Hurricane Nena

original screenplay by

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Developed at Josefina Lopez's HBO Latino Screenwriting Workshop
Recipient of: ABC Entertainment Television Group's New Talent Development
Plaque in "Recognition of Creative Excellence"
Finalist: Cynosure 2005 Screenwriting Competition
Finalist: LIFI/Panamax 2006 Screenwtiting Lab

FADE IN:

SHADES OF BROWN DANCE to CELIA CRUZ power-housing “SABROSO GUAGUANCO”... TITLES BEGIN.

It seems that giant flakes of brown chocolate glide down from the heavens. Are these fried, sweet plantains? Are they dried autumn leaves? These shavings come crashing onto a dark, textured surface.

DISSOLVE TO:

A SEPIA TONE OVER DUSTY, GRAINY FILM.

INT. WEALTHY LIVING ROOM - DAY - CUBA 1959

TITLE: CUBA, 1959

THE SONG ENDS, as a LITTLE GIRL’S HUGE HANDS appear and amass these brown leaves with unusual savvy. A little gold bracelet dangles delicately from her deft right hand.

BIG EBONY eyes look up -- pink barrettes in her shiny black hair. This is NENA when she was 8... IN SPANISH, WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

LITTLE GIRL
Mom doesn’t like it when I do this with you.

Her FATHER, (60’s) a man whose classic looks and tenor could melt the most cold hearted woman, faces her. He wears a white *guayabera*, and brown dress pants:

FATHER
But I do.

LITTLE GIRL
My hands get dirty.

She looks at his shiny black shoes.

FATHER
But I like it when you do it. Go ahead -
- with feeling.

LITTLE GIRL
But, father...

FATHER
Nena, I order you!

(CONTINUED)

Their wealthy living room walls REVERBERATE with his voice. Hunched over a table laden with tobacco leaves, he holds Nena by her arm.

FATHER (cont'd)
When this eternal night falls from our country -- when you're older, Nena. The day Castro dies -- make yourself a cigar, and think of me.

NENA
(giggles)
Yes, Father.

FATHER
If the business falls, the family falls, Nena.

Their young, round-ish black maid, CACHITA, (20's) shakes her head with disapprobation as she irons clothes.

Nena reluctantly rolls the cigar. Her small hands packing, rolling, and closing it with dexterous agility, topped with a generous lick to seal.

FATHER (cont'd)
I don't have male children, and you're the oldest -- so the responsibility is yours.

Finished, Nena crunches the cigar stiff between her teeth, and smiles broadly. With the panache of Fidel Castro himself, she winks. Her father smiles.

The RED BULB OF A MATCH FLICKS AFLAME.

Nena stands in its glow, holding the match and her other arm akimbo. He APPLAUDS, but CACHITA coughs, knocking Nena's father out of his proud daze, and back to his cordial self. He takes the lit cigar from Nena, and holds her close.

FATHER (cont'd)
Nena, help your mother, and your sisters. I'm going to die... I have cancer.

Nena hugs her father.

NENA
No, Papi, no!

He hugs her gingerly. She takes the cigar from him, and runs to another room.

NENA OPENS A LARGE WHITE DOOR - her mother HORTENSE, a grave looking woman (mid 30's) is on her knees, chanting in "tongues", letting a lit candle drip its candle wax into a black cauldron. A rooster is tied by the legs next to her.

HORTENSE
Disgraceful girl!

Hortense picks up a small machete.

INT. VERY SMALL, DARKENED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nena walks in. She WHACKS Nena on the arm.

HORTENSE
Didn't I tell you not to open the door without knocking?

She takes the cigar from Nena's mouth and BURNS her arm with it. Nena SCREAMS! Her father appears at the door.

HORTENSE (cont'd)
Ochun tells me if you don't want the communists to take away the business, there will have to be a sacrifice!

FATHER
I told you I don't believe in those things, witch!

WHACK - a blade decapitates the ROOSTER on a cutting board!

Nena's father looks on in horror as Hortense pours the blood into an iron cauldron. She MUMBLES magic African words and dumps the blood over his head! She shakes a bouquet of white flowers, and enters a trance.

Nena and her father stand there frozen at the sight of this behavior! He suddenly kneels, grabs Nena by the arms and begs her:

FATHER (cont'd)
Promise me that you'll take care of her Nena. If they steal my business -- you take it back! Promise me!

NENA
Yes, Father, I promise!

INT. WEALTHY LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nena runs to the living room, livid, and takes a seat on the couch. The maid, still ironing, wears a sly smile.

CACHITA
What happened to *you*?

NENA
None of your business. Keep on ironing, you stupid maid.

CACHITA
Don't speak like that to Cachita, because I put a hex on you.

NENA
I don't believe in that!

The maid, looks at Nena and shakes her head.

CACHITA
One day, the gods will laugh at you, Nena.

Steam comes off of the hot iron...

DISSOLVE TO:

THE LIVING COLOR OF THE PRESENT:

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ironing... Nena startles herself awake to bitter reality. This is Nena now -- in her late 50's, with an irritating sunburn. Tough as nails, and overly made up to appear as if she mugs mortified tears in a Spanish soap opera, she is a woman of wealthy airs stuck in a poor one's life.

She's in an economical, yet richly kitsch furnished apartment in Hialeah, Florida -- the Cuban ghetto area of Northwest Miami.

She saunters over to an old record player, and turns it on. The NEEDLE falls. SHIRLEY BASSEY and The Propellerheads sing their classic 60's song: "HISTORY REPEATING".

Nena smiles, dancing spasmodically to the beat. She stops momentarily, scratching the scar left by the cigar her mother used to burn her. It's peeling.

NENA
I'm so sick of this shit.

NENA'S FINGER peels a long flake of sunburnt skin. It looks like it might break off, but it hangs in there -- finally, it tapers off at the end -- her finger holding it up. It waves gently in the air...

Nena pauses in front of her old family pictures on the wall and surveys them:

AN OLD PICTURE OF NENA — With her mother and father in 1950's Cuba, in front of a "Hand Made Cigars" business sign. The father holds a huge pair of scissors, signifying the opening of the business. A BULB FLASH.

WEDDING PICTURE - Nena's veil waving in the air, tossing her bouquet. A young Italian man, tough yet elegant, stands close by with his eyes set on a beautiful BLONDE smiling simply. This was AL, her husband, in his heyday.

NENA'S HANDS stuff and roll a CIGAR. She looks up at:

A SEARS "FAMILY PICTURE" — Nena and Al in the 1970's with a baby.

PICTURE: NENA & AL, in the '80's with two kids, a boy (8), and a girl wearing braces (13) at Disney World with Mickey Mouse, holding up Coca Colas.

PICTURE: NENA & HER FAMILY — in '83, when Nena proudly cut the ribbon before an establishment called "HAND MADE CIGARS" at a warehouse-mall district in Hialeah, Florida.

The tip of the CIGAR is lit. PULLING AWAY from the CIGAR, Nena sits examining her rolled up masterpiece, wearing dark, cat-like sunglasses and a large round hat with a chin strap, like a Hollywood movie star of the 50's. She puffs... SPANISH, WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA (cont'd)
Aren't you proud of me, Papá? Just like the ones you used to make in Cuba.

Nena enjoys a celebratory puff. She sees something out of the corner of her eye. Beside her face stands the tall, brown suited ghost of her father, who removes his Fedora for her.

She shivers. Puts out the cigar. Sprays on some fragrance, grabs keys, and adds her spectacular fluorescent green gloves. She sighs, scratches her arm, and exits through the front door.

EXT. WEST 37TH STREET, HIALEAH - MORNING

She drives her mustard colored convertible for all of two blocks in the Spanish ghetto suburb of Miami where she lives, at mercilessly slow speeds.

She pulls into the local grocery store, called SEDANO'S. The parking lot's packed.

Doris Day-style, she finds a spot open just for her, just in the nick of time. Nena's gloved hand turns the radio off. The MUSIC AND TITLES END.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HIALEAH GROCERY STORE - MORNING

Nena and her sister shopping. IRENE (late 30's) wears a white sundress like she's floating in it. By sharp contrast to Nena, there's something "morning dew fresh" about her.

NENA
Irene, just because I write our childhood friend Reynaldo love letters does not mean I'm cheating.

IRENE
Nena, I was too young. I don't remember him anyway. Look, I painted my nails with that polish that changes color depending on your mood, and so far I've only detected one on me - pink, which I think means happy!
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
I've put my hand into some Santeria, and I feel better.

NENA
A lot of good it's doing you. *Mujer*, you're delusional. You know what Papá used to say about that witchcraft.

IRENE
Fuck Papá.

Nena SLAPS her.

NENA
Don't you *dare* say anything about that man. He was a saint!

IRENE
I barely even knew him.

NENA
Have some respect.

IRENE
I can't believe you smacked me!

NENA
I'm sorry. I'm bitchy and I'm peeling all over.
(MORE)

NENA (cont'd)
I just got back from Key Biscayne with Al and everything's a mess. My kids just lounge around all day, and do nothing. And I'm so tired of all this shit! *Yo vine aquí,* for the American dream. And you know what I have? *Mierda.* My kids turn out to be ingrates and my husband a limp *hijo de puta*.

IRENE
Ay, Nena, don't say that --

Nena stops wheeling the cart.

NENA
Irene, I've started to have symptoms for the menopause.

IRENE
You? So young for menopause.

NENA
I shaved my *chacha* three days ago for the beach, and now it's all growing back -- plus the sunburn, the menopause!

IRENE
Ay, that's horrible.

NENA
No, what's horrible are the trembles of your skin at night, the insomnia, the fear of not seeing one's self bleed once a month. *AY*, I'M ON FIRE! I just wanna -- bleed! I don't know, throw myself into this ice --

She dunks her head into a bin holding soft drinks and ice. From below, in the water, Nena's wide eyed face blows air bubbles.

IRENE
Nena, you're crazy! What are you doing?

Nena surfaces, wetting her shirt almost completely.

NENA
What? -- *AYYYY*...

Nena rubs her thighs together -- then scratches her cooch outright. Off the curious look of the YOUNG MAN mopping up aisle 6 --

IRENE
Nena, you need medication -- especially with what's going on.

NENA
I don't need anything but a cigar in my mouth.

IRENE
Nena, I don't want you to be the cuckold *tarrúa* of Hialeah, *pero* I've heard this "*rum-rum*", you know, this "*chisme*", that -- Al is cheating on you.

Nena shoots her a double take.

NENA
Please, Al hasn't been able to get it up since 1995. Besides my lawyer friend, Marcia Goldberg, who got Jenny's ex-boyfriend out of jail that one time -- she's put the business under my name.

IRENE
That Jenny is crazy, just like you. Everything with you is business. Getting your way. Changing people.

NENA
Irene, nothing changes. Irene, in Cuba, Papá had money. And these United States are just poverty and torture. I had to put Mima in an old folks home --

IRENE
Nena, Mima had to go. That's the American way. You're old? Nursing home... You kept the business, Nena, what more do you want? One day this struggle will all pay off.

NENA
Yeah -- the day Castro...

Nena sighs -- then smiles, momentarily adoring Irene's positivity.

Suddenly an OLD LADY (80's) listening to a small, cheap radio with a single earphone inserted in her right ear looks like they're pumping her full of Ritalin! She SCREAMS, drops her walker, and out of her maddened face comes another screech SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

OLD LADY
Oh my God! He's *dead*!

Nena and Irene tense up and hold each other.

SOUNDS OF SIRENS and GUNSHOTS come from outside startling everyone. Nena grabs Irene and rushes with her basket to the CASHIER. A SECURITY GUARD and a POLICEMAN appear.

SECURITY GUARD
All right everyone! We want everyone to maintain calm!

Nena & Irene stand petrified with their purses held tight.

NENA
(sotto, Spanish with English subtitles)
I'll wager a goose that someone stole something.

IRENE
Don't look at me.

A solemn air of tense silence. The cash register goes CHI-CHING! Nena pays to the sound of PEOPLE CHANTING something unintelligible outside in SPANISH. More CHEAP SECURITY GUARDS arrive -- FOUR CUBAN GUYS in their 60's, wearing SEDANO's uniforms.

EXT. HIALEAH GROCERY STORE - MORNING

Nena and Irene walk out of the SEDANO's front door to DISCOVER: THE ENTIRE PARKING LOT WITH PEOPLE CELEBRATING!

Is it Fourth of July?! WHISTLES and HORNS and SIGNS SAYING: "VIVA LA LIBERTAD!" and "VIVA LA DEMOCRACIA!". The two women absorb this, stunned.

NENA
What happened?

IRENE
Oh, look, it's Rosie!

NENA
You're gonna talk to *her*?

IRENE
ROSIE! ... Hi. How are you?

ROSIE
It's incredible isn't it?!

NENA
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
What, girl, what?

ROSIE, a transplanted Newyorican chick (20's), informs them of something that is inaudible over the ever increasing NOISE, but the information is potent enough to make Nena grin like the Cheshire cat, drop her bags, and EMBRACE her!

NENA (cont'd)
(In Spanish)
OH THANK YOU, GOD!

Observing this glee, Rosie's two BOYS: PAQUITO (3), and JOHNNIE JUNIOR (10), and her girl, EVA (8), hug each other, jumping up and down!

From a distance, the entire parking lot looks like CARNIVAL in Rio! A Channel 4 News helicopter races past in the sky above them.

EXT. MIAMI - CALLE OCHO - DAY

A YOUNG MAN runs down the middle of the street gripping a rod. He runs past, it's revealed to be a huge CUBAN FLAG waving.

About three seconds behind him runs a YOUNG BLACK MAN holding an impressive AMERICAN FLAG. PEOPLE stop traffic and come out of their establishments CHEERING.

EXT. MIAMI'S CALLE OCHO - DAY

PEOPLE run randomly through the streets of MIAMI, FLORIDA, CHEERING and waving AMERICAN AND CUBAN FLAGS.

Cars drive down the streets HONKING their horns. PEOPLE dancing salsa next to small cafeterias.

A mob of ONE HUNDRED dancing and partying, completely closing off a Hialeah street. Huddled in balconies cheering like it's New Years Day or Mardi Gras!

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - JENNY'S ROOM - MORNING

A small room, wallpapered with pictures of a handsome young man named RICKY. His face has been plastered in every crevice of this little slice of Miami. It includes a small mobile, from which Ricky's Photoshopped mug dangles, plastered over the faces of A&F models and rock stars.

Various scented candles melting on it, the television set plays more images of the celebrations going on in the streets. It switches channels. On CNN, Larry King is Live:

LARRY
What are your thoughts on the potential reconciliation between exiled Cubans and the new Cuba?

