the first time, she sees Nilo.

OLGA

I like your fire, your way of seeing the world. It is a fire that infects and that will ignite everything it touches.

Silence.

NILO

We can both plan what to do after classes. If we combine our minds... One creates changes from within the family, the nucleus of society.

OLGA

My parents are transferring me to another school for safety...

Silence.

OLGA (CONT'D)

I am leaving Monday...

53 - EXT. TRAIN STATION. AFTERNOON.

Nilo helps Olga close a suitcase that's about to explode.

NILO

This year I graduate, and I would like to talk... to start a serious relationship between you and me.

OLGA

(Smiling)

I am a modern woman. I don't believe in...

NILO

Then let's make a promise... a bond...

Olga looks away and thinks about her words.

OLGA

Nilo, I would like us to finish our studies.

The last call of the train. Nilo and Olga hug each other.

NILO

I am coming. As soon as I finish here... I am coming to you.

54 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. HALLWAYS.

The students await to receive parcels and letters from their relatives.

CALIPSA

Dear Students, Unfortunately the post office has been blocked and burnt down by some civilians. The country is facing aggressive protests demanding equality and the end of poverty. The roads are blocked and we might not be able to receive anything from the capital in a couple of months...

The students are concerned.

55 - EXT. THE UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. PATIOS.

All the students talk about the situation in their country, an informal meeting with a lot of passion. Their faces are worried and full of fear. Nilo, on top of a wooden box, addresses everyone.

ADRIÁN MORENO

For things to change in the country, they have to overthrow the government and arm themselves with rifles to fight.

NILO

We must go out to the streets peacefully. And send the message through music. Not fighting, but through lyrics. When music enters you, you feel it, and you understand.

Silence.

ADRIÁN MORENO

We've already sent letters and requests.

NILO

Do you really think that signing a piece of paper is enough in the face of such injustices?

ADRIÁN MORENO

And not graduate? Nilo, you forget that this institution belongs to the government. Simón Bolívar also said, "Let us have the right conduct and let us leave time to do wonders."

All the students applaud Adrián. Nilo looks to his fellow students, but they refuse to look at him.

NILO

(almost in tears)

"The pure and clean truth is the best way to persuade".

Nilo gets off the box.

NILO (CONT'D)

I get it. Children of high society are afraid to make a peaceful march for those who suffer. You are more concerned with graduation than your fellow man.

56 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. THEATER.

The curtain is down. The audience adjusts. It is the final presentation of the students, the "Zarzuela." They announce the arrival of judges, critics, teachers of the University, plus eminences of music.

Flashback - Hallways of the University

Nilo waits outside the classroom to present his final exam. He studies the musical notes carefully. He enters the room.

PROFESSOR OF MUSIC

Young Soruco.

NILO

Professor.

Nilo greets the pianist who will accompany him. Calipsa takes the finals notes for graduation. When everyone is ready, the teacher, with a look, begins the presentation. Nilo sings one Zarzuela. Nilo, the artist, reveals the soul of a fighter and dreamer.

FLASHBACK ENDS CUT TO:

The song continues, but we are already in full theatrical performance. Nilo is in costume, and with his voice delights the audience. Applause. Nilo was born to be on a stage.

57 - INT. UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. MUSIC HALL.

Nilo waits in an empty classroom. All teachers enter and deliver an envelope to Nilo.

CALIPSA  
Congratulations, Mr. Soruco.  
This is your first job offer to be  
a teacher in a school in the city  
of Tarija.

She hands him the envelope, and tears fall from her eyes.

CALIPSA (CONT'D)  
It has been a pleasure to meet you,  
dear friend.

The teachers embrace Nilo.

58 - EXT. THE UNIVERSITY OF SUCRE. HALLWAY.

Nilo graduates from the University of Sucre. The graduates throw their caps. Nilo can not believe he did it. He re-reads his diploma. It says DEGREE OF PROFESSOR OF MUSICAL EDUCATION.

59 - EXT. TRAIN STATION. AFTERNOON.

All the students say goodbye.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
Nilo, I'm sorry I've disappointed  
you. I was not born to fight.

Nilo points to his guitar and throat.

NILO  
See this? This is my rifle, and  
here is my message. If I do not  
achieve a change, I will have  
disappointed you.

They embrace and part as brothers.

60 - EXT. CUESTA DE SAMA. CAMIÓN. AFTERNOON.

On top of bags of peaches and figs, Nilo looks at the clouds and the landscape. This time Nilo has a mustache; finally, he is a man.

61 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. PATIO.

A humble party. The Soruco family sings and dances a song in front of the fire. Firmo smokes in a corner. He's full of anxiety. Laura, the mother, knocks over a tray intentionally to stop the dancing. Everyone stops. She toasts.

LAURA SORUCO

I want a toast for my son.

All cheer.

FIRMO

(Sarcastic)

A toast brother! You graduated and changed your life. Only your life, but at least one of us won't be a starving dog.

62 - EXT. PLAZA SUCRE. DAY.

Nilo carries a flower and a small gift. Ice cream makers, children, and parents play in the square. Suddenly Olga appears and runs into the arms of Nilo. They embrace and kiss passionately.

NILO

In two weeks, I start teaching.

OLGA

I also start teaching in a few more days...

Nilo kisses her and stares at her. The moment has arrived. Nilo gets on his knees. Olga loses her breath, and everything seems to stop. Nilo takes out a simple ring and puts it in his hands.

NILO

The night you left me at the fountain, I had tears thinking of my love for you, for not having loved you my entire life. Every morning, when I wake up, you are the reason why I smile.

(MORE)



NILO (CONT'D)  
 Whatever our souls are made of,  
 yours and mine are the same.

Nilo puts the ring in the hands of Olga.

NILO (CONT'D)  
 Miss Olga Verdún, would you like to  
 be my best friend, the mother of my  
 children and my wife?

Olga can not answer, and with hesitation, she asks for a few minutes to think. She walks away, crosses the street, and disappears behind the door of her house. Nilo sits on a bench.

63 - EXT. PLAZA DE SUCRE. AFTERNOON. HOURS LATER.

The sun falls between the mountains painting the sky orange. The park is almost empty, and Nilo is still on the same bench waiting for Olga. Already tired, he decides to go assuming a "no" for an answer. Olga exits her house.

OLGA  
 (Screaming)  
 Nilo! Nilo! Yes, I accept.

They both run to hug each other in the middle of the trees as dusk falls behind them.

64 - EXT. IRCALAYA CHURCH. PROVIDENCE MENDEZ TARIJA.

Saturday, February 7, 1954. A humble Catholic ceremony but full of love. The whole family, many Tarija people, and university friends accompany Nilo and Olga.

CARMELITE FATHER 1  
 Love is life. We were made out of  
 love, and our lives are to be lived  
 in that love. The power in love is  
 to release.

Montage: Bridal kiss.

Assembly: Church exit as guests throw rice.

65 - EXT. CORRADO STREET HOME. AFTERNOON.

The "Landlady" leads Nilo and Olga through the old colonial house.

## LANDLADY

Because you will be sharing the house with other tenants, you must be... (She chooses her words). When you have sex, play some music not to bother my tenants.

The landlady points to a group of old ladies who play cards and smoke like chimneys.

66 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

Olga puts away her belongings while Nilo paints on a canvas. Paintings, weavings, drawings, musical instruments, and books scattered all over the place.

67 - INT. BUS. DAY.

Nilo and Olga, dressed as teachers, review their lesson plans.

68 - INT. KINDER GARDEN TARIJA. DAY.

A kindergarten is full of children running and shouting uncontrollably. Nilo recognizes the poverty of Bolivia's public schools.

69 - EXT. "MARÍA LAURA JUSTINIANO" SCHOOL. DAY

Establishing shot. A year later.

70 - INT. "MARÍA LAURA JUSTINIANO" SCHOOL. DAY

Nilo follows the director through the corridors.

## DIRECTOR

You come from teaching at a kindergarten school... That's a different dynamic. This is an all-girls school.

The bell rings, and the students run away. One of them does not wear shoes. Nilo notices a girl eating while others watch.

## DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Any questions?

NILO

With your permission? I would like to organize a collect of bread and bananas for those girls that come to school hungry.

DIRECTOR

(Sarcastic)

Your job is to teach not to change the world. But if you want to, why not go ahead.

She walks away.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

You will get used.

71 - INT. "MARÍA LAURA JUSTINIANO" SCHOOL. PATIO.

Nilo shares bread and bananas with the kids. The children and stray dogs devour the food. Nilo is concerned.

MÚSICA - "MARÍA LAURA JUSTINIANO"

72 - EXT. SUPERMARKET. NIGHT.

Poor people break into a supermarket and steal food in desperation. We see images of protests and the military spraying gas at civilians.

73 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Nilo, under the moonlight, tries to compose a song but can't concentrate because he sees some starving dogs looking for food in the trash.

74 - EXT. MAIN PLAZA. DAY.

A man that resembles Che Guevara shouts in the middle of the square. Nilo listens.

REVOLUTIONARY MAN

The people live in poverty, uncertainty, and hunger. And the rich are richer.

We the workers, miners, and peasants are organizing protests for democracy and labor rights... Its time for change.

(MORE)

REVOLUTIONARY MAN (CONT'D)  
 Come join the Communist Party. We  
 are dreamers that believe in  
 equality.

75 - INT. SAN LUIS COLLEGE. TEACHERS MEETING.

Nilo stands on a chair with a glass of wine in his hand.

NILO  
 Ladies and Gentlemen  
 (looks at a girl)  
 First of all, nobody leaves without  
 giving a cheer to our health.

They all cheer.

NILO (CONT'D)  
 We all know that our students are  
 hungry... Since this government  
 does nothing, we have to do  
 something.

Nilo opens a big box that says "Collect".

NILO (CONT'D)  
 I suggest we all try to fill a  
 basket with fruit or food that is  
 leftover... if we all bring  
 something, we can make a  
 difference.

NILO (CONT'D)  
 And now... lets dance and celebrate  
 the gift of being alive.

Nilo sings a popular song and everyone comes together. In the background, we see OSCAR ALFARO, a nice young man dressed like the typical poet. At his side is another revolutionary smoking a cigarette; he covers his face with a hat until we realize it's Adrian Moreno. He approaches Nilo.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 Nilo!

NILO  
 Adrian!

The men hug.

ADRIAN MORENO  
 You look like a teacher.

NILO  
You look like a spy.

They laugh.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
I am here to join the revolution.

NILO  
Revolution?

ADRIÁN MORENO  
You were right. There comes a time  
when Silence is betrayal.

Nilo is speechless.

ADRIÁN MORENO (CONT'D)  
Come with me. I want you to meet  
someone.

76 - EXT. BAR. NIGHT. HOURS LATER.

Adrian Moreno introduces Nilo to Oscar Alfaro.

OSCAR ALFARO  
Oscar Alfaro, teacher of literature  
and history.

NILO  
Oscar Alfaro, the poet? I love your  
work.

OSCAR ALFARO  
Your "collect Box" moved me. You  
are a giver Nilo. There aren't many  
of you anymore.

Nilo doesn't know what to say.

OSCAR ALFARO (CONT'D)  
Do you believe in equality for  
humankind?

NILO  
I do.

OSCAR ALFARO  
Do you think every man is unique?

NILO  
(Thinks)  
I do...

OSCAR ALFARO

Then if we are all different, why  
should we be treated equally?

Oscar lights a cigar.

OSCAR ALFARO (CONT'D)

I agree with you... we are  
unique... We are not the same. But  
the hunger, the desperation, and  
the pain we all feel are universal;  
therefore, we should all have the  
same rights.

Oscar takes out a pamphlet from the Communist Party of  
Bolivia.

OSCAR ALFARO (CONT'D)

I want to invite you to meet more  
people like you. Come to a meeting  
of the Communist Party of Bolivia.

ADRIAN MORENO

So you can do more than simple  
charity. So you can be part of the  
real change.

NILO

Sorry... I do not mess with  
guerrillas... I prefer my charity.

Nilo walks away.

ADRIAN MORENO

Nilo, you were the one that told me  
that we need to do something. We  
need to fight. This is a war.  
Listen to him.

NILO

Fights only bring suffering.

OSCAR ALFARO

The worst fight is the one that is  
not done.

NILO

I fight with my collects. My words  
and music.

OSCAR ALFARO

Do you really mean that?

NILO

Yes.

OSCAR ALFARO

Then come and sing for us Nilo. We need your words and music.

Nilo smiles.

NILO

I've read your poems. You understand children.

OSCAR ALFARO

I write for them. I am doing this for them...

Nilo is moved.

NILO

I'll come if you let me turn some of your poems into songs. Especially "El Trompo"

They shake hands.

INSTRUMENTAL SONG " EL TROMPO"

77 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE - HOUSE ON BALLIVIÁN Y CORRADO STREETS.

Nilo and Olga move to their new home. Firmo, José, and Antonio help with some boxes. Don Onofre and Laura burn some incense and bless the house.

Nilo kisses Olga and with a mischievous smile, tries to take her to an empty room. She stops him and gently lets him feel her belly. She is pregnant. Nilo is the happiest man in the world.

78 - INT. SAN LUIS COLLEGE. CLASS.

Nilo is reviewing the homework of his students when a pregnant woman walks in tears.

MOTHER OF A STUDENT

Nilo, they told me that you collect money. My two little girls haven't eaten since yesterday and I am trying.

The woman cries and Nilo does not know what to say. Suddenly he opens his drawer and hands her a few coins and bills.

NILO

It's all the money that we have raised with my fellow artists in the past two weeks. But don't worry. We will get more.

Nilo is frustrated.

79 - INT. SAN LUIS COLLEGE. CLASS.

Nilo leads the school choir, the children's voices are cheerful, but there's also an air of sadness. Nilo tries to smile.

80 - EXT. COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE CENTRAL PCB "COMMUNIST PARTY OF BOLIVIA"

Nilo, along with a few teachers, enters the meeting for the first time. Oscar Alfaro, who is in the middle of a speech, greets Nilo with a smile. Behind him enters José Soruco, Nilo's brother, and two other friends. Adrian Moreno approaches to greet them.

ADRIAN MORENO

Welcome to the Communist Party of Bolivia. PCB!

Adrian Moreno hugs him and kisses him on the cheek.

81 - INT. COMMITTEE FOR THE CENTRAL PCB. MOMENTS LATER.

Members of the PCB have gathered in the main room with paper and pencil in hand. They write and share ideas full of passion and rage.

EMILIO SÁNCHEZ

EMILIO SÁNCHEZ. Communism in a sentence: abolish all private property from the thieves!

Applause.

SIMÓN REYES

SIMÓN REYES. The privilege of some is the right of everyone!

FLOYD ORTEGA

FLOYD ORTEGA.



PEDRO FARFÁN  
 PEDRO FARFÁN. Political power is  
 the organized power of one class to  
 oppress another.

Applause.

CLARA TARRICO  
 CLARA TARRICO.

JAIME BAS WERNER  
 JAIME BAS WERNER. The workers have  
 nothing to lose except their  
 chains.

Applause.

OSCAR PRADA  
 OSCAR PRADA.

ROSENDO DEL CASTILLO  
 ROSENDO DEL CASTILLO.

VÍCTOR GOITIA  
 VÍCTOR GOITIA.

MARTHA CERPA  
 MARTHA CERPA. The dispossessed have  
 a world to gain.

Applause.

TITO MACEDA  
 TITO MACEDA.

MIRA CASTRILLO  
 MIRA CASTRILLO. My barn has burned.  
 Now I can see the stars.

Applause.

GILBERTO MEDINACELI  
 GILBERTO MEDINACELI.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 And society will be able to write  
 on its flags: The end justifies the  
 means.

LUIS ALDANA  
 LUIS ALDANA.

HUGO MONZÓN  
HUGO MONZÓN.

NORMA GÁLVEZ  
NORMA GÁLVEZ. Religion is the moan  
of the oppressed.

Applause.

FLAVIO APARICIO  
FLAVIO APARICIO.

OLGA VERDÚN  
OLGA VERDUN DE SORUCO. Luxury is  
the opposite of what is naturally  
necessary.

Nilo is speechless when he sees Olga entering. She is wearing pants, something controversial for the time. She walks to the front and sits next to her husband.

OLGA VERDÚN (CONT'D)  
Is this the first time you've seen  
a woman in trousers?

EVERYONE  
Yes.

They laugh.

OLGA VERDÚN  
Well, get used to the new. We are  
here to change the world!

They begin singing the national anthem.

82 - INT. COMMITTEE FOR THE CENTRAL PCB. ANOTHER DAY.

Adrian Moreno takes the podium.

Note - Throughout the scene, we see images of their activities. Nilo and Olga are very committed to leading the way.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
Gentlemen. Welcome to the meeting  
of the PCB - Communist Party of  
Bolivia.

He adjusts his microphone, causing an echo.

ADRIÁN MORENO (CONT'D)  
Inequality and injustice must end!

Everyone applauds.

ADRIÁN MORENO (CONT'D)  
I insist that for our next protest  
we carry weapons to let them know  
we are here to fight!

Everyone applauds.

NILO  
Violence generates violence, and it  
will not take us anywhere.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
(Pointing to Nilo)  
Nilo Soruco, graduate from the  
University of Sucre.

Applause.

ADRIÁN MORENO (CONT'D)  
Nilo, What do you suggest? The  
military oppresses any citizen that  
speaks up...

NILO  
A peaceful agreement.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
A peaceful agreement?

Nilo walks to the podium.

NILO  
Peace will only exist when we  
finish this separation. They have  
no compassion and act the way they  
do because they have lost their  
humanity. They think we are the  
enemy, but we are brothers. All  
from the same father. If we let  
them know that we are the same,  
with fears and dreams. That we  
bleed, cry, and laugh as they do.  
We will teach them that every life  
must be honored and respected. Even  
the ones that hurt you... We are  
all equal before the law and the  
creator.

Some applaud Nilo.

ADRIÁN MORENO

And what actions do you plan to take? Pray?

Laughter.

NILO

Unite our voices. Become so loud that they have to hear us. Begin a dialogue. Love them as Jesus taught us, love the enemy. We need healing, no more wars. We have been fighting since the colonization.

Nilo continues talking, and in a certain way, we see how he quenches the desire for revenge and a thirst for blood.

NILO (CONT'D)

(Voice-over)

I was nervous and excited, and that afternoon I decided to join the Communist Party of Bolivia.

MÚSICA DE FONDO - CUECA "NO TE CALLES CANTOR"

83 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga writes some banners and papers for the party. She is exhausted. Nilo, by the fire, is composing a song.

OLGA

Nilo, let's sleep.

NILO

I won't be able to sleep until I can denounce with my music what we are experiencing.

OLGA

You denounced a lot today. Let's rest.

NILO

I wish I had a song today... instead of rational words... Music moves the soul.

Silence. Olga is moved.

NILO (CONT'D)

I think I've found a reason to compose and use my gift as a musician.

84 - EXT. CENTRAL PLAZA. DAY.

Nilo, Olga, Oscar, Adrian, Firmo, José, and Antonio try to distribute pamphlets for the PCB, and nobody pays attention. Nilo stands on a box and starts to shout.

NILO

"The murder! The murder! The murder! Extra! The President! Extra! Our head of the country has died, extra!

People approach, all desperate to know details of the false news. Nilo continues with the joke until having the attention of dozens of people.

NILO (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen! Now that I have your attention! It was a joke, but look how happy you were with the idea that the president is gone.

Some get upset with the joke; others laugh.

NILO (CONT'D)

I'm Nilo Soruco, a music teacher. We are calling you to join a movement for equality. We need your signature saying that you want a change. And next to that we have a collect box for the hungry children.

He presents himself as a soldier. People smile and do not take Nilo seriously.

NILO (CONT'D)

Let me shut up talking and start doing what I know. Sing!

Nilo sings one of his first political songs "Chapaco Alzao"

85 - INT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. PATIO.

Olga, with several women, count the cards of information from the new members. Nilo, Oscar, and all the members are planning the next strategy.

OSCAR ALFARO

Suppose we are all at the same time  
outside all the markets, schools,  
and universities. People will see  
us everywhere.

ADRIÁN MORENO

It needs to be at noon...

Olga approaches.

OLGA

(Almost in tears)

We have reached One Thousand names.

Silence. They all look at each other in disbelief.

NILO

We are getting the supporters...  
and it's all peaceful.

86 - INT. TARIJA HIGHSCHOOL. PATIO.

A choir of children sings a peaceful song. CORONEL ZELAYA, a magnetic man in his late forties, picks up his two children. One of them plays with his dad's uniform while he talks to the teachers. The little boy wears his dad's hat.

87 - EXT. TARIJA HIGHSCHOOL. MOMENTS LATER.

Coronel Zelaya steps out of the school. Several pedestrians listen closely to Nilo, who is passionately singing to the crowd and passing communist fliers. The Coronel quickly hides the hat and his military jacket in a bag. Disguised, as a civilian, he follows the group. He sees the fire in Nilo's eyes and how he ignites the same passion in his listeners. Suddenly, the Coronel realizes that more men like Nilo are talking to the crowds a couple of blocks away. He walks straight to the other groups.

LITTLE BOY

Dad, we have to go there...

CORONEL ZELAYA

Not today, today we are walking  
that way...

The Coronel witnesses how the communist party reaches the masses. Olga comes to him with some fliers, and they share a smile.

88 - EXT. PLAZA CENTRAL. NIGHT.

Nilo sings on an improvised podium while people dance and drink some wine. The party members continue passing fliers. Olga counts the new member's information cards.

INT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB. NIGHT.

Olga finishes counting the information cards.

OLGA

We have reached 100.000 names in  
the whole country!

They all clap and embrace. Olga kisses Nilo passionately.

NILO

Now we can ask for real dialogue  
with the government.

89 - EXT. MAIN PLAZA. NIGHT.

Oscar, Olga, and Nilo walk through the square. Olga's pregnant belly makes her fatigue. She eats some cakes.

NILO

(To Oscar)

She has plenty of pregnancy  
cravings.

OSCAR ALFARO

And you have a gift Nilo. People  
listen to you.

OLGA

Nilo can inspire inspiration.

NILO

It's music, it creates that change  
from inside... from the heart.

OSCAR ALFARO

The movement is growing. Our mining  
brothers have joined us in peaceful  
protests in the mine centers. We,  
the teachers, and the miners are  
bringing the country together.

Nilo and Olga hold hands.

NILO

And all in a peaceful way.

OSCAR ALFARO

Tomorrow we leave for the capital,  
Nilo. We will meet with all the  
party members for the first time—  
thousands of dreamers and believers  
like us.

NILO

I can't go. Olga will have the baby  
soon.

OSCAR ALFARO

They have specifically asked for  
the voice of the movement to come.  
They want your singing.

Nilo can not believe it.

OLGA

He is coming. One of us needs to be  
there.

Nilo and Olga share a look.

OLGA (CONT'D)

The baby waited months. I am sure  
we will be fine. Go Nilo.

NILO

I've married the bravest woman in  
the world...

They kiss.

NILO (CONT'D)

(To Oscar)

We have to take some boxes of wine  
to celebrate after the night of San  
Juan.

90 - EXT. FLOAT STATION. NIGHT.

Title: San Juan celebration. A traditional holiday, people  
light up torches and fireworks. All the members of the PCB  
party are about to depart on buses to the capital. A band  
plays a national cueca. Family members have gathered to say  
goodbye. Many families dance and clap with the sound of the  
band. Don Onofre and Doña Laura bless their three sons.

LAURA SORUCO

Sons, please be careful. The  
government doesn't like protests.



NILO

It will be a peaceful protest, mom.  
They have no excuse to hurt us.  
It's more like a celebration; The  
miners are coming from different  
parts of the country to begin a new  
world based on love and equality.

It's the last call for departure. Nilo kisses Olga.

MÚSICA - "NIGHT DE SAN JUAN"

91 - EXT. MINING CENTER. NIGHT.

In the middle of the Andes, many miners have gathered to depart to the capital. The mining centers carry out the traditional celebrations of the night of San Juan, families lighting up fireworks and dancing by the fires. We see the army getting off train wagons and surround the mining camps. After a few minutes, the troops move to the Plaza of Miners, where the radio station "The Voice of the Miner" operates.

92 - INT. RADIO STATION "THE VOICE OF THE MINER." .

One of the miners shares a message with all the listeners.

MINER

Education should be available to  
all civilians. Through instruction,  
the daughter of a peasant can  
become a doctor, the son of a miner  
can become the head of the mine,  
and the son of agricultural workers  
can become the president of a great  
nation!

Dozens of shots destroy the miner's body. We see how his bloody body bounces against the wall.