There's a MIDDLE AGED CUBAN MAN (54), hair dyed pitch black, wearing a hat that says "MARLINS #1", and thick glasses.

MIDDLE AGED MAN
When you say reconciliation, who are you talking about? EH? You talkin' about the so-called "doctors" that applied electroshock to political prisoners?

THE CHANNEL CHANGES to CNBC, where a YOUNG WHITE MAN (20's) in suit and tie speaks on "HARDBALL".

YOUNG WHITE MAN
He's saying that given the Elián Gonzalez saga, a growing number of exiles are considering reconciliation, not confrontation.

Watching this is JENNY (23), a dizzy knockout in baggy pants and a sports bra. To her, the bed's a trampoline. She jumps on it wide eyed, absentmindedly munching on a *pastelito de coco* (coconut pastry).

ANOTHER CHANNEL:

A reporter, ROCK ALLEN (45), a young Al Roker, appears on the screen. The helicopter flies above his head in the distance. JENNY's eyes intensify and concentrate.

EXT. OKEECHOBEE METRORAIL STATION - MORNING

MOBS on the platforms and stairwells behind the reporter celebrating. The REPORTER is having trouble with the absolute pandemonium. His live feed goes out, and then resurges. The Channel 4 van behind him is being rocked from side to side:

ROCK
Oh, Bob, Cindy -- we're very sorry about that -- we're trying to come to you LIVE from the Okeechobee Metrorail station.

PEOPLE standing and bouncing on his CHANNEL 4 van!

ROCK (cont'd)
Will you *please* -- GET OFF THE DAMN VAN!

He loosens his collar and comes to his senses, remembering he's on the air. Clears his throat:

ROCK (cont'd)
I'm sorry, ladies and gentlemen, all Hialeah's broken loose.

He deftly evades a left hook thrown at him from the crowd. SECURITY GUARDS nab the LOONY GUY trying to punch him, and hold the CROWD back.

ROCK (cont'd)
If you're a citizen of the world today, you know that FIDEL CASTRO IS DEAD!

PEOPLE cheer behind him.

ROCK (cont'd)
By contrast to the ruckus around me --

A YOUNG CUBAN GIRL taps him on the shoulder.

YOUNG CUBAN GIRL
This is what we call a tremendous "REBAMBARAMBA!"

CHEERS!

ROCK
A recent *Miami Herald* poll shows that most Cuban-Americans support a peaceful and gradual transition to democracy in Cuba, including possible amnesty for Cuban government officials.

USMAIL (*pronounced "Oosmaeel"*, late 20's, nerdy) grabs the mike from the reporter.

USMAIL
We just wanna the most easiest way for democracy in Cuba. Wanna have elections, like, fair -- like here in Florida.

Rock can't help but do an incredulous, comedic "take" to the CAMERA.

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - JENNY'S ROOM - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

JENNY spots her brother Usmail, acting like an idiot, waving at the camera behind Rock.

JENNY
Oh, my god, that's Usmail!

She points and laughs hysterically!

EXT. OKEECHOBEE METRORAIL STATION - MORNING

Usmail then “mime walks” behind the reporter, and mocks everything he’s saying. He mimes lifting a heavy box. Somehow it engulfs him and he makes a sad face tapping at a window.

ROCK
Huge amounts of money flooded into the Miami-Dade County Metrorail system today, as revelers were encouraged to ride it to Miami’s Bayside Mall.

Usmail mimes throwing money out of his pockets.

ROCK (cont’d)
In three weeks, travel to Cuba will be shut down as the United States government aids its transition towards democracy.

People CHEER! Usmail goes into a FIT of MIME LAUGHTER and clownish excitement, jumping up and down, scaring the people around him.

MAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
CUBA LIBRE!

ROCK
Whether that proclamation of liberty you just heard behind me will realize itself is yet to be determined.

The reporter notices USMAIL, who suddenly breaks off and runs off at full gallop.

ROCK (cont’d)
This is Rock Allen reporting LIVE from the Okeechobee Metrorail station in Hialeah, Florida. Bob, Cindy -- back to you in the studio.

EXT. WEST 12TH AVENUE, HIALEAH - MORNING

Usmail rounds the corner when he sees his mother, Nena, arriving with his aunt Irene in her roofless jalopy.

EXT. HIALEAH APARTMENT BUILDINGS - PARKING LOT - MORNING

Out of breath, Usmail arrives, as Nena and Irene grab their grocery bags.

NENA
Usmail, help us with the bags.

IRENE
Usmail, *hola*. Come kiss your aunt hello.

USMAIL
Mami, Irene. Hurry up, there's a whole mob coming this way.

NENA
Qué?

USMAIL
HURRY UP!

He helps them with the bags, and they run up the stairs to the apartment.

Two hundred feet away A PARADE OF PEOPLE turns the corner and FLOODS DOWN their street, marching and SINGING the CUBAN NATIONAL ANTHEM.

EXT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - MORNING

We TILT UP ABOVE the CROWD. At the second story, there is a window to the right, into which we peer...

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - MORNING

Peering through its screen, and gliding in, there is a room that contains a lifetime's worth of family pictures displayed on a wall papered with a giraffe motif. Nena, Irene and Usmail walk in through the front door. JENNY runs in to join them. Nena grabs the remote, and MUTES the television. She's in hysterics.

NENA
(to Usmail)
Prepare yourself honey -- because we're all going back to Cuba!

USMAIL
I'm not going!

Usmail walks out of the living room, SLAMS his bedroom door. JENNY appears at the doorway to the living room.

JENNY
I don't think I've ever been happier in my entire life!

NENA
Well, I'm glad, because you're the only one not going.

JENNY
(In Spanish)
But why not?

NENA
Because I'm your mother and I say so.

JENNY
Usmail is not going to wanna go, and so if I don't go and he don't go, you're gonna be alone.

NENA
I'd rather be alone than with you engaged in perversion!

JENNY
I'm not a prostitute!

IRENE
Listen, I'm gonna get outta here --

NENA
No, you sit down!

Usmail resurfaces wearing a shirt emblazoned with an American Flag.

USMAIL
Did you see me on TV?

JENNY
All of Hialeah saw it!

Nena eyes Usmail for a moment, but he escapes her glare into his room. Irene goes after him, as Nena picks up her phone's receiver.

NENA
Can I please have the Cuban operator?

On the other hand, she speed dials a cellular.

EXT. WAREHOUSE BUSINESS - HIALEAH - MORNING

A small warehouse with a sign on it that reads: "HAND MADE CIGARS". A man's hands pick up a RINGING office telephone.

NENA (V.O., Spanish)
Did you find out?

AL (V.O., Spanish)
Of course.

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Nena twirls the phone cord around her finger.

NENA
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
This is what we've always wanted!

INT. WAREHOUSE - OFFICE CUBICLE - HIALEAH - CONTINUOUS

AL, looks like what might have become of Scarface if he'd have lived to be 50. He's seated shirtless in his wheeled office chair wearing nothing but gold chains and his pants around his ankles. Riding him is BUFFY (22) hot, blond, very Caucasian -- his office assistant.

AL
(into the phone)
YES! Yes! We have to talk about it some more -- yes. AH!

NENA (V.O.)
Okay. Bye.

BUFFY
Here.

She holds up her number and puts it in his pant pocket.

BUFFY (cont'd)
Call me at home, my Latin lover.

Al looks up at Buffy: This is so hot! She smiles and winks at him, her compact breasts bouncing. Al smiles, in heaven.

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - USMAIL'S ROOM - MORNING

Usmail is changing into jeans and a t-shirt. Irene rails on, seated at the corner of his bed.

IRENE
-- like I told you, you know? This changes a lot of things, and I want to make sure to just go for it!

USMAIL
I think you should.

IRENE
WELL, THEN I NEED YOU TO HELP ME!

They drink.

INT. CUBAN JAIL - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

There is a GUARD and a suited POLICE OFFICER questioning Maria SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES. He looks to the guard, talks to him in whispers, and then gives him a nod of dismissal.

MARIA
What do you want?

POLICE OFFICER
I want you to give yourself to me...
And if you do it, I'll put you both on
a ship headed for Miami next week.

MARIA
No.

She removes her bra.

POLICE OFFICER
No?

She drops her dress.

POLICE OFFICER (cont'd)
But you're going to do it.

She goes to him, and undoes his shirt. He kisses her hungrily. Reaches under her skirt...

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - USMAIL'S ROOM - DAY

USMAIL OPENS HIS BEDROOM DOOR, looks in and lets out a high pitched SCREAM! The room is bare. He charges into the living room.

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He stands there watching Nena struggling, doubled over, sealing a box with tape.

USMAIL
MAMI!

She keeps taping.

USMAIL (cont'd)
MAM --

She cuts off a huge piece of tape with scissors and plasters it on his mouth.

NENA
SHUT UP! You're driving me crazy!

USMAIL
(removes the tape)
WHERE IS MY SHIT?!

NENA
(scratches an arm)
What do you think? I packed it up!

The PHONE RINGS. Nena picks up.

NENA (cont'd)
QUE?! OKAY!

She hangs up.

NENA (cont'd)
Jenny's here with your grandmother.

USMAIL
If you can tell me where my shit is, I'll be out of your way.

NENA
Who says I want you out of my way? Maybe I want you right here, in the middle of my way, so that I can keep an eye on you!

USMAIL
Where is it?

Nena lights a cigar. The front door opens, and Jenny walks in wheeling HORTENSE, now an impertinent old woman in her 90's.

HORTENSE
HEEEELLLOOO! I've come to help you pack!

USMAIL
Abuela, tell Mami to tell me where she put my stuff.

HORTENSE
Where'd you put his stuff, Nena?

NENA
If I tell him, he's not going to Cuba with us.

HORTENSE
It's in a storage warehouse on 35th and 12th Avenue. Security Code 34472.

The old lady FARTS.

NENA
WHY ARE YOU TELLING HIM?! You've got a heart condition, you could croak any minute -- but you come to my house to fart and divulge secrets, Mama?!

HORTENSE
Give me something to do!

NENA
Pack these glasses in newspaper. Put it in this box.

HORTENSE
With my arthritis?

NENA
You're here to help?

HORTENSE
I became an invalid two years ago because of my heart attack, and the doctors said it was because of emotional stress brought on by you, Nenita!

NENA
(double-takes, then sotto:)
In some tribes, when people get to be emotional invalids, they dig a hole in the ground and push them in. Count yourself lucky.

HORTENSE
After all the sacrifices I've had to make for you! This is how you treat me? I'm going to die any minute! The doctors said --

HORTENSE & NENA
(sing-songy and routine)
No shocks to her system...

USMAIL walks in from the bedroom with a couple of white boxes marked "COMPUTER".

USMAIL
Abuela, I found these in Mami's closet. This is my shit -- all of it's in there.

HORTENSE
I know I was lying.

JOHN, (30's), Colombian, annoyingly endearing, walks in through the door.

USMAIL
This, way John -- where's Rosie?

JOHN
With the kids.

USMAIL
Are you bringin' me my herb anytime soon?

JOHN
I'm hookin' it up, man, chill.

NENA
Noooo! No! You can't just come in here like that and corrupt my son! Wasn't dumping my daughter enough for you?

JOHN
I thought you wanted us to break up.

NENA
I did, you drug dealing loser!

Nena chases off after them, leaving HORTENSE in the living room with Jenny who's seated on the couch flipping through a magazine.

HORTENSE
Jenny, my dearest -- push me to the kitchen. I'm hungry.

Jenny gets up and wheels her to the kitchen. The old lady wheels herself to the refrigerator, opens it, and absentmindedly grabs the vial of the pot-laced Vodka. She pours two shots of it into small glasses.

John and Usmail sprint hurriedly through the living room to the front door carrying boxes. Nena trails behind Usmail.

NENA
-- then you better leave for good, because you better not even THINK of coming back!

The front door SLAMS SHUT. Nena erupts in tears.

JENNY
Mami, move, I can't see the TV.

Nena slouches over to the kitchen.

HORTENSE
Here, Nena, have a drink. This will make you feel better.

Nena slams it, then SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA
Oh Mamá, when will this struggle with children ever end?

HORTENSE
Never, *hija*, never.

They pound the THC-laced liquor.

EXT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - PARKING GARAGE

John and Usmail pack the last box into a mini-van.

USMAIL
John, wait -- I forgot something.

Usmail runs back up the stairs, and --

INT. HIALEAH APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- into the apartment, to find Nena and Hortense in a fit of LAUGHTER. He stops in his tracks, weirded out by this.

JENNY
Hey, move, I can't see the TV?

USMAIL
Why are they laughing? They never laugh.

JENNY
They've been laughing their asses off ever since Jerry Springer came on.

Usmail charges into the kitchen and checks for his stash. It's not there. He looks incredulously at the two women. They look at him, and then break out into CACKLES!

USMAIL
Did you two find my little vial?

HORTENSE
(clearly guilty)
No, we didn't find anything.

Usmail finds it thrown in the sink. Thankfully, they left a little of it. Usmail shakes it in front of his eyes, then looks down at Hortense, scolding her with his index finger:

USMAIL
Abuelita!

She smiles a wide, toothless smile. He laughs, and stuffs it in his pocket.

NENA
Usmail. You're my favorite. Better than your sister!

AL surfaces like a bear from the bedroom, having slept for the past four hours. His face is marked with sleeping indentations --

AL
What's going on?

USMAIL
They're high.

AL
High?!

USMAIL
Yeah, ask them.

John shows up at the door.

JOHN
Let's go, man.

USMAIL
Okay.

Al gets an idea while looking in the refrigerator.

AL
Hey -- wow -- wow -- John -- c'mere.

Al takes John aside, puts his arm over him, bringing their heads together. John is a little worried.

AL (cont'd)
John, you think -- 'cause I know you hang out with the crack heads and shit.

JOHN
I don't --

AL
Hey, can I finish?.. I've been lookin' for those, uh, --
(sighs, looks around)
pills, you know. The ones that make you --
(he points out his fist and arm, like an erection)
You know? I'm looking to get some o' those. You know where I can --

JOHN
It's gonna cost ya.

AL
No problem. Viagra, Vagina. Sounds the same to me. And Vagina is always expensive... Get me ten.

JOHN
Yeah, okay, I'll see what I can do.

Al smiles for the first time ever, and shakes John's hand by force. John and Usmail exit.

Nena and her mother are seated next to immobile, perplexed Jenny, laughing a little too hysterically at the antics on television. Their laughter mix with that of a man's:

INT. CUBAN JAIL - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A CUBAN POLICE OFFICER'S FACE, LAUGHING.