NILO

(V.O.)

And even though he was dead, they  
continue firing. Almost as if they  
wanted to kill his soul.

CUT TO:

93 - EXT. MINE CENTRAL. MOMENTS LATER.

The celebration of San Juan continues, and the miners confuse the sound of bullets with fireworks. Suddenly, military soldiers fire hundreds of shots into the crowd.

94 - EXT. LOCATION OF ALTIPLANO. MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

The bus has stopped at a highland town for dinner. Everyone listens to the tune of the 20th-century radio, in which the speaker narrates the violent military takeover of the mines by the government of Barrientos.

RADIO

(Voice Over)

The government of Barrientos killed the mining populations of this area. Initial reports said there are 20 dead and 72 wounded.

Nilo closes his eyes and covers his ears. He can hear the sound of the bullets and the crying of women with children.

NILO

(To Himself)

Why? They weren't fighting... it is a peaceful protest for our rights... Why?

95 - EXT. ALTIPLANO OF BOLIVIA. NIGHT.

Nilo, utterly alone in the middle of the highlands, composes the song "The Night of San Juan".

MUSIC - "THE NIGHT OF SAN JUAN"

96 - EXT. LA PAZ BOLIVIA. MIDNIGHT.

The bus arrives at the capital at 4 AM. Nilo sees hundreds of shoe shiners and homeless people piled up under bridges and parks. Poverty has multiplied exponentially.

97 - INT. LA PAZ. COMMITTEE OF CENTRAL PCB. AFTERNOON.

Nilo finishes singing the previous song "THE NIGHT OF SAN JUAN" in front of hundreds of teachers, miners, and brothers of the town. Everyone cries and applauds.

OSCAR ALFARO  
 (Screaming to the mass)  
 They might kill us or put us in  
 jail. But they will never take away  
 our souls!

A roar of men and women erupts. They are angry and ready to fight for their rights.

98 - EXT. PLAZA MURILLO. NIGHT.

The massive protest is about to begin. However, not many people have shown up.

OSCAR ALFARO  
 Where is everyone? We should all be  
 here now...

NILO  
 People might be frightened.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 I told you that we should bring  
 weapons.

NILO  
 (Heartbroken and angry)  
 I am sorry for thinking that  
 peaceful protest will lead to  
 something. I was a fool.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 (Sardonic)  
 It lead to a peaceful massacre  
 Nilo.

OSCAR ALFARO  
 We give them the signatures and  
 return.

Finally, hundreds of people start arriving from the different corners of the streets. The tension transitions to excitement.

OSCAR ALFARO (CONT'D)  
 Let's start walking to the main  
 auditorium. People join when things  
 are happing.

Nilo and Oscar share a long hug.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC - "TO THE SEA"

99 - INT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL PCB. NIGHT

The auditorium is full of people; many can't get in. Oscar greets the members.

OSCAR ALFARO  
(Shaking several hands)  
Brother worker... Brother worker.

Oscar looks at Nilo who passionately sings one of his songs. Before his eyes, the peaceful idealist becomes a leader with a thirst for justice. Everyone applauds and shouts back. Nilo is angry and ready to fight.

MUSIC. The men start lighting up torches, and finally, the massive protest has begun.

100 - EXT. CITY OF LA PAZ.

NEWS  
Teachers and miners, have arrived  
in the capital to lead a peaceful  
march towards the presidential  
palace.

NILO  
(On a megaphone)  
Why no one mentions that the  
military has killed our brothers  
and sisters the night of San Juan.  
Trying to drown our voices with  
with fear. Man is born free  
therefore he must live and die  
free!  
Inequality is a prison, a prison of  
the soul.  
We will not give up!

The protest continues growing. Some sing the national anthem, others scream in anger. The military starts attacking the protest. Aggressive images of gun shots, attacks, gas and arrests. Nilo gets beat up by the police, Oscar Alfaro arrested and the chaos continues growing. Sounds of screams and applause merge in:

101 - INT. HOSPITAL. DAY.

Olga screams in pain trying to give birth. A nurse asks another nurse "Where is her husband". Finally the first daughter of Nilo is born. Family members have gathered to greet the baby.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC- "LAS CHULUPIAS"

102 - INT. HOSPITAL. DAYS LATER.

Nilo and his brothers walk in the hospital, they have bruises and wounds. Dona Laura and Don Onofre receive their sons in tears.

LAURA SORUCO  
We thought you were dead.

They embrace.

NILO  
They had to set us free...

103 - INT. HOSPITAL. OLGA'S ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo cautiously steps in the room. Olga sees her man alive, she catches her breath, tears roll down her cheeks. They passionately kiss.

OLGA  
It's a girl.

104 - INT. HOSPITAL. MATERNITY ROOM.

Nilo follows a nurse to the maternity room. He greets his daughter for the first time. He looks at her with love, fear, excitement and knows his life has changed. A little bird sings by the window.

NILO  
(to nurse)  
What bird is that?

ENFERMERA  
The chulupia.

Nilo touches his daughter for the first time.

NILO  
My Chulupita...

Nilo weeps in happiness.

NILO (CONT'D)  
(Voice Over)  
When I took her in my arms she  
curled up. She knew it was me, her  
father.  
(MORE)

NILO (CONT'D)  
 She looked at me with those big  
 eyes and grabbed my finger.  
 Zemlya Selva Soruco Verdún. A  
 dreamer, she liked to read novels  
 and books, tranquil, spontaneous,  
 cheerful.

105 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga finishes sewing a dress, she is still in pain from giving birth. The baby sleeps in a basket. Nilo is working on a speech.

OLGA  
 What are you doing?

NILO  
 We are organizing another protest.  
 This time we will have weapons and  
 if we need to fight we will fight.

OLGA  
 (Olga sees her daughter  
 sleeping)  
 When you are part of the beginning  
 of life, you can not stop thinking  
 about its end. Nilo this little  
 girl can not exist without us.

Nilo sits and listens very carefully.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
 We no longer have the right to die.

Nilo approaches to embrace her.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
 I will no longer accompany you to  
 the meetings. I will stay home...  
 open a small tailor shop.

Olga shamefully shakes her head.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
 I am sorry.

Nilo holds her and kisses her head. Olga is in pain.

106 - MONTAGE:

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC. The seasons change. Olga inaugurates a small a tailor shop. Dresses and suits hang throughout their home.

107 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. YEARS LATER.

Olga fixes a dress. Little Zemlya crawls around the house when suddenly stands on her own. Olga smiles, calls for Nilo but he is not there.

108 - EXT. COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE CENTRAL PCB.

The members of the party form a line waiting to receive weapons and shields.

109 - EXT. LA PAZ BOLIVIA. PLAZA MURILLO.

Footage of thousands of Bolivian citizens asking the president of the nation to leave. The NEWS interviews a miner.

MINER

Our citizens immigrate daily. The dollar keeps getting expensive. Extreme poverty is a reality. What is the government doing, taking more away from us. People are starving!

Images of:

Poor people stealing super markets and pharmacies. Hundreds of people on the streets fight the police officers with fire bombs and rocks.

110 - EXT. PLAZA MURILLO. NIGHT.

Nilo, Oscar and the party members are screaming at the police officers that protect the palace. Another aggressive confrontation begins. Except the protesters use some weapons and fight back. More police officers arrive. Some get shot, others arrested or run away.

Just when we thought that the police won, we see hundreds of civilians coming down the streets. The police drops the guns and disperse. Rocks bust the windows of the palace.

Too many citizens in anger force the police to run away.

111 - EXT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB. NIGHT.

Hundreds of civilians surround the streets. There are speakers are in different corners.

Establishing shot.

112 - INT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB.

All the members watch the Tvs. On Screen, Coronel Zelaya.

CORONEL ZELAYA

(Reading)

The president just announced that  
he will have a dialogue with the  
people.

OSCAR ALFARO

(Celebrating)

After so much effort and work.  
Deaths and more deaths. They have  
surrendered and have no choice but  
to listen to the people!

Everyone applauds. Everyone celebrates.

113 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nilo runs towards home and screams victory.

114 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nilo runs and screams in happiness.

NILO

The president will listen! The  
president will listen to the  
people!

Olga opens the door and Nilo runs to her arms. They  
passionately kiss. Their daughter comes out, barely walking  
on her own. Nilo gets on his knees and holds her little hand.

115 - INT. TARIJA PLAZA CENTRAL. RESTAURANT.

Olga feeds her daughter, she is a year older. Nilo watches  
the news.

REPORTER

The protests are violent and  
destructive.

NILO

(Frustrated)

Thats not us! It's the government  
paying traitors to start the riots  
and looting. They want to have an  
excuse to arrest us...



REPORTER

Riots and looting continue rising  
demanding that the government  
presents a plan to fight the  
extreme poverty...

Images of Oscar talking to the news.

NILO

(to Olga)

It's Oscar!

Images of people singing on the streets and attacking the  
police.

REPORTER

The songs of Nilo Soruco have  
become an anthem of this  
revolution.

Images of dead people.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

During the aggressive encounters  
dozens of police men and civilians  
lost their lives.

The song of Nilo echoes in the background. Nilo looks at Olga  
with concern. Olga looks away and continues feeding her  
child.

116 - EXT. LA PAZ BOLIVIA. PLAZA MURILLO.

In a different march, the protesters sing Nilo Soruco' songs  
and burn the Bolivia flag with the president's photos.

117 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nilo composes a song and Olga is making a dress. Suddenly  
Jose, Antonio and Firmo enter.

JOSE

Nilo! Your song is on the radio!

Olga stops sewing and turns on the radio.

ANTONIO

Your songs are being played  
throughout Bolivia.

FIRMO

Your message is being heard.

Everyone celebrates except Olga.

118 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga can't sleep, she's very concerned.

NILO

What are you thinking?

OLGA

Today on my way to the market, I  
saw a group of students burning  
flags while singing your songs.  
Nilo, you have become the voice of  
the revolution.

Silence.

OLGA (CONT'D)

Aren't you afraid?

NILO

(Joking)

Fear is my most faithful  
companion...

OLGA

Nilo, I'm not kidding... I'm  
pregnant again.

Silence. Nilo kisses her sweetly and rests his head on Olga's  
belly.

NILO

God is with us...

OLGA

(Frustrated)

God let his son bleed to death on  
the cross.

Nilo embraces Olga.

OLGA (CONT'D)

Leave the communist party while you  
can.

Nilo's face is afraid but suddenly becomes full of anger.

NILO

Never ask me to stop fighting for  
the freedom of my daughter.

Nilo gets out of bed.

119 - INT. SAN LUIS COLLEGE. CLASS.

Nilo teaches the musical notes to his students.

NILO  
Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol...

Oscar and Olga enter the room. We can see her with a small Belly. They take Nilo aside.

OSCAR ALFARO  
We are on call for an emergency meeting.

120 - INT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB.

Everyone is in front of the TV watching the news.

NEWS REPORTER  
(Stock Footage)  
The military has overthrown the president of the nation Juan José Torres.

Images of the military taking over the palace.

NEWS REPORTER (CONT'D)  
He was overthrown by a coup led by Hugo Banzer with the support of Brazilian conservative sectors and part of the German colony in Bolivia.

OSCAR ALFARO  
There will be no dialogue with the people.

NILO  
What do you mean?

OSCAR ALFARO  
It's over Nilo. The military didn't approved the president's decision.

CUT TO:

121 - Stock Footage - Images of the protests from the city of La Paz. The overthrown president is forced to leave in an airplane.

NILO

(Voice Over)

The upper class and international corporations humiliated the president because he wanted to hear the people. The poor man escaped to Peru, Chile, and finally to Argentina. He was kidnapped and murdered in Buenos Aires, during the Condor Plan.

CUT TO:

Marches on the streets with Nilo Soruco and Oscar Alfaro at the front.

CUT TO:

**Stock Footage:** Military and tanks take over the streets and the Palace of Justice.

122 - INT. PALACIO DE GOBIERNO. STOCK FOOTAGE.

The new President Hugo Banzer speaks to the people.

PRESIDENTE BANZER

I aspire to be the ruler of all Bolivians without discrimination, to be an integral Nationalist Government without sectarianisms. The military will restore the order.

General Zelaya stands next to the paramilitary and swears loyalty to the new president.

123 - INT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB.

The members of the party have gathered to discuss the news. Some embrace, others cry, some discuss possibilities and others came to say good bye. Nilo and Oscar smoke in a corner by a Tv stand. We see images on TV of Coronel Zelaya.

CORONEL ZELAYA

(On TV)

A decisive action to overthrow this rebellion has begun... We will end this revolution... Communism is the uprising ideology of the devil. All residents should stay in their homes after 5 PM.

(MORE)

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)

Any political meeting or conversation against the new president and the regime is considered treason and it will be punished. Anyone related to the communist party will be interrogated and must suffer the consequences for their violent actions...

OSCAR ALFARO

The government has suspended many basic civil liberties... we are officially in coup d'etat. We need to dissipate the party.

We can hear the sounds of airplanes approaching.

Everyone leaves. The PCB remains empty.

124 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

There is a hopeless silence that covers the city with a undercurrent of fear. Nilo's house and his neighbors' are in darkness.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC "GOOD NIGHT IN BAD TIMES"

125 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo hammers a few nails sealing the windows and doors of his home. Candles surround Olga and her new daughter Sonia. She breastfeeds her while Zemlya sleeps.

NILO

(V.O)

Sonia Yeni Soruco Verdún, was born during the darkest times in our history. We were not only poor but had lost all our freedom.

The family hears bullets outside their home. They run under the bed. The girls cry. In the distance we can hear the military shooting a man while a woman screams in pain. Nilo and Olga hold their family close.

126 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo composes a song while his two daughters sleep. "Good night in bad weather"

NILO  
 GOOD NIGHT IN BAD TIME  
 CHRISTMAS, CHRISTMAS OF THE POOR  
 THERE ARE NO GIFTS, NO BONUSES  
 ONLY PAINS IN THE HEART...

MONTAGE OF IMAGES:

- Olga measures a dress on a client. A military siren begins and the client runs away. Olga closes the door with padlocks.
- People running through the streets to their homes.
- Curfews.
- The Military arrests people on the streets and force them to their trucks.
- The morgue filled with bodies of civilians.

127 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. MOMENTS LATER.

Onofre and Laura, look older and tired. They embrace.

128 - EXT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. MORNING.

The Soruco brothers help their parents pack their bags in a taxi. They are leaving the city.

NILO  
 Please tell my sister that I think  
 of her every single day.

ONOFRE SORUCO  
 We will son.

FIRMO  
 Where is she picking you up?

LAURA SORUCO  
 We will meet Clotilde in a small  
 town by the border.

ONOFRE SORUCO  
 She has done it before with some of  
 her friends that immigrated...

The brothers collect some bills and hand it to the parents.  
 They embrace.

129 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Nilo and Olga are having sex. Nilo is lost in his thoughts releasing his anger. Olga sees her husband suffering.

CUT TO:

Olga wakes up and Nilo is already gone.

130 - INT. SECRET MEETING. PCB PARTY.

Members of the Communist party have secretly gathered in a basement of a restaurant.

JAIME BAS WERNER  
Brothers of the revolution,  
reports?

HUGO MONZÓN  
We already sent international aid  
letters.

MARTHA CERPA  
We photocopied all the information  
for all the bases.

VÍCTOR GOITIA  
We made all the calls from the  
first.

TITO MACEDA  
Tomorrow at dawn we will write on  
the main corners anti military  
messages .

MIRA CASTRILLO  
The church has not responded yet.

NILO  
Banzer joined the so-called  
"Operation Condor" that links  
Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay,  
Paraguay and Brazil.

ADRIAN MORENO  
A military intelligence community?

NILO  
Yes. An alliance and strategy of  
arresting, capturing, torturing,  
killing all those who oppose  
dictatorships in Latin America.

Nilo and Oscar know that they are in absolute danger.

131 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga waits for Nilo at the table with a soup. She looks at her fingers cut and pricked by cooking and sewing. Their daughters sleep.

132 - INT. SECRET MEETING. PCB PARTY. DAWN.

The members watch the news. HISTORICAL IMAGES.

REPORTER

Hundreds of people are missing. The government says that they are being interrogated and soon taken to trial for connection with national treason.

Nilo sleeps on a chair.

133 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. AFTERNOON.

Olga is washing the clothes when suddenly she has the urge to vomit. She runs to the bathroom and vomits. She holds her stomach realizing there is a new baby on its way.

134 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga waits for Nilo at the table with a different meal. She looks at her fingers cut and pricked by cooking and sewing. Their daughters sleep. She can't hold it anymore and silently weeps.

135 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Olga is surrounded by her crying daughters. You can already see the belly of the new baby. Nilo enters. We see that he's skinny, tired and lost in his thoughts. Nilo sits. Silence.

OLGA

You were gone for 5 days and you have nothing to say...

NILO

It was too risky to come home... from now on I have to hide Olga.



OLGA

Stop going to meetings! They are  
killing people. Do it for your  
daughters since you won't do it for  
me.

Nilo with shame on his face is unable to look at Olga. Olga  
can no longer contain her anger, she breaks glasses and  
plates.

OLGA (CONT'D)

I do not want to have children with  
you anymore. I'm tired!

Nilo quietly steps out. The girls cry.

136 - INT. HOSPITAL. DAY.

Olga's face is full of anger. She is giving birth to her last  
daughter. Nilo observes behind a glass window.

137 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Olga, alone bathes her new daughter while the other two girls  
play in the background.

NILO

(Voice Over)

Violeta Vilma Soruco Verdún.  
"Violet the dreamer."

TITLE CARD - 10 YEARS LATER.

138 - INT. SECRET PLACE. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB.

Most of the members of the PCB are gone. The ones that stayed  
look tired. Silence and pain linger. The comrades share some  
information while Oscar and Adrian take notes.

EMILIO SÁNCHEZ

(Passing copies)

This is the confirmed list of names  
of our brothers and sisters that  
immigrated to Argentina and  
Venezuela.

CLARA TARRICO

List of Arrested in La Paz.

PRADA  
List of deceased.

Silence.

OSCAR ALFARO  
Nilo, you are the one they want the most. Your music is the voice of the people, and they want to finish it. It would be best if you did not come to meetings anymore.

NILO  
That's what they want us to do, give up.

Silence.

NILO (CONT'D)  
I'd rather be dead than give up. If we continue the work, we will see results. We are the reason the world knows the military's abuses and the killings of the Plan Condor.

139 - INT. MILITARY OFFICE. OFFICE OF CORONEL ZELAYA.

Coronel Zelaya examines the headshots of the members of the PCB that they are targeting for arrest. He pays close attention to Nilo and Oscar Alfaro.

140 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Curfew. Gunshots on the streets. Olga, alone, hugs her three daughters. Zemlya 15 years. Sonia 13 years. Violeta 10 years. They are on a mattress on the floor surrounded by furniture to protect themselves from stray bullets.

141 - INT. CHURCH IN ARGENTINA.

Clotilde Soruco looks older than her age; her hair is white. She is with her mother Laura, and Don Onofre. They pray to the virgin of "Our Lady of Luján". Next to the statue, she places the photos of her brothers: Nilo, José, and Firmo.

142 - EXT. STREETS OF TARIJA. MOMENTS LATER.

Olga, on her way home, witnesses soldiers beating up citizens. Some break into a house with the excuse of looking for Communists. Olga, fearful, walks faster.

143 - INT. OSCAR'S HOME. PATIO. AFTERNOON.

Oscar and Nilo go over a list of names. Zemlya and Sonia help to organize some propaganda pamphlets. José and Olga arrive with little Violeta. José is visibly worn out.

JOSE

We are safe. Nobody followed us.

OLGA

(Angry)

Zemlya and Sonia play with your little sister... I need to talk with them.

Olga sits next to Nilo.

OLGA (CONT'D)

(Cold and Sardonic)

Oscar speak. Nilo won't tell me.  
Get straight to the point.

Nilo doesn't want to talk, but Olga is determined to hear the truth.

OSCAR ALFARO

They are looking for Nilo and me.  
Our photos are on the board. They  
have instructions to arrest us and  
probably torture us.

OLGA

You need to stop.

Silence.

NILO

We can't stop now. We have to hide  
and continue working.

OLGA

(To Nilo)

Let's go home.

NILO

Yes, you go to the house with the girls. If anyone asks for me tell them I am teaching in La Paz.

Olga walks away in tears.

144 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

All the women eat their dinner in absolute silence. Nilo's chair is empty.

OLGA

Eat. Your father is not coming.

145 - EXT. STREETS OF TARIJA.

Sonia returns home from the market with some bags. A group of people recognizes her.

PERSON

Here comes the daughter of the antichrist.

Sonia pretends not to listen.

PERSON (CONT'D)

I hope they find him and kill him.

Sonia continues walking

PERSON (CONT'D)

Kill all of you, communists.  
Traitors!

Sonia holds back her tears and walks faster.

146 - INT. SECRET PLACE. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB

Nilo finishes a speech. There are very few participants.

NILO

As Pedro Domingo Murillo said:  
"Surrender me? Tell your mother to  
fuck off. The torch that I lit  
nobody can turn it off."

Not even Nilo believes in his words.

Everyone listens, but they are already defeated. Suddenly, Sonia enters with the guitar on her shoulder and sits down to listen to her father. Nilo is very moved to see his daughter. Nilo sings a song.

147 - INT. CINEMA. MOMENTS LATER.

Violeta watches a movie by Cantinflas in a semi-empty cinema. Cantinflas dances with his pants down as he seduces a lady. Everyone laughs. Violeta repeats some of the dialogues that she knows by heart. Suddenly there's a blackout and an alarm. Violeta leaves the cinema, which closes immediately.

She walks through the streets and sees a fire where soldiers are burning communist books, pamphlets of the PCB party, and suddenly she sees Nilo Soruco's cassettes, photos of his records. Violet runs home.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC - "FLORILEGIO QUINCEAÑERO"

148 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Olga and the girls are in the backyard of their house.

OLGA  
(Paranoid)  
Bury all the communist books,  
writings... Wrap in plastic your  
father's songs.

149 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

All the women eat their dinner in absolute silence. Nilo's chair is empty.

150 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga and her daughters are sleeping. Suddenly, the military jolts the front door. They force all the women to stand with their backs against a wall. Olga prays. The girls tremble, and Violeta cries. Coronel Zelaya walks in.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
Where is Nilo Soruco!  
Check the whole house!

OLGA  
Sir, Nilo is in the city of La Paz.  
He is a teacher.

CORONEL ZELAYA

Silence! There's a curfew. Nilo Soruco should not be away from his home.

OLGA

He will come home...

He pushes Olga, smashing her face into the wall. Her nose bleeds from the blow.

CORONEL ZELAYA

The government established the curfew. No one is allowed to circulate freely through the streets at night.

OLGA

Yes. That's why we are here. Please. Have mercy on us, women. We are innocent.

CORONEL ZELAYA

We are at war and internal commotion because of you communists.

The soldiers turn furniture over and lift carpets. They stab the roofs and floors, trying to kill anyone who is hiding. The house ends up being destroyed.

SOLDIER

Coronel, he is not here.

CORONEL ZELAYA

Any communist propaganda? Any evidence?

SOLDIER

No, Sir!

Olga continues praying until she feels the mouth of the gun against her head.

OLGA

Please, we weren't doing anything. You don't have a reason...

CORONEL ZELAYA

I don't need an excuse to kill you, unpatriotic dog. One of your own told us everything you rats are doing. You are selling out our country to the Russians and Cubans.

(MORE)

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
You are a danger to the security of  
the State.

They leave.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
(V.O.)  
Find Nilo Soruco and bring him to  
me. Dead or alive.

The young women embrace and cry. Olga finds the strength,  
covers herself with a cloak and runs out the back door.

151 - EXT. STREETS OF TARIJA. NIGHT.

The curfew has an alarm that resonates through the empty  
streets. Only soldiers drive vans and tanks with talking  
radios.

RADIO PARLANTES  
(Voice Over)  
We can not let communists or Nazis  
enter Bolivia! This ideology brings  
criminal acts, murders, tortures,  
and deportations in European  
countries. By order of the bishop  
and the Holy Catholic Church, it is  
the duty of every citizen to report  
any communists.

Soldiers enter homes of possible communists. We see a citizen  
escaping through a window and running for his life. Finally,  
he is shot in the chest and falls dead.

152 - EXT. STREETS OF CENTRAL TARIJA. MOMENTS LATER.

In the darkness of the night, Olga desperately runs through  
the streets of Tarija. She hides in gates, plants, and behind  
parked cars. Suddenly a military truck drives by with  
political prisoners; they scan the streets with lanterns.