Maria stands up before him. They continue SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

POLICE OFFICER
I'm sorry, I'm one of those people who laughs right after they cum.

MARIA
The details of your person don't interest me.

He stands up from the chair on which he's been leaning, and zips up his pants. Maria wipes her mouth with a tissue from her purse.

INT. JAIL CELL - CUBA - DAY

PRISONERS BOO, HOLLER AND HISS, as Maria walks with the Police Officer. An unshaven, beaten Andy awaits. The cage is opened. He lunges at her, embracing her passionately.

ANDY
Maria, I love you with all my soul.

They walk through the long, dingy hallway to catcalls, Andy hanging on Maria.

ANDY (cont'd)
Did you miss me?

MARIA
Don't speak.

They leave the hallway in silence -- Maria never making eye contact with Andy.

EXT. EL MORRO - HAVANA, CUBA - MORNING

Old cars left over from the '50's drive seaside in Cuba. Before a romantic Cuban seashore, RICKY writes a letter:

RICKY (V.O)
"I love you because you're not bitter - you're young and excited about the future -- as opposed to Cuban women. They've lived here all their lives. Living here for them is not an adventure. For me, it still is. That's Cuba to me. Inside you is my future. My child of the past is dead."

He puts the letter in a bottle, capped with a cork and throws it out into the blue-green sea.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

A TOILET FLUSHES BLUE WATER.

NENA is packing up her mother's toiletries. HORTENSE sits on her wheelchair, knitting.

HORTENSE
After you're done packing, you're going to clean up, right? I don't want the nurses thinking I'm a pig.

NENA
At this age, pigs bathe more often than you.

HORTENSE
You're taking care of me because you feel responsible, not because you really love your mother.

NENA
I've always loved you like a mother.

HORTENSE
Before Fidel Castro, everyone loved each other and everything was perfect.

NENA
What Fidel stole from us, I'm getting back!

HORTENSE
(In Spanish, with English subtitles)
That's what I like to hear!

JENNY walks in the room.

JENNY
Hi Mami.

NENA
What are you doing here?

JENNY
Well, I came to see abuelita.

HORTENSE
Stop telling lies.

JENNY
And to tell you I'm going to Cuba.

Nena lets out a LOUD SARCASTIC LAUGH.

NENA
I don't know with who. Not with me.

JENNY
Rosie's got me this boat with a cousin of hers. I'm going whether you like it or not.

NENA
NO! I THINK I KNOW WHAT PERVERSIONS YOU'RE AFTER, AND I'M NOT GOING TO FACILITATE THEM FOR YOU!

JENNY
I'm in love!

HORTENSE
In love? With who? John the drug dealer?

JENNY
John's not a drug dealer just because he's from Colombia! I'm *not* in love with him. I only dated him, and he's married to Rosie. If you people would listen --

HORTENSE
Okay, not with John, Nena, relax.

NENA
She's in love with --

JENNY
Ricky.

HORTENSE
Well, he's a very nice boy. Very good looking. Looks like his mother.

NENA
Mima, that's her first cousin!

HORTENSE
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
True... In that case, no.

NENA
You cannot marry your cousin, Jenny. You can stay here, go to Community College.

She walks to the door:

JENNY
I don't give a <u>fuck</u> what you say! I'll see you in Cuba!

She exits and SLAMS the door behind her. Then, peers back in. Nena SLAPS her.

INT. CAR - HIALEAH STREET - AFTERNOON

Al pulls up to the MANGO HILL APARTMENT COMPLEX in his car, and HONKS. John surfaces in a wife-beater and shorts lower than the underwear hangin' off his butt crack. John hands him a bottle. Al opens it, looks inside.

AL
They're pink.

JOHN
Best in the market. You'll be surprised. Nena's gonna be a different woman.

AL
Yeah. Definitely a different woman.

Al drives off, leaving John standing in the dust --

JOHN
See ya later.

The car ZOOMS out of sight.

INT. BUFFY'S BEDROOM - HIALEAH - DAY

Buffy guides Al into her bedroom… They land on the bed making out.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Nena is packing.

HORTENSE
If I were you I would never have married that man.

NENA
Ay Mima, SHUT UP! I need a Valium.

She goes to the small bathroom, and fills a glass with water from the sink. She's put two bitter pills in her mouth and, is about to drink the water, when NENA suddenly spies an image in the glass! Her husband! IN BED WITH BUFFY <u>AGAIN</u>!

She throws the glass to the floor, shattering it. She spits the Valium into the sink. Nena reaches for her purse and digs out her cell phone. Desperately, she speed dials her husband.

AL (V.O)
Hello, this is AL of HAND MADE CIGARS. I'm not around my cell phone right now, so leave a message.

BEEP!

NENA
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
You're a son of a whore!

INT. BUFFY'S BEDROOM - HIALEAH - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Al rolls around in bed with Buffy, having the time of his life.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Nena drives her roofless snot mobile with Hortense double strapped alongside her, to a REPRISE OF "HISTORY REPEATING". Behind the vehicle, she trails a U-Haul, which has a HUGE CUBAN FLAG with a nicely designed LOGO that reads: "CUBA OR BUST". Nena lights up a cigar. Her mother coughs, and flaps her hands in front of her face.

EXT. PORT OF MIAMI - DAY

Nena pulls in with her U-Haul. There is a SWARM of ACTIVITY. People taking all sorts of JUNK with them, CRYING and saying their good-byes. Nena searches for her ship. She spots it and stops, unloads the wheelchair, and PLOPS Hortense on it.

IN FAST MOTION: She diligently opens the back of the U-Haul, and removes an interminable amount of BOXES marked "NENA", "AL" and "USMAIL". She finds a small one marked "JENNY", and after looking around and making sure nobody sees -- she dumps it in a garbage can, and claps her hands clean of it. The MUSICAL REPRISE ENDS.

EXT. SHIP - PORT OF MIAMI - MORNING

PIPO, a young, strapping Cuban-American guy (26), who works as a boatswain/cargo guy is in mid-argument with Nena.

PIPO
There's not gonna be room!

NENA
First of all, you call me MISS. I am much younger than I appear. What's your name?

PIPO
Pipo.

NENA
Pipo is what you call somebody's father.

PIPO
I *am* a father.

NENA
No, you're a *mother* -- fu -- Let me speak to the manager.

PIPO
He's gonna say the same thing.

Hortense wheels herself over.

NENA
You see her? You can call *her* 'lady'.

PIPO
CAPTAIN!

Pipo disappears onto the ship.

NENA
He's calling the Captain, Mima.

Nena pulls out a compact, adjusts her make-up and lipstick.

NENA (cont'd)
I look like Mrs. Howell instead of Ginger.

HORTENSE
You look beautiful, Nena. Just like me.

Nena looks at her sympathetically.

NENA
These details tip me off to the fact that you're blind. Don't incriminate yourself.

Pipo returns with a very tall Caucasian man of about 60, but whose solid All-American looks make him appear to barely reach 45. This is the CAPTAIN -- the looks of Ernest Hemingway, if he'd been a model for Sears.

NENA sets eyes on him, and it's clear that this man makes her heart swoon. She fakes a semi-dizzy spell. She leans on her mother's wheelchair. The Captain leaps from the ship to two feet in front of Nena.

CAPTAIN
Captain. Tom Nülief. How can I help you?

NENA
I'm Nena -- pleased to meet you. Pipo was helping -- I'm sorry -- sort of dizzy --

She leans on his chest. He props her up. She looks up at his face.

NENA (cont'd)
Your arms are like a father's.

CAPTAIN
They are. I have three.

NENA
Three arms? -- Oh! You mean children. You're married? Never mind, don't answer that. Don't want to know. That's private.

CAPTAIN
Divorced.

NENA
Noted... Well, that's enough getting to know you. Look, this is all my stuff.

Nena points at a mountain of boxes behind her.

CAPTAIN
All that?

NENA
Yeah, plus the old lady.

CAPTAIN
Ooookaaaay.

Nena looks at him, eye to eye.

NENA
You think *it'll fit?*

The Captain smiles nervously, trying to divert eye contact.

CAPTAIN
Pipo!

Pipo hops off the ship. The Captain takes him aside. Nena takes a deep breath, clutching her purse.

NENA
I'm going to have a heart attack waiting like this.

The Captain takes a couple of steps back toward Nena.

CAPTAIN
It seems that after discussing the possibilities with Pipo, we've come to a certain geometrical storage formation, which will allow your luggage to fit.

NENA
I carry a lot of baggage, don't I?

CAPTAIN
Yes... but we'll give it a go.

She jumps on him, kissing him with gratitude.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
Please, control yourself.

NENA
Yes, I'm sorry.

In the distance, a BLUE TOYOTA TERCEL rounds the palm tree lined corner.

INT. TOYOTA TERCEL - DAY

ROSIE, wearing HUGE SUNGLASSES and a tube top is driving JENNY in a halter top and short shorts. Jenny hands Rosie a check.

ROSIE
Put it in my purse, I gotta go deposit that shit right after this, or my cell phone is dead.

JENNY
Look, it's over there! But wait, oh, shit -- oh shit -- that's my mother's car! This is fuckin' terrible! FUCK ROSIE! She's gonna kill me!

ROSIE
No, she won't! What's the worst that could happen?

JENNY
There she is -- what's she doing all over that guy!

ROSIE
Nena's having an affair?!

The BLUE TOYOTA car stops next to Nena's. Jenny gets out of the car, and heads for Nena. Pipo loads Nena's boxes. Jenny approaches her.

NENA
What are you doing here? I thought I told you to stay in Hialeah.

JENNY
Oh yeah? Who am I, Cinderella? You get to go to the PACHANGA with everyone, and I have to stay?

Nena hauls off and SLAPS her.

NENA
Stop talking to me like that! I'm your mother.

JENNY
I paid Rosie fifty bucks to get Cuca la Santera to give me a ride on this boat. Open up the trunk, Rosie, I'm getting my *shit*!

NENA
You stop right there!... Well, if you're gonna go, where's your brother?

Nena takes a cell phone out of her pocket.

AL rounds the corner as a side passenger in BUFFY's RED PORSCHE -- which is packed to the hilt. Several boxes are strapped atop it for good measure.

NENA (cont'd)
Should be ashamed of himself.

INT. IRENE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Usmail and the blond prostitute, Sven are on the couch making out. His CELL PHONE RINGS. He looks at the caller I.D.

USMAIL
Oh, that's my mother freaking out. I'll let the answering machine get it.

SVEN
I'm so glad you called me.

Usmail shrugs. They keep kissing.

EXT. PORT OF MIAMI - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

No answer on Nena's cell phone line. She snaps the cell phone shut. AL gets out of the PORSCHE, leaving Buffy at the wheel, and approaches Nena.

AL
Nena, I'm not going. I want a divorce.

Nena suddenly twitches, and something in her obviously "snaps". But this time, it's something more profound, which gradually turns into a mad search through all her remaining boxes... Pipo continues loading.

NENA
Because you no longer love me?

AL
Well, no, I don't Nena. We haven't loved each other since 1975.

Nena throws several of the smaller boxes aside in a rampage.

AL (cont'd)
Nena, I think we should go our separate ways. Buffy and I are going to get our own apartment in South Beach. I'll just take my boxes and be out of here.

Nena finds a box labeled: "AL'S SHIT". She withdraws a gun, and points it at him. CLICK-CLICK!

NENA
I bought you a ticket to go with me, Al -- and you're going!

SHE SHOOTS THE GUN IN THE AIR! SHE MEANS BUSINESS!

PEOPLE scatter and SHRIEK around them. Al's got balls, though. He holds his ground.

AL
Nena, stop the theatrics and give me the gun.

JENNY observes this nearby, holding her luggage.

JENNY
Mom, put the gun down.

Nena SHOOTS at Al's legs, misses!

NENA
YOU stay out of this! This is between the man your mother gave her HAND MADE CIGAR business to -- who is now turning around and stabbing her in the back!

JENNY
Way to go, Dad!

AL
Nena, I'm in love with Buffy.

NENA
Shut up and get on the ship, we're leaving!

AL
I'm not going.

Nena SHOOTS his leg, pegs him this time! Al drops to the ground, writhing.

PIPO
Captain, this lady's --

JENNY
Someone call the cops!

AL
No! Don't call the police. Not with my record.

NENA
Pipo, put him on the ship, lest you want me to knock a couple o' holes in you too!

Pipo does as he's told. Buffy is wide-eyed in her car. Nena leers at her.

NENA (cont'd)
(announcing)
AND ALL THE REST OF YOU PEOPLE?! MOVE! GET ON BOARD NOW. I'M TAKING OVER!

JENNY
People are going to call the police!

NENA
Stand away from the boat, *bitch*! I'll take you out!

Buffy disguises herself with sunglasses and gets out of the car. The CAPTAIN appears.

CAPTAIN
What the hell is going on here?

NENA
My husband wants to leave me -- and I won't let him. Let's go! Let's get this ship going!

CAPTAIN
I'm the captain of this ship. I say when it goes... You're married?

Jenny sneaks on board. Behind her, Buffy does the same.

NENA
Yes! I'm trying to save my family. Please, Captain, help me.

CAPTAIN
All right, Mrs. --

NENA
Call me Miss. I won't be married for long.

CAPTAIN
Get on board. PIPO?! Let's shove off!

EXT. PORT OF MIAMI - DAY

The ship separates itself from the pier, and heads out into the ocean.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CUBAN PORT - DAY

Maria and Andy stand in line, next to a ship headed to Key West. They give their names to the very same GUARD who blackmailed Maria.

MARIA
Maria... Perez.

The GUARD smirks, nods.

ANDY
Andy... Perez.

Guard nods. They walk on board, and head towards the bow.

MARIA
(looking out)
What a beautiful day for liberty, eh?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY
I want you, and the ability to dream. I want it all.

MARIA
Keep dreaming.

He hugs her and they both smile.

EXT. SHIP - DECK - MIDDAY

It's BONE DRY. The ocean is a plate. NENA, wearing a large sun hat and glasses, is still peeling and scratching.

AL, reaches into his pocket and pops a pill.

The Captain stands with Pipo atop a platform surveying the crowd.

PIPO
Captain, we're running low on water.

CAPTAIN
Stop drinking it, or you'll have to start drinking your own piss.

PIPO
Who's gonna tell *them* that?

A CROWD of TIRED GUESTS fan and shade themselves against the sun. Nena's mother is in her wheelchair agonizing. She tugs at Nena by the arm.

HORTENSE
Nenita, I'm so sea sick.