For a moment, it seems that they noticed Olga, and they  
return. They light up the place again, and Olga is no longer  
there.

153 - EXT. PARK OF TARIJA. MOMENTS LATER.

Olga, covered in sweat and a bloody face, continues running  
through the streets.

154 - EXT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. HIDEOUT.

Olga finally arrives at her destination. With all her might, she kicks and punches the door.

OLGA  
Open, please. I'm Olga Soruco.  
Please... My God, please.

The door opens for a few seconds, and Olga enters.

155 - INT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. HIDEOUT. MOMENTS LATER.

Olga walks through a colonial patio to enter another deck and another terrace. Nilo, under a fig tree, works with few members of the PCB party. Nilo sees his broken wife and runs to her.

OLGA  
Someone from the party betrayed you  
and told the Military that you were  
not home during the curfew.

Nilo hugs Olga.

NILO  
My daughters? Where are my  
daughters?

OLGA  
Where they've always been: at home.

Nilo collects his belongings.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
No, Nilo. You can't come home  
anymore.

Silence.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
It's too late. If you want the best  
for us, then you have to stay away  
for our safety.

Nilo and Olga look at each other deeply. The moment of separation has arrived. Olga kisses Nilo softly. She caresses his face. Nilo has tears in his eyes.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
We will be fine... look at me. We  
will be fine.  
(MORE)



OLGA (CONT'D)  
 You stay alive for us. If you love  
 us, fight for your life Nilo. I  
 need you.

Olga cries.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
 I love you.

They kiss with passion.

NILO  
 I will. I promise. I am sorry  
 things turned out like this. I am  
 sorry.

Olga takes a deep breath and leaves. Nilo can't move.

Slowly all the brothers of the party disappear. Nilo is  
 alone. Feeling dizzy, Nilo walks through the colonial  
 courtyard. He sits under the fig tree and rests his head on  
 the trunk.

156 - INT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. HIDEOUT. DAYS LATER.

Nilo approaches a mirror, and we see in his eyes the  
 realization that the fight it's over. He needs to abort his  
 mission.

Instrumental music. Nilo, in front of the mirror, sees the  
 light of days, afternoons, and nights pass by. His hair and  
 whiskers grow. Nilo becomes the revolutionary image that we  
 know of him today.

157 - INT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. HIDEOUT. PATIO.

Antonio Soruco walks through the patios of the hideout. He  
 finds his brother under the tree. He is lost in his thoughts  
 and pain. He sits next to him and opens a bag full of food,  
 clothing, and family pictures.

NILO  
 This is a prison.

ANTONIO SORUCO  
 You are safe, brother.

They embrace.

ANTONIO SORUCO (CONT'D)  
 Soon brother... be strong. Be  
 patient.

Silence. They look into each other's eyes for the first time. Antonio brings bad news and can not hide it.

NILO  
My family...

ANTONIO SORUCO  
The girls and Olga are fine. They sent me here...

NILO  
Our sister?

ANTONIO SORUCO  
Clotilde always asks for you in her letters. She is in Argentina. She got married.

NILO  
Married...  
(Nilo Smiles)  
Firmo?

ANTONIO SORUCO  
Firmo... Firmo is sick Nilo. He was smoking too much.

Antonio gives Nilo some bread (Bollos).

NILO  
And José?

ANTONIO SORUCO  
They intended to put him as a bait so that you'd fall. José was imprisoned for a month, maybe two, and eventually released.

Nilo grabs his head.

NILO  
Mom and dad?

Silence.

ANTONIO SORUCO  
They are resting now. They died months ago.

Silence.

ANTONIO SORUCO (CONT'D)  
We did not know where you were to tell you.

Nilo cries from his soul. His cry is silent.

ANTONIO SORUCO (CONT'D)  
They were proud of our fight,  
brother.

Both brothers embrace.

NILO  
Antonio, I only ask you one thing.  
Please take care of my daughters  
and my wife. It's the only thing I  
ask.

158 - EXT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. HIDEOUT.

Antonio exits the house covering his head with a shawl.  
Adrian and three members await outside.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
Is he Okay? Did you talk to him?

Antonio nods. They all leave in a jeep.

159 - EXT. PCB PARTY MEMBER HOUSE. PATIO.

Coronel Zelaya, with his soldiers, enter Nilo's hideout.  
Adrian Moreno leads the way. The soldiers search the patio  
and the rooms. Nilo is not there anymore; he managed to  
escape.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
You said this was his hiding place.

Adrian Moreno picks up a communist book, and we see regret in  
his eyes. He tosses it to a corner.

ADRIAN MORENO  
Can't you see that it's full of  
communist crap?

160 - INT. CORRIDORS UNDER A BUILDING. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo, with 12 comrades of the PCB party, escape through  
catacombs below the city. Finally, they come out to a law  
firm as a hide out.

161 - INT. LAW FIRM - LA PAZ

Nilo finds his brother José covered in bruises, wounds, with a broken arm and leg. José was tortured.

NILO

Jose! What did they do to you?

They embrace.

JOSÉ

Nilo, we have to immigrate to Venezuela. They are one of the few countries that are giving asylum to the brothers of the communist party.

Nilo doesn't respond.

JOSÉ (CONT'D)

Venezuela is abundant, full of opportunities and freedom.

Suddenly the Military busts the windows and kick the doors. The glass darts all over the place.

JOSÉ (CONT'D)

The Military is here! Run!

It is impossible to escape; everyone has a gun pointing to their head. They hit Nilo on the head. Everything goes silent; he falls unconscious.

CUT TO:

Newspaper - "Nilo Soruco falls prisoner."

**News:** Nilo Soruco, the voice of freedom, has been arrested.

162 - EXT. LA PAZ BOLIVIA. PLAZA MURILLO.

Hundreds of people have gathered to demand the government to set Nilo free. Some carry his photo; others wave white flags. Some signs say, "You can't lock his voice". A group of musicians play his music. Among them, we see some party members in incognito and his daughters leading the protest with Olga.

163 - INT. JAIL. NIGHT.

The police split men from women. They are entirely undressed and humiliated with freezing water.

This scene resembles a scene from the Holocaust. All the naked bodies form a pile; it's freezing.

164 - EXT. - LA PAZ

Citizens eagerly buy newspapers.

NEWSPAPER BOY

Names of political prisoners and  
the ones that have been released!  
Names of political prisoners and  
the ones that have been released!

Olga and her daughters search in the liberated section for the name of their father.

OLGA

Do you see his name?

VIOLETA

No...

ZEMLYA

Keep looking.

A man watches as each one reviews different newspapers.

MAN

They are never released, they  
always announce amnesty for  
Christmas, but it is a lie. My son  
is already ten months inside.

The girls look devastated.

ZEMLYA

That's not true. There will be  
amnesty; there will be amnesty!

OLGA

They can't touch NILO; he is a  
musician.

165 - EXT. LEGISLATIVE PALACE OF LA PAZ. AYACUCHO-COMERCIO STREET.

Nilo's face is covered with rag bags, along with dozens of political prisoners.

MONTAGE OF IMAGES:

The prisoners enter the palace  
through the back door.

They descend underground to jails and torture rooms.

Tittle - PDO. Department of Political Order.

166 - INT. SAN PEDRO JAIL. DAY.

Nilo curls trembling in the corner of his cell. He is in pain and almost lost his hearing thanks to the hit on the head. He can hardly recognize the sound of military boots walking to his cell. The cell opens up, and the light blinds him.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
Nilo Soruco...

Nilo looks in the Coronel's eyes.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
Is this the great leader Nilo? The voice of the underdog. It can't be him... This guy looks weak, scared, hungry, and cold. Is that you, Nilo Soruco? The voice of the communist party?

Nilo doesn't respond.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
Do you still have a voice?

Some men laugh in the background.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
Perhaps you never had it on your own, and they just gave it to you.

Coronel Zelaya opens an envelope and reads a sentence.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
"Nilo Soruco Arancibia. You are charged guilty with sedition, terrorism, obstructing the city, and disorderly conduct. "

He stops reading.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
You should be charged for all the deads you caused with the atrocities you wrote to celebrate communist ideals. Words that ignited treason to your nation.  
(Reading)

The Coronel folds the paper and spits on his face.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
The genocide of Cuba. Seven  
thousand innocent people dead. And  
you wanted to do the same in your  
own country.

You will not come out alive from here. They beat him up.

167 - EXT. SAN PEDRO JAIL.

Zemlya and Sonia wait in line to visit the prisoners.

Olga and Violeta still lead the peaceful protest to free Nilo and the prisoners. They scream, "Amnesty."

168 - INT. SAN PEDRO JAIL.

The police check Zemlya and Sonia for guns or any weapon. They do it in an abusive and sexual form.

169 - INT. SAN PEDRO JAIL. NILO'S CELL.

Sonia and Zemlya find her father asleep on the floor. Nilo opens his eyes and looks at his daughters, crying. Sonia hands him pencil and paper.

SONIA  
I thought the first thing you would  
want to do is write.

Nilo can't hear very well, he kisses her hand. They hug.

NILO  
My loves. Thank God. My loves.  
Where is your mother?

Zemlya is dry and angry.

ZEMLYA  
Those demons only allowed us.

SONIA  
If they think that they will stop  
your music by doing this, they are  
wrong.

ZEMLYA  
Your songs are everywhere.

Nilo sees the pain in the eyes of his daughter.

NILO  
Your eyes look swollen, my love. I  
don't want you to cry anymore.

ZEMLYA  
Every night I pray God kills them.  
I hate the government. I hate the  
law. I hate this country.

Zemlya cries. Nilo hugs his daughter.

NILO  
Hate is the anger of the weak, and  
it's contagious.

Nilo sings acapella almost composing at the moment, "Life is Beautiful",

Note the acapella version of the song becomes an orchestra (Los Cantores del Valle). The melody accompanies the following scenes.

MUSIC - "LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL"

170 - EXT. LEGISLATIVE PALACE OF LA PAZ. AYACUCHO-COMERCIO STREET.

Zemlya and Sonia come out and join the protest that screams, "Amnesty."

171 - INT. SAN PEDRO JAIL. NILO'S CELL.

They drag Nilo out of his jail.

NOTE - "Life is beautiful" continues in the background throughout the torture scene.

172 - INT. SAN PEDRO JAIL. TORTURE ROOM.

Nilo is beaten up. They break two of his fingers, kick him in the head and the ribs.

CUT TO:

The citizens of Bolivia dance the song at parties, parks and protests. Ironically the song is cheerful and an ode to life.

CUT TO:



In a tub filled with water and ice, they try to drown Nilo.

CUT TO:

Different gatherings show that "Life is beautiful" is a musical success throughout Bolivia.

CUT TO:

They lift a naked Nilo with ropes and chains; they stretch his arms and legs. The image is almost messianic.

CUT TO:

In an anchored chair, Nilo receives a blow to the ear.

The song stops abruptly. Nilo loses his ability to hear.

173 - EXT. MILITARY OFFICE. MOMENTS LATER.

Olga and her daughters stand outside with dozens of desperate family members. Police and military guard the entrance. Finally, the call for a number and Olga raises her hand.

174 - INT. MILITARY OFFICE. CORRIDOR.

Olga and her daughters walk through the corridors. Many people hold photographs of missing relatives; some cry.

175 - INT. MILITARY OFFICE. HOURS LATER.

Amidst the chaos Sonia prays, Violeta walks from one side to another and Zemlya holds her head. Olga helplessly analyzes her daughters. Suddenly, a secretary comes out.

SECRETARY

Olga Soruco.

Olga and her daughters approach the woman.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Only you.

The girls stay behind.

176 - INT. MILITARY OFFICE. OFFICE OF CORONEL ZELAYA.

The office is large and luxurious. The secretary leads Olga through an anteroom full of gifts and baskets for the Colonel.

Finally, we see CORONEL ZELAYA, in the sovereignty of his office. Behind him hangs the Bolivian flag with portraits of Simón Bolívar and Sucre. He is having "tea time".

CORONEL ZELAYA

Mrs. Soruco, please have a seat.  
Join me. It's tea time. Would you  
like a cup of tea? Or coffee?

OLGA

No... No thank you.

The secretary is about to leave.

CORONEL ZELAYA

A coffee for Mrs. Soruco.

(To Olga)

You'll need it. We will be here for  
a long time.

The secretary leaves.

OLGA

Please, set Nilo Soruco free. He's  
a teacher and an artist.

CORONEL ZELAYA

(He pours sugar)

I just hope that they didn't take  
him to Viacha or Chonchocoro.  
Because then it would be too late.

OLGA

Please, Colonel, you have  
authority... please.

CORONEL ZELAYA

I can't do much for a communist.  
The most I could do is to keep him  
alive in prison until he dies of  
natural causes.

Olga covers her face and cries.

OLGA

Please we have three daughters.

Coronel Zelaya stirs the sugar of his coffee,

CORONEL ZELAYA

A communist is a terrorist.

The secretary enters with a tray with coffee and cake.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
Are your daughters here?

Olga hesitates to answer for a moment but finally nods "yes".

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
(To the secretary)  
Make sure they get their tea  
served.

The secretary serves her coffee.

SECRETARY  
Sugar?

Olga nods her head. The secretary puts the sugar in it. Her stirring makes a sound. The general stares at Olga.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
That's enough. You can leave us  
now.

Olga shaking, drinks her coffee.

177 - EXT. MILITARY OFFICE. MOMENTS LATER.

They drag Nilo's daughters to the street while they scream for their mother.

178 - INT. MILITARY OFFICE. HOURS LATER.

Several hours went by. Olga sits on the floor, with her bleeding nose. Colonel Zelaya takes off his jacket and opens a few buttons on his shirt. He's smoking and reading from a list.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
Once again? Martha Cerpa, Tito  
Maceda, Mira Castrillo, Gilberto  
Medinaceli, Luis Aldana, Hugo  
Monzón, Norma Gálvez

OLGA  
I don't know where they are!

Colonel grabs Olga's face.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
Don't fucking lie to me.

OLGA

I know that my husband is not a terrorist.

He slaps her. Olga bites her lips.

CORONEL ZELAYA

Of all the plagues that have devastated humanity, from the black plague to cancer, one of the deadliest has been communism. Thousands of deaths. Hitler attacks Jews. Communists attack religion and entire classes of society. All under the name of freedom.

The colonel takes a gun out of his drawer.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)

Would you like us to rape your daughters? share them among my soldiers? Everything belongs to everyone, right? Isn't that your ideology?

He pulls her hair.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)

What if I tell you that they are already dead.

The colonel breaks the tea cups and glasses. He aims a gun directly at Olga's mouth.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)

Where are those communists?!

Olga is breathless.

OLGA

On the life of my daughters, I do not know.

CORONEL ZELAYA

Do you know why communists deny the existence of the soul? Because they don't have one.

Olga cries like a newborn. Years of pain and suffering come out in her tears. The Colonel moves the gun to her head. She prays.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
Are you praying? I thought  
communists didn't believe in God.

OLGA  
Even if I didn't, he is always  
watching.

This somehow bothers the Coronel. He stops the torture and  
returns to his desk.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
As we speak, Nilo is being taken to  
the airport. We will drop him in  
the middle of the ocean to make  
sure he never returns.  
You stupid little bitch. Run. Run  
to the church and beg for  
forgiveness.

Olga nearly falling runs for her life.

179 - INT. JAIL CELL. LA PAZ.

The Military pulls Nilo and other prisoners out of the cells.

180 - EXT. AIRPORT. NIGHT.

Nilo and some political prisoners are locked in a dark barn.

181 - INT. BARN. MOMENTS LATER.

In the darkness, some civilians exchange their names.

182 - INT. BARN. MOMENTS LATER.

The door opens and a beam of light blinds the prisoners.

POLICE OFFICER  
Nilo Soruco.

Nilo almost out of breath responds. Adrian Moreno walks in  
and kicks Nilo. He lifts him up and whispers in his ear.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
(Whispering))  
I am here to save you. I will not  
do anything to you. But you have to  
pretend that I am hurting you.  
(Pretending a fake punch)  
(MORE)

ADRIÁN MORENO (CONT'D)  
 Fucking traitor, Now you will see  
 what is justice.

183 - EXT. BARN. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo is lead to an airplane that is about to depart. The wind blows strongly with the sounds of planes and helicopters and shouts from armed forces. Nilo takes off his blindfold.

NILO  
 (In Shock)  
 Adrian...

ADRIAN  
 Get in that plane and never come  
 back.

NILO  
 (Realizing)  
 You betray us...

ADRIAN  
 I had to save my family...

NILO  
 You betray us...

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 I told you from the beginning to  
 take the power by force not singing  
 pathetic lullabies.

NILO  
 Where you on their side the whole  
 time?

ADRIAN MORENO  
 Nilo, men go from one ambition to  
 another: first, they seek to secure  
 against the attack, and then, they  
 attack.

Helicopter lights blind them. Nilo looks down.

ADRIÁN MORENO  
 We are just trying to survive.

NILO  
 I thought we were friends.

Adrian has tears.

ADRIAN MORENO

We can not change anything Nilo.  
Nothing. We are garbage... a loss  
of existence.  
No one will remember our fight. We  
will die in oblivion. And history  
will repeat itself.

Two pilots drag Nilo to a plane.

NILO

(Screaming)

No! No! No!

The plane takes off and a bullet bursts wide open Adrian's head.

MONTAGE

184 - OSCAR ALFARO TIRED AND LOOKING OLD SPEAKS TO THE BOLIVIAN PRESS.

OSCAR ALFARO

Nilo Soruco is safe in Venezuela  
after having been liberated by the  
Banzer dictatorship and put on a  
plane to Caracas.  
We demand freedom for all political  
prisoners.

185 - IMAGES OF NURSES AND DOCTORS HELPING NILO AND THE REST OF THE PRISONERS IN VENEZUELA.

186 - OLGA AND HER DAUGHTERS ARRIVE HOME.

187 - OLGA'S HOME IN DIFFERENT SEASONS AS TIME GOES BY.

188 - NILO IS RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL WITH A PLASTIC BAG, HIS BODY ACHING AND WITHOUT A COIN IN HIS POCKET.

189 - EXT. VENEZUELA. BUS STATION.

It's the Christmas season. Venezuelan families get ready to celebrate the holiday. Nilo looks for food in the trash. It begins to rain. Finally, Nilo lets out a silent but deep cry. Slowly the words come out of what will be La Caraqueña.

190 - EXT - CARNIVAL.

All Tarija dances the Caraqueña. We see handkerchiefs and parties. It's a musical success throughout Bolivia. Olga, alone, sees her daughters dancing with other young men.

191 - EXT. CHURCH OF SAN ROQUE. DAY.

Nilo's family accompanies Violeta in her first communion. Their faces are full of nostalgia. Olga's hair is turning white.

192 - INT. VENEZUELAN SCHOOL. DAY

Nilo delivers his curriculum as a teacher. They ask for his passport. They reject him.

193 - EXT. BUS STATION. AFTERNOON.

Nilo sings in a corner and collects coins. Nilo hungry tries to buy food but he doesn't have enough money.

194 - EXT. SAN LUIS COLLEGE. DAY.

Sonia Soruco graduates from school. Olga has aged and looks empty. She is surrounded by Nilo's brothers.

195 - INT. VENEZUELAN CAFE. NIGHT.

Nilo finishes singing a song and counts his coins.

196 - INT. HOSTAL. DAY

Nilo shares a room with 6 people.

197 - INT. CHURCH OF SAN ROQUE. AFTERNOON

Zemlya is about to get married. Olga's hair is completely white. She hands her daughter her wedding ring.

198 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Olga prays for Nilo to return. She has no tears left.



199 - INT. EXILE HOUSE. VENEZUELA. NIGHT.

Nilo in a humble house sings "La Caraqueña" for all the exiles. The Chileans, the Uruguayans, the Paraguayans applaud and sing.

NILO

(Voice Over)

My song became an anthem for all the exiles. The Chileans, the Uruguayans, the Paraguayans, all of them... And they made me sing over and over. They name it "La Caraqueña" because it was born in Caracas, Venezuela. The land of freedom and abundance.

200 - INT. HOSTAL. DAY

Nilo sits on the floor looking at the empty wall when an exile approaches him with some news.

EXILE MAN

Nilo, we found your brother.

201 - INT. EXILE HOUSE. VENEZUELA. NIGHT.

Nilo walks through a colonial house full of exiles. Finally, he sees his brother José with his wife and his four children. They give each other a long hug.

202 - INT. EXILE HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

José serves bread and tea to Nilo.

JOSÉ SORUCO

I went into exile three months before you.

NILO

I hate this place. They will not give work to exiles.

JOSÉ SORUCO

Venezuela is the only Latin American country that is allowing the exiles.

NILO

They let us come and then starve.

Silence.

JOSÉ SORUCO  
Brother, your new song is becoming  
popular. I've heard in an exiles  
party. That's how I've found you.

The brothers smile.

203 - EXT. PLAZA CARACAS. DAY.

Nilo anxious walks in circles.

204 - EXT. PHONE BOOTH. MOMENT LATER.

Nilo on the phone waits for an operator.

OPERATOR  
You have two minutes and ten  
seconds.

The sound beeps.

OLGA  
Hello?

NILO  
(Whispering)  
My love...

OLGA  
Hello? Who's this?

Silence. Nilo has tears on his face.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
Nilo...

NILO  
Are we safe to talk?

Olga loses her breath.

OLGA  
It's good to hear from you.

NILO  
I know... it's good to hear your  
voice.

Silence.

OLGA  
You waited years to call home.

NILO  
I was afraid they would hurt you. I  
was ashamed. I was angry.

Silence.

OLGA  
We are okay.  
Violeta had her first communion.  
Sonia graduated from school.  
Zemlya is married. I gave your  
daughter our wedding ring.

Nilo tries to hide his crying.

NILO  
Who danced with them the Walts?

OLGA  
Your brother...

Silence.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
How are you?

The sound beeps. Silence.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
You're good?

NILO  
Yes, I'm fine.

OLGA  
I'm trying to find a way to visit  
you. It's so expensive... humanly  
impossible...

NILO  
No. Stay there. As soon as this  
murderous government is out I'm  
coming back, I'm not going to leave  
my homeland nor my fight.

OLGA  
Nilo... Oscar Alfaro is no longer  
with us.

NILO  
Where did they send him in exile?

OLGA  
No Nilo, Oscar is dead.

Silence.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
Nilo?

NILO  
How?

OLGA  
His heart stopped.

NILO  
They broke his heart...

The phone call cuts out.

NILO (CONT'D)  
I am coming home. I am not giving  
up.

204 - INT. BOHEMIAN BAR. NIGHT.

Milo, heart broken, drinks with other bohemians.

205 - INT. BOHEMIAN BAR. MOMENTS LATER.

On stage, Nilo speaks with two musicians who will accompany him in his songs. He is so drunk that can't even enunciate or stand still.

NILO  
I go first and you come in with the  
guitar.

Nilo speaks into the microphone. A stunning woman called the URUGUAYA watches him from a distance.

NILO (CONT'D)  
This song is called "They turned  
off the songs" ... in this  
clandestine life, I feel that they  
have strangled our voice.

HE SINGS IN THE DIM LIGHT AND CIGARETTE SMOKE. IN THE  
DARKNESS WE SEE LUSTY COUPLES KISSING AND DRINKING.

MUSIC - "THEY TURNED OFF THE SONGS". The "Uruguaya" is moved  
by his performance.

206 - INT. BOHEMIAN BAR. DAWN.

Nilo drinks alone in a corner of the bar.

URUGUAYA

Bravo.

Nilo ignores her.

URUGUAYA (CONT'D)

Your voice is passionate.

The woman sits.

NILO

My voice is angry.

URUGUAYA

They call me the Uruguaya.

Nilo looks into her eyes. She is full of life and passion.

URUGUAYA (CONT'D)

You have so many scars.

NILO

You don't want to be next to a wounded dog.

URUGUAYA

I carry my own scars.

Nilo looks at her lips and breasts.

NILO

I don't see any scars...

URUGUAYA

Maybe I am wounded inside.

Nilo finishes his drink.

207 - EXT. VENEZUELAN BAR. MOMENT LATER.

The Uruguayan kisses Nilo. The animal instinct of Nilo comes out almost releasing his anger.

208 - INT. NILO'S ROOM. VENEZUELA. NIGHT.

Nilo and the Uruguaya are having sex, he is lost in his thoughts.

209 - INT. NILO'S ROOM. VENEZUELA. DAY.

Nilo wakes up next to the Uruguaya. He feels guilt.