NENA
Didn't you take the Dramamine?

HORTENSE
Sometimes, in life you have to stop numbing yourself, and feel the pain.

NENA
Mima, why do you think God invented Valium? Enh?

Nena offers her a pill.

HORTENSE
No drama for me. *Gracias*.

NENA
Okay. I'll watch you agonize until we get to Cuba.

BUFFY rounds a corner.

BUFFY
All right *perra*! This is where we settle the score.

Nena does a double take, and although not feeling herself, is up for the challenge.

NENA
I don't talk to *whores*!

Buffy SLAPS her. Nena PUNCHES Buffy. Instantly they're in a full out hair pulling mêlée, slipping and sliding all over the decks.

AL peers around a corner with Jenny to find Nena battling Buffy! BAM! POW! Nena grabs a hold of a mop and swings it at Buffy. It misses. Instead, the stick rams into her mother's wheelchair -- right on the BRAKES!

Hortense goes CAREENING off the side of the ship! She's headed towards an open part of the deck!

NENA (cont'd)
MIIIIMAAAAAA!!!

BUFFY JUMPS on Nena's back, tearing her shirt off.

The OLD LADY GOES FLYING OFF THE SIDE OF THE SHIP! HER HANDS reach up in the air, like it's a roller coaster ride, and just in the nick of time, PIPO'S MUSCULAR ARM REACHES her arm, and he grabs a hold with a BRAVE FEROCITY. The wheelchair is lost, but, HORTENSE now dangles off the side of the ship with Pipo trying to pull her up!

Nena crashes herself backwards onto a wall, dislodging Buffy from her back.

BUFFY
Just give him up, bitch!

NENA
After you try and kill my MOTHER?!

Buffy pulls some MACE from her back POCKET and SPRAYS it on NENA'S FACE! Nena gasps for air. THROUGH NENA'S BLURRY EYES, BUFFY SUCKER PUNCHES A COUPLE O' TIMES. BANG! BANG!

Nena's head is bobbing around, but she shakes it, and comes to. She removes Al's gun from her purse and points it at Buffy.

BUFFY
Kill me. You'll go to jail as soon as we land. And that'll serve you right.

NENA
And you're Saint Buffy, stealing people's husbands from right underneath their backs?

BUFFY
You have no power over me.

NENA
Oh yeah?

Nena puts the gun in her purse and instead grabs the VOODOO DOLL that the Santera gave her.

NENA (cont'd)

Take THIS!

She TORKS the DOLL'S LEFT ARM, and suddenly a SHARP PAIN shoots down BUFFY'S LEFT ARM!

BUFFY
UHHHH! You WITCH!

NENA
Call me what you want, honey.

She FLICKS THE DOLL'S FACE, and suddenly the PUNCHES become VISIBLE on BUFFY'S face. Buffy BOBS HER HEAD BACK -- as if she were really being clobbered!

AL RUNS to NENA and grabs the VOODOO doll from her. He pockets it and RUNS OFF.

BUFFY
This isn't over, yo! May I call you "yo"?

AL limps off towards a good lookin' CHICK sitting on the other side of the ship.

BUFFY (cont'd)
You just better give up on him, because he's <u>mine</u>!

NENA
I've put up with him for thirty years, I've trained him to do my bidding, you're not gonna get him that easy!

Buffy executes a KUNG FU MOVE!

BUFFY
You're gonna DIE!

Nena responds in kind.

NENA
I wouldn't be caught dead next to you! *Hija de puta!*

A few CHOPS later, they're at a stale-mate headlock.

The CAPTAIN shows up with PIPO carrying HORTENSE. Pipo puts Hortense down, then grabs BUFFY, while the Captain takes hold of NENA.

CAPTAIN
What's going on here? <u>THIS IS MY SHIP</u>! And <u>*I'm*</u> in Command here! Pipo, take them to the BRIG!

NENA
You have a brig here?

CAPTAIN
But wait! Before you do that, I want both of you to follow me.

They quietly round the corner with the Captain, and he points to AL, who is currently wooing a SEXY MULATA CHICK on the bow, his VIAGRA WOODY is fully erected.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
You see? Both of you ladies are wasting precious time.

NENA
I have an idea.

EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY - LATER

Buffy holds the LOUDSPEAKER MICROPHONE:

BUFFY
Ladies and gentlemen of the ship, Nena Huracán de Picante and I, Buffy Fieldsworth, are here to tell you that - -

INT. SHIP CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Al tries to sweet-talk the chick he's with, except he's distracted by:

BUFFY (O.S., FILTERED)
Al Picante is a -- what is that? -- an *HIJO DE PUTA*? Right, a son of a whore.

PEOPLE STARE at AL and point. MIKE SQUEAL.

BUFFY (O.S., FILTERED, cont'd) (cont'd)
He's a lecher, and you'll know it's his *Miami Vice*, tired ass if you notice the VIAGRA hard-on he's sporting today. *Muchas gracias*.

MIKE SQUEAL. AL is dumbfounded. The MULATA CHICK notices the HARD ON, SLAPS AL, and walks away in a huff.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP'S BRIDGE - DAY - LATER

The CAPTAIN placidly steers his ship. NENA stands behind him.

CAPTAIN
What have you done now?

NENA
Nothing. I came to say that maybe I apologize. But I'm so hot, I don't even know what I'm doing.

CAPTAIN
Is your mother all right?

NENA
She's fine. There's no known way to kill her without being detected.

The Captain laughs, but Nena is stoic. She sees the crystalline water and the majesty of THE HORIZON.

NENA (cont'd)
I'm a weakling, Captain. How can I fight for my father's stolen business when --

CAPTAIN
Not the way you fought today. You're strong Nena, I like that about you.

NENA
My senile mother's braving this treacherous trip... And me, fighting for a marriage that's over. The stitches in my plastic surgery coming off --

The Captain considers her at arm's length, then embraces her.

CAPTAIN
You look beautiful to me. *Terra firma.*

NENA
You're a mirage. All men are... Since the last time he cheated on me. I can't let infidelity go. I want him to suffer -- his love comes in spasmodic stutters, and it... is not enough.

The Captain laughs. Nena inches closer to him, resting her head on his shoulder. She sees the binoculars hanging from the Captain's neck, and in an impulsive move, GRABS THEM AND PLACES THEM IN FRONT OF HER EYES.

THROUGH THE BINOCULAR'S VIEWER - Nena surveys the ocean.

NENA (cont'd)
Oh Captain, when will there be land? There needs to be land... Aren't there any road signs out here?

The Captain smiles, and sighs.

BINOCULAR'S VIEWER - NENA spots another ship, and starts jumping up and down!

NENA (cont'd)
Oh look, there's another ship! They're going to America!

The Captain grabs the binoculars and looks: Indeed, there is another ship headed in the opposite direction. PEOPLE on it are DANCING!

NENA (cont'd)
Listen to the music! You can hear it from here!

She YANKS the binoculars and looks at the ship again. It is now significantly CLOSER.

BINOCULAR'S VIEWER - Nena sees MARIA on the ship!

NENA (cont'd)
OH MY GOD! MARIA IS ON THAT SHIP!

CAPTAIN
Who's that?

NENA
MY SISTER! I haven't seen her in years! Please, let's get closer!

CAPTAIN
You and me?

NENA
NO! THE SHIPS! Let's bring the ships closer!

CAPTAIN
We can't do that. We have to keep going.

NENA
For me, Captain?

CAPTAIN
I can't, I'm sorry.

She pulls her gun out, and aims it at him quite seriously:

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
Your gun is out of bullets. I emptied it while you were sleeping.

She shoots skyward. CLICK. No bullets.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
I don't know why I care, Nena, but there's something about you that's --

NENA
Glamorous?

She drops the gun on the floor and sobs.

CAPTAIN
Yes -- but also, that's -- that's alive. For a long time, I've been living, but I haven't been alive.

NENA
This is nice, Captain, but if we talk too long, I'll miss my chance.

CAPTAIN
Of course. PIIIIPOOOO! Let's turn this ship around!

Pipo startles awake from a siesta, and runs to his post.

EXT. CLEAR OCEAN - DAY

The two ships are passing. Captains at the helms.

CAPTAIN (O.S., CB RADIO)
This is Captain Tom Nülief from the ship "HIALEAH HOE", do you read me?

CAPTAIN GONZALEZ (O.S., CB RADIO)
Roger that, Captain.

CAPTAIN (O.S., CB RADIO)
I've got a crazy request for you, sir...

FROM THE SUN's POV - both ships slowly move in each other's direction, to the beat of a WALTZ. PEOPLE wave at each other. The ships come closer. CAPTAINS WAVE TO EACH OTHER.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP DECK - OCEAN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

As if the ships themselves were dancing, they magically SWIRL around each other until they come together at the bow. A single rope is thrown, to hold the ships together for these brief moments.

Both sisters, NENA AND MARIA, both risking falling off their respective ships by reaching so far, manage to TOUCH HANDS... in... SLOW... MOTION.

SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA
Maria! You're safe!

MARIA
Yes, I managed to get on this ship. I'm going to Miami. It's a long story. MAMÁ!

Hortense is brought close to her by Pipo's able hands.

MARIA (cont'd)
Mamá!

HORTENSE
Maria, my child! I have missed you so much!

MARIA
Mamá, I'll see you soon!

CAPTAIN
We have to part the ships, Nena.

NENA
No! Not yet!

CAPTAIN
We have to...

The Captain unties the rope that has been temporarily tied on the ships. The ships drift apart, as the women wave good-bye.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP BRIDGE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The Captain is on his CB radio, with Nena holding on to his shoulder.

CAPTAIN GONZALEZ (O.S.)
Beautiful day to pull a stunt like that Captain Nüleif.

CAPTAIN
It's all for a girl.

Hortense puts her hands to her face to stifle sobs. She WAVES to Maria in the distance.

CAPTAIN GONZALEZ (O.S.)
I understand, Captain. Roger that.

Nena weeps, mascara running.

CAPTAIN
Thank you for makin' someone's dream come true, Captain Gonzalez.

INT. CAPTAIN GONAZLEZ'S SHIP - DAY

Captain Gonzalez broadcasts the next message over his SHIP'S LOUD SPEAKERS:

CAPTAIN GONZALEZ
VIVA CUBA LIBRE!

People on both SHIPS CHEER!

EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY - LATER

Hortense cries while Jenny consoles her.

HORTENSE
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
This was my last opportunity to see Maria before I die.

JENNY
Grandma, if you survived *this*? You've been predicting your own death since abuelo died in 1983.

HORTENSE
I wanted him to take me with him -- but just like in life, he never took me anywhere.

INT. SHIP - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - LATER

The Captain pours himself a drink.

NENA
How can I be happy with my family falling apart?

She paces. He takes her by the arms and sits her on his bed.

CAPTAIN
"Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."

For a moment, Nena stops her buzzing and takes in his words. She becomes still -- looks into his eyes.

NENA
So beautiful.

CAPTAIN
Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote that.

NENA
I don't know who that is. So I'll pretend you did.

CAPTAIN
You're uncontrollable Nena, like the sea. That's what I love about you.

The CAPTAIN kisses her. She starts undoing her own blouse.

NENA
I feel so guilty.

CAPTAIN
Really?

NENA
Well, there's still this technicality.

She shows him her wedding ring. He shrugs. She PULLS IT OFF HER FINGER and flings it out the window.

EXT. SHIP CORREDOR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

THE RING lands on the deck and ROLLS...

INT. SHIP - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

She moves towards the Captain hungrily.

NENA
Come closer, Papi.

Nena kisses the Captain.

INT. SHIP DECK - DAY - CONTINUOUS

AL kisses Buffy's hands. He then leans back and massages the VOODOO doll he's hid in his back pocket.

AL
You know I'm gonna clean up when we get to Cuba, right? I mean, this is like traveling, you know? Like a party.

BUFFY
A party in your pants, right?

She rolls her eyes.

AL
Listen to me --

BUFFY
What the fuck could you say to me to make amends for this, Al? There's no way out, except out.

AL looks down, dejected. Buffy huffs. THE RING rolls right through his feet, and does a DOUBLE LOOP, until it comes to a CLEAN HALT, square between them. AL smiles like a crocodile. Bends down, grabs the RING, and holds it up with a grin. THE RING GLEAMS! Buffy smiles.

EXT. CUBAN PORT - DAY

The ship docks in Cuba.

PIPO helps Hortense off the ship on a new wheelchair. Nena walks alongside them until they reach a taxi loading zone. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES.

NENA
Thanks for your help.

PIPO
No worries.

NENA
Here.

She slips him a hundred.

NENA (cont'd)
For your troubles.

PIPO
Daaaaamn! Thanks!

Hortense has fallen asleep in her chair.

NENA
She's either dead or asleep. They're both convenient.

PIPO
Nena, don't say that.

NENA
(hands him a slip of paper)
Just kidding. *Mira*, Pipo, if you make sure that the stuff gets delivered to this address, there's more money in it for you.

PIPO
I'll make sure.

She hugs him. Nena waves and peels off with Hortense.

EXT. CUBAN STREET - DAY

A series of taxis await people in an area near the ship. As Nena and Hortense wheel through a long expanse of cement towards a taxi, Jennifer comes running up, holding hands with RICKY! They catch up to Nena. Immediately, Nena's disgust and fury rise to her face.

JENNY
Mami!

NENA
Please, don't call me that. I don't want people to know.

JENNY
Nothing is going on, I just got off the ship.

NENA
Are you with him?

JENNY
Yes.

NENA
Then you're out of my life.

JENNY
I make my own decisions.

NENA
No, I make your own decisions while you're under my roof!

JENNY
That isn't your roof!

NENA
It's my sister's roof!

RICKY
It's *my* roof. And I say it's fine.

NENA
You shut up!

RICKY
Why should I?

NENA
Because -- you -- degenerate.

She SLAPS him on the chest, and continues *sotto*, so HORTENSE doesn't hear.

NENA (cont'd)
You have no business seducing your first cousin!

RICKY
I didn't grow up with her!

NENA
Are there not enough women in the world?!

JENNY
Love is blind.

NENA
And you're retarded -- and about to make more of you.

RICKY
You're going to kick me out of my own house?

NENA
Do I have to?

RICKY
Nena -- why don't you just finish getting here.

NENA
(in furious whispers)
If you wake the old bitch up, I'm gonna punch you in the balls. Look at this -- you're giving me hot flashes, and I can't breathe. Here, you push her, you're the man around here.

RICKY
No, apparently, you're the man around here.

SOUNDS OF RUNNING make them look behind. ZOOMING towards them at full speed is the Captain.