210 - INT. NILO'S ROOM. VENEZUELA. COMMUNITY BATHROOM.

Nilo in the shower rubs his body with disgust.

211 - INT. NILO'S ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo wakes up the Uruguaya.

NILO  
You have to leave...

He opens the curtains and window. She opens her eyes.

NILO (CONT'D)  
You have to leave...

URUGUAYA  
Okay... but I need my clothes.

Nilo collects her clothes.

NILO  
Here... dress up and leave. Please.

She starts dressing up.

URUGUAYA  
Is this how you treat women?

NILO  
I have to work...

URUGUAYA  
Hopefully, no one treats your  
daughters the way you are treating  
me...

NILO  
I ...

URUGUAYA  
At least you could offer me a  
coffee after last night. I am not a  
prostitute.

Nilo pauses. He holds his head.

NILO  
You are right. This is not your  
fault...

She continues dressing. Nilo sees her for the first time.

URUGUAYA  
Turn around. Don't look.

212 - INT. VENEZUELAN CAFE. MORNING.

Nilo and the Uruguaya eat breakfast.

NILO  
I am going back soon...

URUGUAYA  
You have to be realistic. You might  
never go back to your country. You  
need to continue with your life...  
You are in exile.

NILO  
I am realistic. I am saving money  
with my singing. I am going back or  
I am bringing them here.

URUGUAYA  
Well, then stop drinking. Last  
night you sounded like a weeping  
dog.

Nilo is shocked at her honesty. He smiles.

URUGUAYA (CONT'D)  
Thanks for breakfast Nilo Soruco.

NILO  
Wait. I am not paying for all this  
on my own. I don't have that much  
money.

URUGUAYA  
Figure it out, Romeo. Next time  
don't take a lady home if you can't  
buy her a coffee.

She walks away. Nilo is amused. Nilo makes sure nobody sees  
him and he storms out of the cafe.

213 - INT. NILO'S ROOM. VENEZUELA. DAY.

Nilo picks up his guitar and touches it with a smile. He fixes his hair and starts shaving.

214 - INT. VENEZUELAN BAR. NIGHT.

Nilo sits on the same corner holding a drink. Suddenly the Uruguaya appears from behind.

URUGUAYA  
Howling again tonight, drunk Nilo?

NILO  
I am drinking water.

URUGUAYA  
Impressive...

Nilo smiles.

URUGUAYA (CONT'D)  
And smiling. Double impressive.

Nilo steps on a small stage with almost no audience.

MUSIC - "LOVE PAIN"

215 - EXT. VENEZUELAN BAR. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo comes out hugging the Uruguaya. They are drunk, there's some lipstick on his shirt. Two young men come out of the darkness: JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO and JERZON JUSTINIANO.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO  
Mr. Soruco...

NILO  
What the fuck do you want?

JERZON JUSTINIANO  
We are Bolivians.

NILO  
I don't want to think about Bolivia right now...

JERZON JUSTINIANO  
We want to help you.



JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO  
 You are not alone. There is a  
 community of Bolivians... we admire  
 you...

NILO  
 There's nothing to admire. Good  
 night.

Nilo continues walking.

JERZON JUSTINIANO  
 I work for the cultural center of  
 the Central University of  
 Venezuela.

Nilo stops.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO  
 We want to organize a "social  
 justice" recital.

NILO  
 Why me?

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO  
 Because you are the voice of the  
 oppressed.

216 - EXT. VENEZUELAN POST OFFICE. DAY.

Nilo along with hundreds of people await letters from their  
 relatives. Finally, he arrives at the postman and Nilo  
 delivers an envelope with money for his daughters, he also  
 receives a family letter.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

OLGA VERDÚN  
 (Voice Over)  
 Nilo, I was told by several people  
 that you have a new woman. It makes  
 sense, after all these years... I  
 forgive you.  
 It's finally time for me to think  
 about myself and start a new life.  
 I thank you for the pain, it has  
 made me a strong woman. Do not call  
 me. Do not write to me. Forget that  
 I exist. Olga.

217 - EXT. PHONE BOOTH. MOMENT LATER.

Drunk Nilo on the phone waits for an operator.

OPERATOR

Sir, your phone call was rejected  
by the receiver. Thank you.

NILO

Please I need to speak with my  
wife...

OPERATOR

The call has been rejected seven  
times already sir...

218 - INT. NILO'S ROOM. VENEZUELA. DAY

Nilo still drunk sleeps on the floor surrounded by bottles  
and ashtrays. The Uruguaya, Juan Carlos Lazcano and Jerzon  
Justiniano splash cold water on his face. Nilo wakes up.

JERZON JUSTINIANO

Tonight you have your first  
recital.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Here is some money in advance to  
buy you some decent clothes and cut  
your hair.

Nilo still drunk gets up and falls again.

219 - INT. VENEZUELAN HAIR SALON. MOMENTS LATER.

A hairdressing salon of the rich Venezuelan society. Very  
nice women comb Nilo's hair and do his nails.

NILO

My God! I feel like a woman...  
"From the other team".

URUGUAYA

In Caracas, elegance is an  
essential item.

Juan Carlos and Jerzon smile. They are a couple.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

There are also good people like us  
in "that other team."

Nilo smiles and is deeply grateful. His eyes fill with tears.

220 - INT. UNIVERSITY CENTRAL OF VENEZUELA. CULTURAL CENTER.

The performance is about to begin, the musicians tune their instruments. Nilo sits by the wings of the stage, he prays and trembles. Juan Carlos and Jerzon walk in wearing elegant suits.

JUAN CARLOS

You are up after this song.

Silence. Nilo listens to the crowd behind the curtain and decides to peak. He comes back and drinks a glass of wine.

NILO

I hope the audience doesn't feel my anger.

JUAN CARLOS

The audience already feels the anger, they are coming to forget.

PRESENTADOR

Ladies and gentlemen. It's my honor to present the voice of the revolution. He started singing on the streets, was tortured by the military, and today he is a refugee and he is here to honor the refugees of every nation. His songs have become forbidden anthems of freedom.

Applause. Nilo comes out and the small auditorium is half full. For a moment Nilo can not even speak, he feels vulnerable.

MUSIC- "PAPERS, PAPERS"

221 - INT. INSTITUTE OF INVESTIGATIONS. NIGHT.

Hanging tittle "The recital: Institute of investigations"

NILO continues singing "Papers Papers".

Juan Carlos and Jerzon from behind the curtain count some bills and sold tickets.

MONTAGE OF IMAGES: Nilo sings on different stages and theaters. Every performance has a bigger venue.

222 - THE FEDERATION OF TEACHERS UNION.

223 - CULTURAL CENTER OF PABLO NERUDA.

224 - MARACAY. CORO CITY. OUTDOOR THEATER.

Nilo finishes singing "Papers Papers" in front of thousands of people. Applause. The curtain falls, Juan Carlos and Jerzon embrace Nilo

225 - INT. CORO CITY. OUTDOOR THEATER. MOMENTS LATER.

Juan Carlos and Jerzon escort Nilo to his dressing room while members of the press try to get an interview.

226 - INT. ESTUDIO DE GRABACION.

Nilo is sad, lost in his thoughts. Jerzon and Juan Carlos talk to the music producers. The Uruguaya feels Nilos' pain.

URUGUAYA

You miss them.

NILO

I wonder if they would be proud...

Silence.

URUGUAYA

Life takes un expected turns. We can only go and trust...

Nilo holds her hand.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Nilo, they are ready.

Nilo steps into the studio and is surrounded by professional musicians. The instrumental band of "Life is beautiful".

NOTE - ALL THE SONGS THROUGHOUT THE MOVIE are parts of these recording.

227 - INT. CORO CITY. BACKSTAGE. MOMENTS LATER.

Juan Carlos hands a newspaper to NILO with him at the cover. It reads " The voice of the nations"

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Your work is very popular among the exiles of the revolution.

JERZON  
We have another schedule of  
performances.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO  
Nilo the press wants to officially  
meet this poet revolutionary.

228 - INT. CORO CITY. OUTDOOR THEATER. WALKING.

Nilo gives a press conference. Cameras and flashes form a  
wall of luminous eyes.

JOURNALIST 1  
Nilo ... what does your name mean?

NILO  
It's a reference to the Nile river.

A camera flashes.

CUT TO:

229 - EXT. WATERFALL OF SALTO ANGEL. VENEZUELA.

Nilo observes the waterfalls exploding against the rocks.

JOURNALIST 2  
(Voice Over)  
In a few words, How would you  
describe Nilo?

NILO  
(Voice Over)  
Nilo... hopeful, adventurous, and  
passionate...

JOURNALIST 2  
Love?

NILO  
There is only one kind.  
Unconditional.

JOURNALIST 2  
Do you forgive the men who tortured  
you?

NILO  
Only during my prayers.

JOURNALIST 2

Dreams?

NILO

End world's hunger.

CUT TO:

Flash of camera.

230 - INT. CORO CITY. OUTDOOR THEATER. MOMENTS LATER.

The press follows Nilo. Photo Flashes.

JOURNALIST 3

What message would you give to the Venezuelan people?

NILO

Protect your votes, choose your leaders wisely... because in the blink of an eye freedom can be easily snatched.

231 - INT. HOTEL VENEZUELA. AFTERNOON.

An argument behind one of the salons of a Hotel Suite.  
Finally, Nilo walks out and Juan Carlos Lazcano follows him.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Nilo, it's Celia Cruz!

NILO

Who the fuck is Celia Cruz?

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Cuban singer, one of the greatest interpreters of Latin music of the century.

NILO

Exactly! Cuban and against the communist regime...

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

It's one night! She wants to sing with you. It could be an international launch for your career!

NILO

No! Celia speaks ill of the Cuban regime.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Celia is a great artist!

NILO

She is a Traitor.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

What if you're wrong about the Cuban regime?  
What if they are the enemy. What if you are supporting the enemy?

Nilo pushes Juan Carlos against the wall.

NILO

I sacrificed all my life for the Communist Party! Why would I support the enemy?

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

Hundreds of victims in the name of revolution. All in the name of communism. To me, it's starting to sound a lot more like a civil war lead by mercenaries.

Nilo backs off and releases Juan Carlos.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO (CONT'D)

Fidel Castro carried out the deaths, political arrests, and disappearances of hundreds of thousands of people...

Nilo is silent.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO (CONT'D)

Here you have the contract to sing with Celia Cruz.

NILO

I'm not going to sing with these people!

Nilo tears up the contract. Suddenly Jerzon enters running.

JERZON JUSTINIANO

Nilo. News about Bolivia and the president.

Nilo walks to the TV room. Everyone watches the news "The Banzer government fell"

STOCK IMAGES:

NEWS

Today, July 21, 1978, Bolivian military president Hugo Banzer Suarez was overthrown.

Nilo falls on his knees and thanks God. Everyone celebrates.

STOCK IMAGES: Bolivian citizens celebrate on the streets.

NEWS (CONT'D)

The National Congress of Bolivia will prosecute Banzer for crimes against humanity, during his dictatorship.

232 - EXT. HOTEL VENEZUELA. OCEAN BAR. NIGHT.

Nilo smokes a cigarette and drinks a whiskey while watching the waves of the sea.

URUGUAYA

I am happy for you...

NILO

I'm afraid to go back, I do not know who I am anymore.

URUGUAYA

You are the great and famous Nilo.

NILO

The NILO that sings about human injustices but stays in the most expensive hotels...

The Uruguaya hugs him.

URUGUAYA

Nilo abundance and prosperity is a right for all. You were born with a talent and you deserve to live well.

Silence.

NILO

What if I'm wrong and communism is not what I thought?

(MORE)



NILO (CONT'D)

I do not want to believe that thousands of people have died for nothing. I swear to you that the only reason I enlisted was for the fight of freedom and equality for all.

URUGUAYA

I will miss you.

Nilo gives her a last gentle kiss on her forehead. Tears roll down her cheek.

NILO

Thank you... Thank you...

Instrumental music.

233 - EXT. AIRPORT (RETURNING TO BOLIVIA).

Juan Carlos, Jerzón and José Soruco say goodbye to Nilo.

NILO

Brother, Are you sure you won't come home?

JOSE

I can't forgive what that country did to me. I will stay and live in Venezuela with my family. You can always come visit.

José and Nilo hug each other.

NILO

Where is the Uruguay.

JOSE

She didn't come...

Silence. Juan Carlos and Jerzon hand him a record of his.