CAPTAIN
Nena!

He grabs her by the arms, and kisses her passionately. She pulls away.

NENA
Please, this is in front of everybody!

CAPTAIN
Here is my cell phone number. I'll be in town. If you think you could love me forever, call me. I have to get back to the ship, but last night was great!

He kisses her full on the lips. Quite suddenly, he runs back. Nena finds herself coming out of a trance with everyone staring blankly at her. JENNY and RICKY exchange glances.

EXT. PORT OF MIAMI - DAY

MARIA and ANDY surface from the ship to find IRENE, ROSIE and her KIDS waiting for them. Everyone hugs hello. The two sisters cry.

MARIA
I saw Nena on the way here, it was unbelievable... And Mamá!

IRENE
Did you dream this?

MARIA
No, for real!

The KIDS who roll their eyes at each other.

INT. CUBAN TAXI - DAY

NENA, HORTENSE, JENNY and RICKY are crammed into a taxi. The driver's name is HUGO, and his face is a funny, toothless one. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

HUGO
To where?

RICKY
Párraga.

The car pulls out.

JENNY
(in English)
You have *nerve* talking about me and Ricky when you and the Captain are fucking.

Nena gives her a double take. Starts to say something to her, and then stops and in mid sentence, LUNGES AT JENNY WITH SLAPS and SCREAMS so FIERCELY, that the old lady wakes up to slaps herself for being in the middle.

It's MAYHEM with everyone screaming for the fighting to stop.

HUGO
Oye! Oye! OYE!

Finally NENA stops, stares out of the window, fuming.

NENA
I just wanna throw myself out the WINDOW!

Silence in the car.

NENA (cont'd)
LOOK AT MY COUNTRY!
(sobs)
It's a fucking mess!

FLASHES OF CITY STREETS AND LOCAL AREAS OF HAVANA FROM NENA'S POV IN THE CAR.

NENA (cont'd)
Look at all those beautiful buildings -- Thank God the architecture is still salvageable. Such lovely textures.

Nena's reality in America had been primary colored, now her view of the world deepens. GRITTY IMAGES of what she'd left behind pass by her eyes.

NENA (cont'd)
And look at those people.

HORTENSE
They're hungry as hell.

NENA
So am I, Mamá. My God. They look so happy. Just that they're *alive!* There's music in their soul.

More HOUSES now.

RICKY
It's still the same people. You know, a lot of people stayed and dealt with Cuba.

HORTENSE
Of course. Of course they stayed. They didn't have their stuff stolen.

NENA
(patting her mother's hand)
We'll get it back, Mamá. That's why we're here.

JENNY
I'm so glad to be here. It's a dream.

She TICKLES RICKY's hand with her FINGERS discreetly. They smile at each other.

HORTENSE
This is the Cuban dream you're living now, Nena.

NENA
Yeah, well we'll see how it turns out.

RICKY
Wanna come to my concert tomorrow night?

JENNY
Me?

RICKY
No, your mother.

JENNY
Oh, my God. Of course.

RICKY
Here, I have a flyer.

NENA
Driver, this is my sister's house here.

The taxi stops in front of Maria's house.

RICKY
Yes, my house. Before anyone gets off, I have an announcement to make. I've arranged a wedding for Jenny and me for this weekend.

SILENCE. Out of nowhere, NENA REACHES ACROSS TO SCRATCH HIM WITH HER CLAWS! PUNCHES FLY!

HUGO
Oye! Oye! OYE!

EXT. SMALL CUBAN CONVENIENCE STORE - MIAMI - CONTINUOUS

A small CAR drives into the parking lot. ROSIE'S DRIVING. The KIDS, IRENE, MARIA and ANDY get out and head toward the store.

MARIA
You get to a new country, and the first thing you think about is gambling?

ANDY
The lotto.

INT. SMALL CUBAN CONVENIENCE STORE, MIAMI - DAY - CONTINUOUS

As they walk in:

MARIA
Don't throw your money away.

ROSIE
Girl, I won the Cash Three the other day. Paid five hundred bucks. Don't be stupid, Andy. You're in the United States of Miami now. It's all about taking chances.

At the COUNTER, Andy buys a lotto ticket, which he stuffs into his pocket. Maria watches with her arms crossed, displeased.

EXT. CHURCH - CUBA - DAY

Nena's high heels BATTER the concrete sidewalk with a CLACKETY-CLACK, pushing Hortense, all dolled up in her wheelchair. They speak SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

HORTENSE
My face is falling off from the shame.

NENA
Well, they're sons of whores.

HORTENSE
No, Nena, because then what would that make us?

NENA
What we are.

A few drops of RAIN fall on them.

INT. CHURCH - CUBA - DAY

DISTANT THUNDER CLAP! The skies behind them are darkening. They enter the church to a HORRIFIED GASP from the assembled GUESTS. Among them, SARITA... THE WEDDING MARCH BEGINS.

JENNY is brought in by AL, still with a slight limp. HE SPIES NENA, but as he is immediately shunned, he moves his eyes discreetly away from hers. The PRIEST SURFACES:

PRIEST
Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today...

Hortense leans over to Nena:

HORTENSE
En Ingles? Hunh.

She rolls her eyes. Nena purses her lips.

PRIEST
You may now say your vows.

JENNY
I think you're really handsome and I love your singing. That's it.

PRIEST
Ricky?

RICKY
(grabs a guitar)
I thought I'd sing a little song.

He smiles at the audience. The AUDIENCE RUSTLES.

PRIEST
I have another wedding in an hour.

RICKY
Oh, okay then.
(puts the guitar down)
Will you marry me?

JENNY
Yes!

PEOPLE APPLAUD awkwardly.

PRIEST
(skimming the book)
By the powers vested in me --

SARITA STANDS from one of the pews. THUNDER CLAPS.

SARITA
WAIT! I OBJECT!

EVERYONE turns to her. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

SARITA (cont'd)
I OBJECT to this marriage because -- that woman is a WITCH!

Sarita points at Jenny.

PRIEST
Well, there will be no witchcraft tonight. There is only love.

SARITA
She caused me to have a miscarriage!

Everyone GASPS. THUNDER CLAP!

PRIEST
I think my work here is done.

The couple shrug and kiss to the sound of THUNDER and the LIGHTS GOING ON AND OFF. AL looks at a HOT WOMAN (30's), who winks at him.

Hortense tries to yell out something, but her voice won't work! She grabs her throat. NENA wheels HORTENSE out of there, while Jenny and Ricky are still kissing on the altar.

SOMEONE in the audience THROWS A TOMATO in RICKY's FACE. And that's followed by a barrage of EGGS and other VEGETATION. PEOPLE BOO them out of the CHURCH!

EXT. CHURCH - CUBA - CONTINUOUS

THE YOUNG COUPLE escape the church through the front doors.

An ANGRY MOB OF CHURCH GUESTS yell horrible SLURS at them, THROWING VEGETATION, reminding them of GOD'S WRATH!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CUBAN STREET/HOUSE - DAY - LATER

Nena walking hurriedly down the street, looking at the names and numbers of the houses. She holds her cell phone with one hand, and with the other adjusts her bra strap.

NENA
(into the phone)
Well, this is the street.

CAPTAIN (O.S.)
Look behind you.

Nena does and here he comes, holding an umbrella.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
You shouldn't be without an umbrella.

He comes close and covers her. A DILAPIDATED HOUSE in a section of Havana called El Vedado.

NENA
It's this house.

They walk up to the door, and she knocks. A dimpled woman, DOLORES (30's), answers the door, and lets them in.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

TWO BOYS are heard PLAYING in another room. A TELEVISION SET plays images of a hurricane, and a WEATHER MAN RAMBLES about an oncoming storm. Dolores turns the TV down. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

DOLORES
How can I help you?

Dolores stifles a sob and sighs heavily instead. Her TWO BOYS (9 and 12) come over, and stand by her now.

NENA
You know me. I want to reclaim it.

DOLORES
You're throwing me out of my house?

The Captain holds Nena back by the shoulders. Dolores composes herself, sits.

NENA
(to Captain, venting in English)
How will *I* be repaid for *my* loss, hunh?

The children stare at Nena's theatrics.

NENA (cont'd)
Why can't everything be like it was?
(leans into the Captain's chest)
I'm cuckolding my husband with this American. Call him "Captain" -- that's what he likes.

DOLORES
(in English)
Oh, hi, Captain.

NENA
You speak English?

DOLORES
Fluently.

The TV gets Dolores's attention.

DOLORES (cont'd)
I had a nightmare that a hurricane was coming to take away my house, and here it is.

Nena looks at Dolores's impoverished kids again. She feels sorry for them. Something in Nena SNAPS:

NENA
I, Nena Huracán, do hereby GIVE you my CHILDHOOD home, the plot of land where I came out of my mother's VAGINA, so that you can live with your SEMI-COMMUNISTIC attitudes for the rest of your pathetic life!

Dolores looks at her, wide-eyed.

CAPTAIN
That's enough, Nena.

NENA
And furthermore -- yes, I think that's enough. My childhood home is YOURS. What's your name?

DOLORES
Dolores.

NENA
Dolores! BUT LET NOT ONE DAY GO BY that your poverty-stricken family doesn't remember the name NENA HURACÁN!

THUNDER CLAP OUTSIDE!

CAPTAIN
Let's go, Nena.

NENA
(to Dolores, nicely)
Your children are endearing. How old are they?

DOLORES
Nine and twelve.

NENA
God bless them.

Nena opens the door and scoots the Captain out. She SLAMS the DOOR SHUT, leaving Dolores and the children agog. In the front lawn, with RAIN drenching her large black umbrella, Nena weeps and rants on his chest. And he's solid as a rock.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CUBAN STREET - "CIGARROS HECHO A MANO" - DAY - LATER

Nena shows up at her father's old business with the CAPTAIN, the original SIGN completely intact: "CIGARROS HECHO A MANO."

INT. "CIGARROS HECHO A MANO" - CONTINUOUS

Nena walks in, drying her eyes and sniffling. The business is very much up and running. She looks around.

NENA
(to the Captain)
It's all the original stuff. Unbelievable.

A thin, wrinkled, short man, LUIS (70's), appears from the back office. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

LUIS
Nena Huracán. I heard you would be blowing around here. You know the government has sold this to Italians.

NENA
How can you sell something you don't own?

LUIS
Look, Nena, I'm a working man, I work for you as easily as for the Italians.

NENA
With my documents, don't worry, I'll recuperate my father's property.

LUIS
Good luck, but remember, *they* invented the word *America*.

NENA
You wanna know what word *I* invented!?

She spins on her heels and walks out with the Captain trailing behind her.

EXT. CUBAN STREET - DAY - CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN
Hey! Hey! Hey! Walk alongside me, not ahead of me.

Nena stops, switches to English:

NENA
Al never cared.

CAPTAIN
I'm not Al. I'm still working on the ship at the port, and this hurricane's coming, and it doesn't feel like you --

She stops a cab as he continues:

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
You -- um -- I mean, it seems like you're going to do just fine without me.

A few droplets of rain fall on her. A gust of wind, lifts her skirt with a momentary Marilyn Monroe-*esque* sensuality.

NENA
Men always leave. They just do.

She hops in the taxi and looks at him through the open window.

CAPTAIN
This one sticks around -- when a woman pays attention to him.

He does an ABOUT FACE and walks away from her. NENA'S visage registers a distant sadness, but then with renewed energy, she leans forward. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA
Take me to San Cristobal in Pinal del Rio.

Taxi driver turns around.

TAXI DRIVER
You crazy? That's in hell's house.

NENA
I'll pay you double.

The taxi PEELS off --

EXT. CUBAN HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

MUSIC PLAYS as NENA stares out of her taxi, watching A FAST MOTION set of IMAGES: the city turning into country.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - TWILIGHT

The taxi drives up to a little hut, which just barely passes for a house. Nena gets out of the taxi and gestures for him to wait a minute. SPANISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA
Anybody there?!

She takes a few steps further. Suddenly, a very rugged, handsome man with Italian looks, REYNALDO, comes to the door. Nena flushes over with delight.

NENA (cont'd)
Reynaldo, is it you?

REYNALDO
NENA!

He runs up to her and lifts her in the air, twirling in circles. No matter how big Nena is, his powerful arms would be able to lift her, like a stick of sugar cane.

NENA
Ay! *Put me down!* Bajame!

He does, and she runs over to the taxi. Pays the driver, and it drives off. Reynaldo waits, smiling, until Nena turns to him with a girlishness about her.

REYNALDO
If you let him go you're screwed
because I don't have a car.

NENA
AY NO!

She turns and runs towards the taxi, which is already speeding off into the distance.

NENA (cont'd)
TAXI! TAXI!

But it's too late. She turns around, shoulders slumped, and walks towards him, and ultimately into his arms.

REYNALDO
Come in.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - TWILIGHT

Nena is drinking a hit of *cafesito* with Reynaldo. She looks at him lovingly.

NENA
From the time I was nine, and you saved me. *Bueno...* I'm still in love with you.

REYNALDO
I saved you?... I just said to get out.

NENA
Can you believe it? What a brave little boy.

REYNALDO
Well, I always cared for you very much, Nena... (*laughs*) Oh, how we played growing up. And you laughed so much. I remember. Nena -- always laughing.

NENA
You remember me?

Pause. They drink.

NENA (cont'd)
Reynaldo, I want you to help me again. I had to give up the house out of pity, but I want the business back.

REYNALDO
Without the deed it looks grim.

NENA
But I have all the other papers.

REYNALDO
As the ball rolls around here, people say they made your father sign a document selling the farm to the government.

NENA
Of course they're going to say that!

REYNALDO
Nena, it's been so many years already. Don't waste your time. The past is the past.

NENA
(stands)
They didn't assassinate your father, did they? But they did mine.

Nena huffs.

REYNALDO
Tell me what I can do.

NENA
First I'll call my lawyer in Miami and forget the rest.

She picks up her cellular, and calls. She checks her nails, and looks around at the filth in the room. Reynaldo peels a sugar cane, and hands her a slice. She accepts it. She glances at him lustfully.

REYNALDO
I know you might be embarrassed now to see her. But talk to Cachita, Nena.

NENA
It's just that I treated her so badly.

REYNALDO
Time for you to right some wrongs.

NENA
What about us? I'm still nine and in love.

REYNALDO
I'm married, Nena.

NENA
What a shame.

Nena shakes her head and smiles at him.

INT. CLUB - CUBA - NIGHT

A HAPPENING SALSA CLUB - The place is MOBBED, with the band in full swing. RICKY is CROONING up a SALSA STORM. JENNY, a few months pregnant, suddenly notices the FINE CUBAN GIRLS tearing at his pants, and can't believe her eyes!

RICKY waves to her from the stage. THE SONG COMES TO A GREAT, UPBEAT CRESCENDO, and then PA-PA-PA! RIOTOUS APPLAUSE! Except for bloated Jenny -- and her huffy crossed arms and scowl.

INT. CUBAN AIRPORT - DAY

JENNY and RICKY stand outside a terminal and argue in an arrivals area.

JENNY
And if you don't find me attractive this way, then tell me.

RICKY
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
Of course you're beautiful.

JENNY
Liar.

A GROUP OF PEOPLE SURFACE from the airplane tarmac. Among them, a tanned, relaxed, and hair gelled USMAIL enters with stunning, blond SVEN.

USMAIL
Hey Jenny.

RICKY
I'm your cousin, Ricky.

USMAIL
Oh, yes... this is Sven.

Sven shakes hands with them. Ricky puts an arm around Jenny.

JENNY
So, how'd you meet Sven?

USMAIL
Long story.

Sven smiles at him. Usmail shushes him behind their backs.

JENNY
Where are you staying?

USMAIL
We're staying with you guys.

RICKY
With us?

She eyes Ricky. He responds with a disgruntled double-take.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - CUBA - AFTERNOON

JENNY shows USMAIL and SVEN their room.

JENNY
It's a queen-sized bed.

USMAIL
Perfect.
(winks at Sven)
We love queens.

JENNY
One of you might have to sleep on the floor. Oh, and it gets very hot at night.

USMAIL and SVEN smile at each other.

JENNY (cont'd)
There's a fan, but we're using it.

USMAIL
Nice.

JENNY
Sorry, bro.

USMAIL
So you married this guy, and he's our cousin?

JENNY
Yeah.

USMAIL
That's kinda sick and gross.

JENNY
And you fudge-packing with Sven seems a lot more sanitary?

Sven is shocked. He looks to Usmail.

USMAIL
Okay, whatever. Good luck. If you choose to live this lifestyle, then that's your business.

JENNY
Okay. Thanks. Later.

She closes the door. Beat.

Usmail and Sven look at each other, drop their bags and lunge at each other at the foot of the bed, falling sideways onto it in a passionate embrace. From outside, JENNY'S VOICE:

JENNY (O.S.) (cont'd)
They're OFFERING YOU SEX every NIGHT!

RICKY (O.S.)
Well, what do you want me to do?! GIVE UP MY CAREER?! You should be GRATEFUL THAT I HAVE A JOB! And that I feed you and let your FAGGOT brother stay in this house.

JENNY (O.S.)
He's NOT a FAGGOT, they're just friends!

USMAIL and SVEN stop making out, widen their eyes, and smile.

EXT. RURAL ROAD IN CUBA - DAY

A taxi ZOOMS down a bumpy road, back towards the city.

INT. CUBAN TAXI - DAY

Nena is on her cell phone, riding these bumps like a bucking horse. A VIEW of PALM TREES and fields of grass ZOOM by.

NENA
Do you think I have recourse?

SPLIT SCREEN:

INT. OFFICE - MIAMI - DAY

A Jewish woman, MARCIA GOLDBERG (40's) with curly, fried fro-like hair -- which she's developed the habit of primping and scrunching constantly -- answers:

MARCIA
Nena, I think you've got a case.

NENA
But they say that without the deed -- and then that there are people that are going to side with the current owners, because that's all they've known.

MARCIA
I understand --

NENA
I'm worried --

MARCIA
You know what, there are a billion cases about this very same thing going around now. Let me take care of it, Nena.

NENA
Marcia Goldberg, you are a life saver.

MARCIA
Can't do a thing with this Streisand pouf.

NENA
I'm hoping for a *mitzvah*.

MARCIA
Pray.

The city comes into view for Nena through the taxi driver's windshield wipers. She sighs, and looks straight ahead.

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE - CUBA - DAY - RAINING

It's raining harder now on the dilapidated, wooden house.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - CUBA - DAY - RAINING

HORTENSE wheels herself quietly to USMAIL's room, and opens the door. USMAIL is alone, in bed, and to his horror -- She GETS UP FROM THE WHEELCHAIR, and walks to the CLOSET -- opens the door and finds Sven NAKED, covering his privates with his hands.

She has a HEART ATTACK right before their eyes! Takes a couple of steps backwards and falls, seated, square into her wheelchair!

SVEN
(astounded, shaking Usmail)
Do something!

USMAIL
Reeeelaaaaxxx.

USMAIL is nonchalant. HORTENSE goes into the final throes!

USMAIL (cont'd)
If *that's* what's gonna kill 'er --

He shrugs, looks at Sven, whose eyes are popping out.

HORTENSE
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
I'm glad I burnt you!

He shows her the scar on his arm, flips her a bird, and shrugs, simultaneously pulling Sven over, kissing him some more.

At the sight of this, she gulps one last breath of life, reaching out simulating strangling him from a distance then -- hunches over, dead. Usmail kicks the chair out the door with his foot. It slowly wheels the old lady backwards. He SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT.

Nena charges in through the front door, drenched.

NENA
Mamá!... I found out from Reynaldo that Cachita the black maid is still alive!

Usmail comes out of his room with shorts on. Jenny comes out of another room in a sundress with Ricky in tow.

NENA (cont'd)
Where's Mamá?

Usmail looks to Jenny.

SMASH CUT TO:

MOMENTS LATER - Nena is beating the tar out of Usmail.

NENA (cont'd)
So the first thing you do, you maricón, is to land in *this* country, in *this* house and -- kill my mother?!

USMAIL
She died of natural causes!

NENA
No, she didn't because you -- you -- and your sister are both unnatural. You're both children of *SATANAS*!

USMAIL
Old ladies have heart attacks all the time!

NENA
You're gonna give ME a heart attack you *DEJENERADO*!

Finally, Nena runs out of steam. She reaches the hallway where the old lady is still sitting. Nena crawls on her knees to Hortense, sobbing.

NENA (cont'd)
Ay Mamá!... There were so many things left to say! So many things about our future that only you knew! This is one tragedy after the other. How can I be so unlucky?

JENNY
What are you talking about Mom?

NENA
Only your grandmother knew if Papá signed away the business to the communists, or not, you idiots!

USMAIL
What business? That business is gone.

NENA
I want to die.

She erupts in tears on the floor before Hortense.

JENNY
(crossed arms, callous)
Mom, she lived a full life.

NENA
If you don't shut up right now --

Nena gets up, walks into one of the rooms and SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT, leaving Jenny, Ricky, and Usmail standing there.

Out of another room, Sven peeks his head out , but Usmail widens his eyes at him and waves his hand indicating he should get back in, which Sven does gladly, closing his door quietly.

JENNY
What are we gonna do, Usmail?

USMAIL
I don't care.

RICKY
She's our grandmother.

USMAIL
Let's burn 'er.

JENNY
They’re gonna want an open casket.

USMAIL
You know what? Don’t worry, I’ll take care of the arrangements.

USMAIL pops out his cell phone and dials, grinning.

INT. IRENE’S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - SOUTH BEACH - DAY

Irene, now pregnant, is cooking a Cuban meal in the kitchen. Fried plantains, black beans, rice, and heating up espresso. She’s expert at keeping everything from boiling over. PEOPLE CHEER ON THE TV! A BEAUTIFUL MODEL stands before the white, numbered balls circling inside the LOTTO barrel. As the numbers surface, Andy sips his beer, and Maria sits around her sister’s casual Art Deco apartment.

MARIA
You only need one, Andy!

IRENE
Ay Dios mio!

ANDY
Aaaaand, Fifty-five!

They JUMP FOR JOY!

MARIA
AHHHH! YOU WIN! This is so exciting!

ANDY
Here’s my American dream, Maria! It’s happening.

MARIA
What are we going to do with the money?

ANDY
We? Who said we?

MARIA
Bueno -- I was thinking...

He puts the ticket in his pocket.

ANDY
As soon as people have anything, everybody’s on their back.

MARIA
I’m on your back?

ANDY
No, but I heard *you* were from some of the guys in the ship. I heard what you did, and I --

MARIA
You what? *Hijo de puta*. I did that for you. For us. I stayed for you. I could have left years ago with my family!

ANDY
I didn't ask you to do it. I would have preferred to stay in jail.

MARIA
Oh, you say that now, when I've gotten you to this country and you win. When did you ever make a sacrifice for me?

ANDY
Sacrifice? I heard you enjoyed it.

Maria SLAPS him with all her might across his face.

MARIA
You were the communist! Not me! I stayed for you!

ANDY
Yeah? Well don't ever do anything for me again!

Andy leaves. Maria grabs a nearby vase, and SMASHES it against the door!

IRENE
That was expensive, okay?

MARIA
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
Oh Irene, what a piece of shit, that man.

IRENE
Listen to me.

MARIA
What?

IRENE
If you're going to live here with me, I have to tell you. I'm a pregnant lesbian. Don't throw things at me.

MARIA
So?

IRENE
So... that's all.

MARIA
And your baby?

IRENE
I inseminated myself with the sperm of a Swedish gigolo.

MARIA
(gently)
Sounds terrific, Irene!

IRENE
Don't judge me.

MARIA
Maybe you've had the right idea all along.

IRENE
No, my girlfriend dumped me when she heard I was pregnant.

She hugs Irene, and rubs her belly. Irene cries with her, relieved at her sister's acceptance.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE IN CUBA - NIGHT

Hearing the rain outside, RICKY and JENNIFER make love. He suddenly stops:

RICKY
Do you feel weird having sex where our grandmother just died?

JENNY
In America, we have a saying.

RICKY
What is it?

JENNY
Incest is best.

RICKY
I'm gonna cum.

He does, she moans, and he PUTS HIS HAND OVER HER MOUTH. They sexually peak simultaneously.

EXT. CEMETERY - CUBA - DAY

Several monotonous grey rows of grave stones. In the morning, under light rain, NENA and USMAIL, wearing all black, stroll along the cemetery.

USMAIL
I hated her.

Nena drapes her arm around his as they promenade. They compare scars. She considers hers fondly.

NENA
That was her way of loving us.

Nena shudders, a bit dizzy, but okay.

NENA (cont'd)
Well, are you a top or a bottom?

USMAIL
What?

NENA
I wanted to know what kind of homo you are. Do you give it to Sven, or do you take it?

USMAIL
What makes you think it's exclusively one or the other?

They stand at a part of the cemetery from which the ocean can be seen. A huge, grey tanker passes behind them.

NENA
That's a disgusting thought, but it reminds me of falling in love with your father.

USMAIL
Really? You loved him?

NENA
I fell in love with your father longing to go to America for about forty-five seconds when we conceived you. We'd gone by the harbor and made love to the view of the passing American ships. And I named you what we saw emblazoned across those ships. USMAIL. In English: U.S. MAIL.

USMAIL
That's horrible! You never told me that!

NENA
You never told me you were gay until now. Just wanna see how *you* like it -- so take that little piece of info. and store it somewhere painful.

USMAIL
It's *that* painful? I mean, I'm in love with somebody and I'm happy.

NENA
I'll never have grandchildren will I?

USMAIL
Probably not, unless I adopt.

NENA
May the Lord protect us from that.

USMAIL
Jenny will have children.

NENA
They won't be Jenny's, they'll be *Jerry's* kids.

USMAIL
Mami... Do you still love me?

She puts one hand on his cheek, and reveals a tender, sincere look on her face. She peers into her first born's eyes.

NENA
I doubt it... But I'm still thinking about it. I'll keep you posted.

They continue walking.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - CUBA - DAY

They're watching TV at the funeral. *CRISTINA* goes to commercial, and a REPORTER appears with news about the hurricane, although we only see the IMAGES.

The somberly dressed CROWD mill about. Nena is the center of it, with her closest relatives most DISTANT from her. USMAIL sits somewhere in a far corner, behind the crowd:

USMAIL
And they named me after American mail! Can you believe that *shit*?

SVEN
Your family is insane.

NENA leans over Hortense's casket.

NENA
Oh my God!

CASKET WITH HORTENSE inside. Hortense has been given extra long lashes, powdered with a whitish talc, and sports a mole next to her tightly pursed maroon lips. Nena stifles vomit.

NENA (cont'd)
USMAIIIIL! ... I'll never survive this.

Through the front door, from the POV of an ashtray, AL shows up lookin' like a Cuban Pimp.

RICKY
Is that your father?

Jenny, dressed morbidly, sighs and bows her head.

USMAIL
It's like if I'm going to bear your fuckin' scar for the rest of my life, and I live *longer*? You're in trouble.

SVEN
I hope you die first.

At another corner of the room, Nena talks on her cell phone:

NENA
(into the phone)
No. No... NO! NO!

Everybody HUSHES and looks over to Nena, about to implode! Her corpulent AUNT BETTY (70's) wobbles over, weighing in more than Nena twice over. She SLAPS Nena in the back full force! SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

AUNT BETTY
What happened?!

Nena is so taken aback by this slap -- it is *she* who usually does the slapping -- that she turns around and YELLS IN HER AUNT'S FACE AT FULL VOLUME:

NENA
Maria JUST WON THE LOTTERY!

EVERYONE CHEERS!

NENA (cont'd)
Maria, I'm so happy for you...

She moves aside to a hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Nena stands against a corner. PEOPLE mill about behind her.

NENA
(on her cell phone)
She died in peace. Usmail killed her... Maria, *no llores*; don't cry. They're all here. And no one has any plastic surgery, unbelievable. I know you can't come now. What?... Oh, what a shame. Oh, honeeeeeyyy... I'm so sorry. You blew -- and he dumped you? No, your life is not shit. We're three sisters, and none of us is wise enough to stay away from the men! *Bueno*, I've got to go, Maria. Oh, really? Performing? You? Where? South Beach? That's fantastic! Okay, well break a vocal chord! Life's too short, Maria. Life is a man. Take it by the balls. Irene did ***WHAT?***

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - VIEWING ROOM - DAY

Nena rejoins the room, her mascara drippy, peering over her nose at JENNY with RICKY, and USMAIL with SVEN. The PRIEST (40), stands before Nena and smiles serenely.

NENA
And we're supposed to call you "father"?

PRIEST
If you please.

NENA
Please.

PRIEST
Ladies and gentlemen.

The crowd SHUSHES.

PRIEST (cont'd)
We are all gathered here --

Aunt Betty pushes her way up the middle aisle. She holds a glass of wine and she's a little flushed. Her round face perspiring, and indignant. SPANISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

AUNT BETTY
Hey! This is CUBA! Here we speak Spanish!