JUAN CARLOS LAZCANO

It's been an honor Nilo Soruco.

They all hug.

NILO

Sometimes angels manifest in the most unexpected way. I will be for ever grateful.

MUSIC- "RETURN"

234 - INT. AIRPLANE. ANDES MOUNTAINS. DAY.

Nilo composes the song "Return" on a paper napkin.

235 - EXT. EL ALTO AIRPORT. NIGHT.

Nilo touches the ground and falls on his knees. He kisses the soil. Hundreds of people await, press and fans. He sees his daughters. They embrace.

NILO

Where is your mother?

They don't know how to respond.

236 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nilo with flowers in his hand hesitates to ring the bell. Finally, he does. Olga comes out and looks at Nilo with a cold, dead expression. She goes back to the kitchen and closes the door. Nilo enters the kitchen and tries to embrace Olga. She releases her anger punching his chest.

237 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo and Olga sit at the table. They don't know what to say. Olga smokes and Nilo drinks a coffee. Their eyes are red and swollen from crying so much.

OLGA VERDÚN

I can proudly say that I am still loyal in this marriage. But I don't see you as my partner. I tried to find forgiveness in my heart but couldn't find it. I don't love you anymore. I want my freedom back.

Silence. She hands him a letter.

OLGA

It's a divorce letter. The judge put all the points. Custody and visitation, maintenance, division of goods, and who will be responsible for paying the debts.

Nilo takes the letter. Olga goes to her room and tries to close the door, and Nilo blocks it with his foot.

NILO  
Let me come in. Please...

OLGA  
No Nilo. Many men have already  
kicked and pushed at this door. I  
don't want anyone to come in.  
Please understand.

Olga closes the door.

238 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nilo with his daughters, unbury books, cassettes, and manuscripts.

239 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. DAY.

Nilo leaves his home with some belongings. The daughters cry by the door. Olga is not there.

240 - INT. INN. TARIJA. NIGHT.

Nilo enters an inn with his suitcase. Nilo is alone.

241 - EXT. MAIN PLAZA. DAY.

Nilo sits by the same place where he used to sell newspapers. Almost like deja vu, the dogs are still starving and looking for food, shoeshine boys, confectioners, and beggars try to get the daily bread. In contrast to wealthy families who walk through the square.

242 - EXT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB. NIGHT.

Nilo stares at the building.

243 - INT. COMMITTEE CENTRAL OF THE PCB. NIGHT.

Nilo walks into an empty auditorium. Sits and looks at the Bolivian flag hanging from a wall. Coronel Zelaya, dressed as a civilian approaches Nilo. He sits next to him.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
I've heard the great Nilo is home  
and I had to come and greet him.  
Especially when we are both on the  
same political party.

Nilo is in shock.

NILO  
You are a murderer...

CORONEL ZELAYA  
We were forced to fight against  
each other. I was just following  
orders.

NILO  
Who allowed to be here...

CORONEL ZELAYA  
I am the reason General Banzer is  
not our president anymore.

NILO  
You are an insatiable monster that  
betrays and slays like everyone  
here.

Silence.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
I am a victim, just like you.  
Following the orders of the most  
corrupt...

NILO  
You knew exactly what you were  
doing. You have free will.

CORONEL ZELAYA  
Just remember that we are being  
watched.

Nilo is broken and has no words.

CORONEL ZELAYA (CONT'D)  
Welcome home brother Nilo. Come to  
the meetings of the party.  
You will be surprised how many  
friends like me you will find.  
Different heads same players. We  
all have an opportunity to make  
this country great again. Happy you  
are alive. We need you.

244 - INT. HOUSE ON COCHABAMBA STREET. PATIO. NIGHT

Nilo with his brothers Antonio and Firmo, warm up by the fire of a clay oven. They are roasting a pig. They see how the flames of fire consume the skin of the animal.

FIRMO

Disappointments are not meant to destroy you, brother. They are destined to strengthen you.

Silence.

NILO

Our parents are gone, Clotilde in Argentina, José in Venezuela ... My wife does not want to see me ... I didn't see my daughters grow up. And for what? Everything remains the same. I feel that nothing has changed. That my struggle was in vain.

Silence.

FIRMO

At least you are back...

NILO

The same people we fought against are in the government taking advantage of the poor. The so-called communism has been misrepresented in so many ways that I don't recognize it anymore.

245 - INT. HOTEL ROOM. TARIJA. NIGHT.

Nilo sleeps covered in sweat. He is having a nightmare. He is hallucinating. He imagines screams of Hitler mixed with war sounds: Bombs, shots, and peace songs. Words of Fidel. Russian and Chinese Communist speeches. American news. The bells remembering Jews killed in the Second World War.

CORONEL ZELAYA

(Voice Over)

We were forced to fight against you. I was just following orders. I am a victim, just like you my friend. I was just serving the leaders.

Suddenly he suffers a cerebral embolism. His tongue becomes tense, he tries to turn on the light but ends up dropping the night table. His body is completely paralyzed.

MUSIC - "THE WAR ENDS, LONG LIVE PEACE"

246 - INT. HOSPITAL. WEEKS LATER.

Nilo opens his eyes. He is paralyzed in bed. He can not recognize his daughters.

DOCTOR

(V.O.)

Cerebral embolism is a type of cerebral infarction... brain cells are left without oxygen and lose their function...

A tear falls from Nilo's face.

247 - INT. HOSPITAL VENEZUELA. DAYS LATER.

Sonia, Zemlya, and Violeta talk to the doctor.

DR. PRINCE

Your father's health is in serious jeopardy. We urgently put in a pacemaker. He can't be alone.

248 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

They carry Nilo in on a stretcher. Olga accompanies him from afar and directs the nurses to a remote room.

OLGA

Not in the main bedroom. Take him to the one on the other side of the house.

249 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo prostrated on a bed looks at the ceiling. The light changes from days and nights. Nilo grows old. On his face, he carries anger, frustration, pain, and little faith. The happy man, dreamer, and fighter for freedom is dead.

250 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. EARLY.

Nilo and Olga live in the same house, but in separate rooms. Everyone is sleeping. Nilo is a 65-year-old man but looks a lot older. Nilo turns up the volume of his radio. Olga wakes up in another room.

OLGA  
(To herself)  
Crazy old fucking man.  
(To Nilo)  
It's six in the morning! I don't  
care about the news right now.  
Nilo turn off that crap off!

Nilo responds from the other room.

NILO  
You have to know what is going on  
with your country!

Nilo barely walks to the kitchen.

NILO (CONT'D)  
(High on meds)  
Fucking communists destroying my  
country. There is no fresh bread in  
this house. God damn it.

251 - EXT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. MID DAY.

Nilo sunbathes in solitude and silence. Suddenly he looks at the clock and yells full of anger.

NILO  
Its already noon! Lunch time!

Olga is cutting vegetables.

OLGA  
One of your daughters is not here  
and we all eat together in this  
house.

NILO  
I'm hungry.

Nilo sits at the table.

NILO (CONT'D)  
Is she already here? It is done?

OLGA  
If you are so hungry, help yourself  
and eat alone.

Olga gives him an empty plate of food. Nilo with much difficulty tries to serve his plate.

252 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. MOMENTS LATER.

Nilo has trouble chewing his food. The daughters have already finished eating.

NILO  
Jesus, you eat like geese!

253 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. DAWN.

Sonia wakes up and listens to Nilo whining in the bathroom.

SONIA  
Dad, what's up? What do you need?

NILO  
(high in meds)  
Maybe if we would have been more  
aggressive things would be  
different!

254 - EXT. HOSPITAL SAN JUAN. AFTERNOON.

Zemlya fills a form for Nilo for a general check.

ZEMLYA  
Daddy, have you changed your  
underpants?

NILO  
For what?

ZEMLYA  
Dad! How could you not change your  
underpants if you're going to see  
the doctor?

NILO  
(Horrified)  
I have not changed!



255 - INT. NILO AND OLGA'S HOUSE. PATIO.

Nilo in his room sees Olga sitting by the fire. Nilo sings acapella "Pobre mi Negra". The melody touches Olga's heart. Somehow Nilo's old broken voice enters her heart, Olga lets tears roll down her face. The daughters accompany an old CLOTILDE, Nilo's sister. Clotilde and Nilo exchange a look and Nilo rests in his sister's arms.

NILO

Sister...

CLOTILDE

I pray for these moments.

The siblings embrace. The daughters give her an envelope.

CLOTILDE (CONT'D)

The girls showed me the Invitation  
for the Honorary ceremony in  
Tarija. Congratulations.

NILO

I am not going.

CLOTILDE

I've traveled days to see my  
brother receive his recognition for  
years of dedication.

NILO

There is nothing to honor. We  
failed.

CLOTILDE

You are coming... I came to drag  
you out there.

Nilo smiles, she is serious.

NILO

You remind me of mom. I miss her...

Clotilde smiles.

CLOTILDE

She is in both of us... Nilo.

Nilo smiles.

NILO

I wish I had been a different  
son...

Silence.

CLOTILDE  
God tests us in unexpected ways...

NILO  
I don't believe in God.

CLOTILDE  
The older you get the more pain and  
anger I see in your eyes. Brother  
learn to forget.

Long Silence. Music.

NILO  
I can't sing anymore.

Nilos starts weeping.

NILO (CONT'D)  
I lost my voice... I can't sing...

The weeping turns into a deep cry.

NILO (CONT'D)  
I have lost my faith in humanity. I  
don't have any hope left in me.

Nilo lowers his head. Olga steps in the room.

OLGA  
I didn't do my hair or dressed up  
for no reason ...

Olga sits next to Nilo. She cleans his tears.

OLGA (CONT'D)  
The Nilo I felt in love always had  
a smile. I do not know how many  
years we have left...

NILO  
Olga, I miss you.

OLGA  
I am sorry for not forgiving us  
faster.

Nilo cries like a child in the arms of his family. In that  
cry, we understand his pain. The daughters pick him up and  
Olga finally hugs him.

NILO  
I have failed you.

OLGA  
Nilo, we are alive. We survived.  
Our family is alive.

MUSIC- "I GO AND COME BACK"

256 - EXT. SUNDAY PEACE COLLEGE. PATIO. NIGHT.

Nilo, holding Olga's arms, and his family enters the school. The daughters carry "Nilo's donation box". His immediate family and friends follow them as well. All the children in the school are holding lit candles. In the center of the patio, the school's choir is about to perform. Light lamps hang from the trees.

NILO  
(to his daughters)  
Put the donation box for those who  
are hungry.

Violeta opens the same box that young Nilo used for his collects. There are some bananas and bread. Some children take the food. Nilo smiles.

STUDENT 1  
Mr Nilo! Hello! My father says you  
are crazy but a hero...

Nilo gives his hand and they come over to kiss him.

NILO  
Hello! No kiss, pieces of shit!

Another student kisses him.

NILO (CONT'D)  
Hello! Don't kiss me.

STUDENT 2  
How is it going?

NILO  
You have to say hello: Good  
evening! "How is it going?" What  
is that?

Everyone applauds Nilo. The children sing "Life is beautiful" for Nilo. Nilo is lost in the faces of the children who turn into faces of the characters that accompanied his journey during the movie, moment by moment.

## NILO (CONT'D)

(Voice Over)

That moment I understood the meaning of life, doing the best you can without expecting anything back. I may not be able to sing my songs but the children and future generations will always sing them for me.

Yes I may not have accomplished what I wanted, but every smile and every happy heart is the biggest gift you can leave behind. Thank you father God. Thank you for the lessons and sufferings, that made me understand the perfection of imperfection of being a human. We are all scared, we are all afraid... we fight, we struggle, we suffer for one simple reason: To feel loved. Because we all want to be loved.

"The best and most precious thing that man has is life. There is only one time and you have to live without being a martyr of pain, that does not burn your shame and that when you die you can say: all my life and all my strength I gave them to the most beautiful thing in the world: To the struggle for the liberation of humanity!" (N.Ostrovski)

Blackout.

## TITLE CARDS:

Nilo continued denouncing injustice until his last days. He dedicated himself to the teaching of music, implemented the history of music, the chair of musical research, cueca and copla.

In 2003, Nilo received the National Culture Award.

The children of the school today sing the "One hundred poems for children" by Oscar Alfaro that Nilo musicalized.

Nilo helped hundreds of people in their small town, becoming a legend and an icon of Tarija.

Today the house of NILO Soruco has become a museum of his work and legacy. An emblem of the endless fight for equality.