PRIEST
I was asked to speak in English.

NENA
(to the Priest)
Mamá was bilingual.

The priest stands behind the pulpit. IN ENGLISH:

PRIEST
Today we are gathered here.

Nena heads for the pulpit. She squeezes the priest out.

NENA
I have a few words about my mother I'd like to say.

Before the priest knows it, he's been knocked into sitting.

NENA (cont'd)
I've been very sad the last couple of weeks with the death of my mother, and a separation of my husband.

PEOPLE GASP, look at each other in stunned disbelief.

AUNT BETTY
QUE?!

NENA
If you don't understand, tough *tetas*! So shut up!

Aunt Betty clicks her tongue, rolls her eyes, and folds her arms.

NENA (cont'd)
My son is a faggot, my daughter's incestuous with her cousin. You all know this.

THE CROWD MURMURS. Jenny and Ricky are wide-eyed, and paralyzed. Usmail and Sven on the other hand, tighten the grip on their interlaced fingers, smiling broadly.

USMAIL
(whispers)
Finally, this is getting good.

NENA
How can I save you all? With Irene giving birth to a bastard son of an Italian whore, to my son the *maricón* and his blond boy toy, to my incestuous daughter getting knocked up and probably spitting out a retard -- that child will be among his own.

People PERK UP: *What did she just say?* In walks the CAPTAIN, and stands in a corner listening. She sees him and her eyes brighten. His energy in the room is wind to her sail.

NENA (cont'd)
My mother is dead.

USMAIL waves at everyone as if he were on a float.

NENA (cont'd)
What do I do with the ones that live? Kick them in the *cojones* every day?... After a while I'm tired.

Bewildered RELATIVES AND FRIENDS look at each other.

NENA (cont'd)
And you see that man back there?

Nena points at the Captain, who shifts his weight uncomfortably. The room GASPS.

NENA (cont'd)
I'm going to live with him in SIN! And I'm going to ENJOY LIVING IN SIN for the rest of my life! Okay?

Aunt Betty wobbles up to her, nodding her head sideways. Then SLAPS NENA SO HARD, that her SPIT IS SEEN FLYING IN SLOW MOTION -- like a jab thrown at ROCKY.

AUNT BETTY
(Spanish)
Don't talk any more shit defaming my sister and this family. Get out of there.

Nena holds her face, and looks at Aunt Betty incredulously, while she makes a fist out of her right hand -- when suddenly, she stops herself.

Observing the Captain, she lifts a hand to her pained face, smiles, and shrugs. Nena sighs now, achieving a certain state of ZEN. She walks over to him, folds her arms and leans in:

NENA
This is all of them. I'm sorry.

CAPTAIN
Nothing in life is perfect.

NENA
Please... You are.

He grins. They watch Aunt Betty weep at the podium.

AUNT BETTY
(Spanish, weeping)
... and she burnt me with her cigar!

EXT. CEMETERY - CUBA - DAY

Nena throws dirt on the coffin, and they lower the body. Holding Nena by the arm, is Usmail. AL, walks towards Nena and Usmail from the parking lot, limping on his cane.

AL
Nena, I feel your pain.

NENA
And it's about time.

AL
Before Castro died, and I could never see my own mother, and she was like a mother to me. You know? I loved the old broad.

NENA
Well, thank you. I accept your apologies.

AL
Who's apologizing? You shot me.

NENA
You cheated on me. Five times. I'd be better off if you'd shot me dead!

AL
Nena, I did you wrong and I repent.

NENA
Yeah? For giving me useless children?

Usmail lets her go, and she semi-trips for a step.

AL
They're around <u>you</u> now. Are you never satisfied?

Jenny comes up walking slowly through the grave stones with Ricky. Sven also catches up, flanked by the Captain.

AL (cont'd)
That's why I cheated on you, Nena. Because nothing was ever enough for you. Our children grew up wanting your love and support, and what did you give them? *Patadas!* Kicks in the head. "Mami, I got an "A" in class today." "You can do better than that. Where's the plus?"

NENA
Shut up, you're an idiot. Usmail, *ayudame*!

USMAIL
No, walk by yourself.

Usmail joins Sven, whom he takes by the arm. Buffy quietly sidles up to Al, leaning her head against his arm, until he reaches over and pats it lovingly. Nena -- still walking, now looks to her sides, and notices no one is there. Jenny walks past her with Ricky. The only ones who dare.

NENA
You're leaving before me?

JENNY
We're not leaving with you.

NENA
You're my daughter. You have to leave with me.

JENNY
Mama, when will you understand that I need respect.

NENA
Why should I respect you?

JENNY
Because -- I don't know why! But you have to! That's why everybody hates you, Mami!

NENA
Nobody hates me.

She looks around at the listless CROWD of FUNERAL GUESTS.

BUFFY
I hate you! And I've just bought a plot of land in the burial spot right next to where you bought yours to prove it!

She proudly holds up the receipt.

BUFFY (cont'd)
I'll be seeing you in hell, witch!

Al turns her around, and they walk off together, him soothing her. They disband from the mass.

NENA
So you all hate ME?!

JENNY
Yes.

NENA
Even though I always find a place in my heart to love ALL of you! You perverts are my family! And I have to love you no matter what!

CACHITA, now much older, in her 70's, walks up arm in arm with AUNT BETTY.

CACHITA
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
Nena, you have to love people in Spanish, not in English.

Cachita pats her on the face, and keeps walking. Nena is left dumbfounded. Alone. She opens her black umbrella: WHOOSH! She walks to her car, forlorn. She's marvelled to find the CAPTAIN sitting there, waiting for her, smoking a cigar.

CAPTAIN
How'd it go?

NENA
My mother's dead, and I'm sentenced to an afterlife next to my husband's mistress. My children -- no, correction, my whole family hates me, and the only one willing to impart some advice is the woman I spat on as a child.

CAPTAIN
A typical day in the life of Nena.

WHOOSH! Nena shuts the umbrella, opens the door to her car.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
I'm here to tell you -- I'm taking off.

Behind him rain clouds gather, and a flash of lighting with a CRASH OF THUNDER is heard.

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE IN CUBA - NIGHT

TORRENTIAL RAIN AND WIND. Palm trees bend madly in the wind. This is INTERCUT with other HURRICANE DISASTER IMAGES across the country.

THROUGH THE WINDOW - Nena pacing, holding a phone receiver. Nena can hear the SOUND OF A PHONE RINGING. On her television set a REPORTER speaks, followed by IMAGES OF CUBA ATTACKED BY HURRICANE NENA!

CAPTAIN (FILTERED V.O.)
Hello, this is Captain Tom Nülief. Please leave a message.

NENA
If you don't call me back, I'm going to die. Do you hear me?

She hangs up and goes to her special box, where she extracts a cigar and lights it. She looks around in the rooms.

INT. USMAIL'S BEDROOM - MARIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She peeks in. Usmail is in bed, and Sven is in a chair reading.

INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM - MARIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jenny is "about-to-pop" pregnant. She's having a bad dream. She moves her head from side to side. Nena waves to Ricky, who is lying next to Jenny, watching a TV on the boudoir.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She returns to the living room and stands by the window. NENA smokes a cigar to the tune of "FUMANDO ESPERO" by Sarita Montiel. The rain on the window glass streams like tears on her face.

A chunk of a palm tree SMACKS against Maria's house as the storm intensifies. She opens the door, and in spite of the storm, defiantly walks out of the house!

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE - CUBA - NIGHT

THUNDER. LIGHTING. In the RAIN, by the light of a lamp post, Nena surfaces from the house and stands on the front lawn.

NENA
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
DAMN TO HELL THIS EVIL WIND! MY GOD, I REPENT FOR USING THAT BLACK MAGIC! FORGIVE ME!

Nena's face radiates blue. She looks up at the lamp light, rain clearing her eyes, jolting a memory:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WEALTHY LIVING ROOM - DAY - CUBA 1959

SEPIA & DUST.

Nena sits on the couch with Cachita ironing. Her father, wiping off rooster blood, calls Cachita over to him. He hands her some money, and papers, and whispers something in her ear to which Nena is not privy.

Cachita pockets what he gives her in her apron, and nods affirmative. She puts her hand to his cheek. He almost weeps looking her eye to eye.

THREE BEARDED MEN, wearing army green, and carrying heavy machine guns SMASH THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR, causing NENA to SCREAM.

REYNALDO, here a little boy of around Nena's age, runs in. He takes Nena by the hand and tries to urge her out of the house. Cachita stands still against the wall, holding a sleeping INFANT. Hortense shows up in the hallway, drunk and disheveled.

HORTENSE
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
What's going on here?!

Nena sees her Father being dragged out onto the back of the property by the men. She escapes from the boy's hands and watches.

They question him, SLAP him, PUNCH him. Then one of the men holds up a paper and a pen. He makes Nena's father sign it. Reynaldo grabs Nena and hauls her out.

Cachita takes a mesmerized Hortense by the arm, and carries the infant IRENE, and Maria (2), out the door. SMACK! Once again the father, now with a bloodied face, gets WHACKED.

Nena, at the door, looks back, and unfortunately -- SEES ONE OF THE MEN pick up his gun, PULL THE TRIGGER -- EXPLOSION OF LIGHT LIKE LIGHTING, THEN BLOOD!

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE - CUBA - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

In the rain, Nena falls down to her knees, sobbing, when out of the house wearing a robe comes USMAIL. He stands outside dumbfounded at the sight of this. Behind him, the others show up.

USMAIL
Mami, I've already forgiven you for my name.

NENA
I know, go inside.

USMAIL
You're gonna get sick. What are you doing?

NENA
I'm asking the gods not to destroy us.

USMAIL
Can't you do that from inside?

Nena sobs uncontrollably.

NENA
For the first time, I'm close to having the first thing I wanted. This hurricane is going to take it!

USMAIL
Mom, that's completely unfounded.

Nena opens her arms at the heavens! THUNDER! LIGHTNING! Enough to make the others step back into the house a couple of steps.

NENA
I AM THE HURRICANE! I'M DESTROYING MY OWN LIFE WITH PARANOIA -- WITH FAITH IN THESE... GODS!

A THUNDER BOLT answers Nena, and the gods make the WIND grow more intense. Just then, a RANGE ROVER pulls up and SCREECHES to a HALT. The CAPTAIN hops out, and immediately runs over to Nena. By instinct, he picks her wet body off the grassy mud.

NENA (cont'd)
Where... have you been?

CAPTAIN
Nena, you're losing it.

NENA
No, Captain -- I think I just found it.

USMAIL, SVEN, JENNY and RICKY walk back in the house. The CAPTAIN carries NENA back into the house like a groom carrying his bride through the threshold.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

TITLE : NINE MONTHS LATER.

EXT. IRENE'S APARTMENT - SOUTH BEACH - TWILIGHT

Maria has settled in with her sister, IRENE, who is now very pregnant. Irene sags on the couch with the TV on "SABADO GIGANTE".

IRENE
I'm pregnant. My girlfriend left me. How low can you go?

Maria shows up with a plate of *platanitos* and sets it in front of her. Irene gorges on them.

MARIA
You know what I think to myself sometimes?

IRENE
I miss Fidel.

MARIA
Ay niña, don't talk nonsense.

IRENE
You don't feel like that?

MARIA
Of course I do -- I lived my life there, and brought up my child, had a career. I know what you mean, but I can't go back now, Irene. I wanted to come here so badly for so many years. Well, now what?

IRENE
OW! Oh my God! I think it's happening!

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - JENNY'S ROOM - CUBA - AFTERNOON

Jenny is giving birth to her baby, with Cachita and Nena alongside her, helping.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CUBA - AFTERNOON

Nena shoves a cigar in Ricky's mouth.

NENA
You know what you get when you gamble with nature?

RICKY
Yes... a perfect baby.

Cachita shows up holding the NEWBORN.

NENA
What are you naming him?

RICKY
Fidel.

Nena makes a face at the name, but can't help but fall in love with the baby.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MIAMI - DAY

IRENE HOLDS HER CRYING BABY - Next to her are ROSIE and JOHN and the KIDS talking to Maria.

ROSIE
I saw her out there. She's beautiful.

IRENE
Well, that's what I paid for.

Irene smiles weakly.

MARIA
Congratulations!

Maria leans over to Irene and kisses her on the forehead.

MARIA (cont'd)
I have to go. I'll see you all there, yeah?

EVA
Mom won't let us go.

JUNIOR
We really wanna see you perform, Maria!

PAQUITO
(removes pacifier)
Yeah!

Maria giggles, grabs her stuff and rushes out the door.

EXT. SOUTH BEACH SIDEWALK - TWILIGHT

Maria walks along the street to the song "PURO TEATRO", by C. Curet Alonso, as crooned by Maria HERSELF. Andy steps out from behind a couple of store fronts. He walks briskly down the street, obviously having staked her out. He runs up behind her. Taps her on the shoulder. She turns around. He's flipping his usual coin.

ANDY
Maria.

MARIA
What do you want with me?

ANDY
I want you to return to me.

MARIA
I don't need your money. Keep it.

She tries to keep walking but he impedes her from doing so.

ANDY
I lost it all at the dog track... I lost everything.

MARIA
(laughs)
I have to go.

She turns with an extra flick of her neck. Andy notices that above her is a halo-like glow coming from a billboard that reads: “EL CLUB PACHANGA presenta MARIA Y SU ORQUESTA! SOLD OUT!” He runs up to her and tries to grab her arm.

ANDY
Loved you for twenty years and gave you a son!

She YANKS it loose -- adjusts her bra straps, and takes a dollar from her purse.

MARIA
That’s enough.

ANDY
I’m so beaten down.

MARIA
(stuffing it in his pocket)
Here. Buy yourself a lottery ticket.

She turns, and walks further towards the theatre, her face dripping with tears. Over her shoulder, his small image is left standing pathetically alone. ANDY drops his coin. It lands on “heads”.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BONGO NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Maria, dressed as a matador, SINGS on stage. She adds layers to her costume, slowly becoming a SPANISH DIVA.

JOHN and ROSIE are there, sitting at the club alongside another YOUNG COUPLE -- all decked out to the nines. They toast as she sings.

MARIA
(sings)
“Perdona que no te crea. Lo tuyo es puro teatroooo!” (I’m sorry for not believing you. Your act is pure theatre!)

Upon hitting this FINAL HIGH NOTE, she whips out a Spanish fan and gyrates it circularly. She SNAPS the fan closed.

THE CROWD GOES WILD!

EXT. CUBAN COURTHOUSE - DAY

To establish --

INT. CUBAN COURTHOUSE - DAY

A large MASS OF PEOPLE is assembled here today. Practically EVERYONE in NENA's life... with the exception of AL.

Nena's lawyer MARCIA is there going through her notes. A JURY of very INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS observes the proceedings. Across from them sits an ENTOURAGE OF ITALIAN GENTLEMEN (40's-60's) with a very polished, but sweaty Cuban lawyer with a pot belly (60) named MANNY CRESPO.

JUDGE ARTURO FERNANDEZ, a black Cuban man (80's), wearing spectacles and a head of white hair walks in. CACHITA arrives making her way into the room quietly, helped by REYNALDO, who clutches her arm respectfully.

COURTROOM GUARD
All rise.

EVERYONE RISES.

COURTROOM GUARD (cont'd)
Court is now in session for the case of Nena Huracán versus Italian Enterprises.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Now, where we left off was finding out who has the deed?

MANNY
We have the deed.

Nena puts her head in her hands.

CACHITA
(Spanish w/English subtitles, to Reynaldo)
What's he saying?

Reynaldo shushes her gently.

MANNY
This is a document evidencing that Italian Enterprises has been making hand made cigars in Cuba for the past twenty years.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Bring that to me please.

The judge surveys the letter. NENA looks behind her and examines the crowd. Everyone's there. Yes, even Usmail, Sven, Jenny and Ricky.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ (cont'd)
And this is his signature?

MARCIA
I argue that it isn't.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Counselor?

MARCIA
Well, I argue that that document was signed on the night that Nena's father was murdered by the Castro government.

The COURT RUSTLES.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Quiet please.

MARCIA
And any document signed under duress --

MANNY
I object.

JUDGE
Over ruled.

MARCIA
So, if we want to get to the bottom of this, we have to consider forthcoming testimony from the witness about the night her father was killed by the government after he was made to sign those papers at gun point. Please observe the date of the signature and the date of the death.

JUDGE
It's signed one day after his death.

NENA FLASHES BACK TO:

INT. WEALTHY LIVING ROOM - DAY - CUBA 1959

SEPIA & DUST... Nena's father hands Cachita money and a letter. He whispers something in her ear. She pockets it, and nods to him.

INT. COURT ROOM - CUBA - DAY

Nena turns her face, and sees Cachita smiling brightly at her.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
So what are you holding up as evidence, Ms. Goldberg?

MARCIA
Nena Huracán's memory, and that of several people in this very room, who know the story. What man would give everything away quite so willingly?

MANNY CRESPO
A man who had cancer. That date thing is a technicality.

MARCIA
What?

JUDGE
Do you have evidence of this?

MANNY CRESPO
(grinning)
Of course I have evidence of this.

Manny gets a file handed down from the furthest ITALIAN SUIT in the room. Manny hands it to the judge. The JURY MEMBERS CHATTER among themselves. Nena looks worried.

MANNY
I'd like to present that as Exhibit B. The government was about to be toppled, Mr. Huracán was of the bourgeoisie, and had a mortal disease. He knew it would be a bright choice.

JUDGE
Marcia, you're in trouble...

Judge Fernandez sneezes. Marcia looks to Nena, who tries not to laugh.

JUDGE (cont'd)
I think that counsel should take a day to reassess, as I'm just getting over the flu... From the looks of it, both your arguments better be good. Thank you.

He POUNDS the GAVEL, SNEEZES, hurries out. PEOPLE STIR.

MARCIA
Nena, you didn't tell me he had cancer.

NENA
What? Was I supposed to know that's important?

MARCIA
Well, if you look at how they presented it, it is!

Cachita walks closer. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

CACHITA
My girl, come by my house this afternoon. I invite you to a little coffee.

NENA
Oh, I don't know... Okay, all right, Cachita. Expect me around three.

Cachita holds her face and smiles. She walks away with the help of anyone that happens to be filing out alongside her. Nena watches as Marcia packs up her stuff. She's frustrated.

MARCIA
Nena, you can't send me blind into the battlefield.

NENA
I never thought this would pose a threat.

MARCIA
You better cough up the spirit of your father right here with your Santería if you want to win.

Scrunches her hair. Leers at Nena.

INT. CACHITA'S APARTMENT - CUBA - DAY

Cachita lives simply. Her modest home is a virtual temple to the gods of the Yoruba religion of Africa. She opens her door, and there stands Nena, uncomfortable. SPANISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA
Ay, Cachita, I forgot you lived here.

CACHITA
Yes, my child. Since you were young. Sit.

Nena sits. Cachita hands her espresso coffee in a small cup.

CACHITA (cont'd)
Here. Coffee.

Nena takes it and sips. Cachita sits down.

CACHITA (cont'd)
You have problems.

NENA
Yes, Cachita. Well all this about my father's business worries me the most.

CACHITA
I know. I heard what you promised your father before his death... How beautiful... And you so young.

She wipes a tear. Nena puts the coffee cup aside and holds the old woman's brown hands.

NENA
Oh, Cachita, don't cry... I want to ask forgiveness.

CACHITA
To me?

Cachita laughs.

NENA
Yes, to you. For all that I said. What did I know? A daddy's girl who always did what she wanted. I should have been born a giraffe, Cachita.

CACHITA
Why, my dear?

NENA
Because they have no vocal chords.

Nena cries on her lap.

CACHITA
Don't weep, my child. You never offended me. Because even then, so many years ago, Cachita was still older than you.

Nena composes her self. With much trouble, Cachita wobbles over to a cabinet. She opens it, and retracts a single letter, and hands it to Nena.

CACHITA (cont'd)
So that you'll be proud of who your father was. Read it.

Nena opens the letter and reads. As she reads on, her emotions grow from deep sadness, to delight to sadness again. A sigh, then relief.

NENA
Thank you Cachita! You keep saving our lives.

CACHITA
(laughs)
Hey, but when they return the business to you, throw a couple of pennies Cachita's way, okay?

Cachita LAUGHS boisterously, and Nena is tickled. Cachita holds up Nena's little gold bracelet.

CACHITA (cont'd)
You used to wear this all the time when you were little. I kept it for you.

Nena eyes the bracelet dangling on Cachita's finger. She takes it delicately and holds it to her heart, looking at Cachita lovingly.

NENA
Gracias, Cachita.

They embrace.

INT. COURT ROOM - CUBA - DAY

PROFESSOR MARKS is on the stand. A wiry, bulbous-headed fellow with a cadence which makes it evident he spends his life in a lab.

PROFESSOR MARKS
(too close into his mike)
Yes...

COURT ROOM cringes.

PROFESSOR MARKS (cont'd)
(close again)
In my professional opinion --

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Not so close to the microphone, Professor Marks.

PROFESSOR MARKS
All right... Um -- in my opinion, I would say that this signature is quite similar to all the others. I would say that yes, they are legitimate.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Thank you. Counsel?

MARCIA
Yes, I'd like the professor to tell me if this letter I hold in my hand also bears the signature of Mr. Huracán. Please check the accuracy, professor.

She hands him the letter, which he surveys from afar, moving it about in all different directions, and at different distances from his bespectacled nose.

PROFESSOR MARKS
Well, upon first inspection, I'd say it's legitimate. I'd have to study it further.

Nena clicks her tongue.

MARCIA
Can you please read it?

PROFESSOR MARKS
Me?

MARCIA
Yes, please, so that the court can hear its contents.

PROFESSOR MARKS
I couldn't possibly.

NENA
(stands, furious)
And why not?! This is staged!

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
Silencio!

POUNDS THE GAVEL.

PROFESSOR MARKS
(timidly into the mike)
Because I don't speak Spanish.

PEOPLE LAUGH. The judge looks at Nena over his glasses. She catches herself, and seats herself quietly. The judge's resplendent voice MIXES in with THE VOICE OF THE FATHER:

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
I'll translate as I read... "Dear Nena, I write you this letter today because it will probably be the last day of my life.

NENA FLASHES BACK AND SEES IMAGES from her DREAMS of SEPIA & DUST.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ (cont'd)
"Whether the cancer kills me, or the government does, remains to be seen. But know this: They want me to sign away the business. I am a weakling. If they torture me, I'll have to sign in order to make it an easy death."

NENA FLASHES BACK TO IMAGES of her father being assassinated.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ (cont'd)
"Keep this as proof that I have signed against my will. I will give this to Cachita..."

MARCIA
I rest my case.

The judge puts down his glasses, and looks to Nena.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
This is clearly evidence, Ms. Goldberg. We will recess for one hour, and return with the verdict.

Marcia smiles, and scrunches her over-permed hair proudly. Behind her, the COURT ROOM CLOCK'S HANDS MOVE FROM 3PM TO 4PM.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COURT ROOM - CUBA - DAY - LATER

The JURY WALKS IN AND SITS. The judgement is handed over to the judge from the international jury. In through the door walk ROSIE, JOHN and the KIDS. They stand there, and wave to Nena, who looks anguished.

JUDGE FERNANDEZ
This jury finds in favor of Nena Huracán.

(MORE)

JUDGE FERNANDEZ (cont'd)
All property of CIGARROS HECHO A MANO must be returned to her within the time span of one month. Case closed.

Judge POUNDS THE GAVEL! Nena's FAMILY STANDS AND CHEERS!

EXT. HAND MADE CIGARS - CUBA - DAY

FIREWORKS POUND the SKY and EXPLODE! Below is a GAGGLE of PRESS PEOPLE gathered before the establishment. Nena opens the door to her store to HUGE APPLAUSE! POOF! Pictures of Nena, the diva. SPANISH W/ENGLISH SUBTITLES:

NENA
Very many thanks to all for coming!

AN IMPORTANT MAN hands her a pair of scissors, with which she cuts a red ribbon behind her.

NENA (cont'd)
This is the first business to be returned to a Cuban family post-communism! LONG LIVE DEMOCRACY!

PEOPLE CHEER: "VIVA!" The press follow Nena as she unveils a "HAND MADE CIGARS" sign (in English) displayed on a broad sign over Nena's revamped business. An OLD CUBAN MAN's hands roll a cigar. On a table nearby, cigars are being given away for free. To a nearby CAMERA:

NENA (cont'd)
Orelio has been working for this company for years. He's the best at what he does.

ORELIO
Gracias, Nena.

He hands her a cigar. She lights up, and the CROWD cheers! AL GETS IN FRONT OF THE CAMERAS PHOTOGRAPHING NENA.

AL
This woman used to be my wife, and she's a terrible person. She's taken away my job!

Nena is trying to get back in front of the camera at all costs. She pulls him away. The REPORTER's CAMERAS SEE THEM GESTICULATING AWAY in a small hallway in between establishments. Nena SMACKS Al. Al SMACKS her back.

INT. SMALL HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Nena pulls her bra straps back in place.

NENA
What do you think?

AL
I think that the least I deserve is my old job back... This time, it's strictly business, Nena... I never cheated the business.

Nena sighs. He's right. The CAMERAS with their OPEN IRISES are staring at her from afar. She stands upright and walks out. Al chases after her. She stands before the press, and they shush.

NENA
Ladies and gentlemen, meet the new President of Shipping, *Al Picante*.

Like PIRANHA, they turn to AL, who looks into the lenses nervously.

INT. NENA'S LIVING ROOM - NENA'S NEW HOUSE IN CUBA - DAY

MUSICAL MONTAGE: A REMIX of Sarita Montiel's "NENA" with a Techno beat with RICKY singing. Then, SPLIT SCREEN - RIGHT SIDE - NENA MAKING TELEPHONE CALLS from her kitchen, porch, while she's putting on make up, rolling a cigar, cooking, etc. SPLIT SCREEN - LEFT SIDE - FAST IMAGES of just about everyone in the movie, holding phones surprised to receive the call.

EXT. SHIP DECK - CUBAN PORT - DAY

TITLE: "FOURTH OF JULY". NENA's new CAPTAIN hubby puts suntan oil on Nena. They relax on his ship. *This is a different Nena. More relaxed and sure of herself.*

CAPTAIN
You've finally stopped peeling.

RICKY'S LIVE BAND, called: *Los Marimberos*, is still in the midst of Sarita Montiel's "NENA" instrumentally. They've propped themselves up on a mini stage near the front of the ship. Nena walks past.

IRENE boards the ship with her new BABY, and MARIA. Irene's almost embarrassed about the child.

IRENE
I'm sorry Nena.

NENA
(observing her baby)
Sorry for what?

IRENE
For doing what I've done to the family name.

NENA
Are you kidding? If he grows up to be hot, that'll be a good thing.

IRENE
(sighs)
You're right. I feel like I finally accomplished something, you know?

NENA
So... do you rent the father from time to time?

IRENE
No, your son dates him. Shhh! It's a family secret! By the way, I'm a lesbian.

ALL THREE SISTERS CACKLE WITH LAUGHTER, AND CLINK GLASSES.

MARIA
We'll talk about that later.

NENA
This is the picture for our memory book! PIPO!

PIPO shows up with a camera, and POOFS a picture. The THREE SISTERS hold up their champagne glasses, and smile.

THE CAPTAIN sees the bottle Ricky once cast into the ocean KNOCKING against the side of the ship. He fishes it out of the blue-green water, and hands it to Nena.

NENA (cont'd)
(reads)
"I love you because you're not bitter - you're young and excited about the future -- as opposed to Cuban women. They've lived here all their lives. Living here for them is not an adventure. For me, it still is. That's Cuba to me. Inside you is my future. My child of the past is dead."

CAPTAIN
What do you think?

NENA
A sign from the *gods*.

CAPTAIN
Of course, Nena...
(looks into her eyes)
It's lovely...

She sips a rum & Coke. Her well muscled, bikini-wearing son and boyfriend strut around greeting people, and helping with the beverages and party-stuffs.

USMAIL
(to Sven)
Hey, you ready?

SVEN
Yeah.

He walks up to RICKY and they talk unintelligibly. Suddenly a WEDDING MARCH PLAYS, and PEOPLE gather to the music next to USMAIL and SVEN, on top of a small box.

NENA
That's so romantic.

CAPTAIN
You're really not just about to vomit?

NENA
I've evolved, Captain.

CAPTAIN
Marry me.

NENA
I can't.

CAPTAIN
Why not?

NENA
I promised myself I wouldn't.

CAPTAIN
Will I ever change your mind?

Nena's eyes search his face.

NENA
No. Never... It's pointless now.

He kisses her.

USMAIL and SVEN say their vows in the distance, still in their swimsuits. Suddenly they kiss as Nena turns around to them. She turns to the Captain:

NENA (cont'd)
(sighs, rolls her eyes)
For once, I'm going to mind my own business.

JOHN and ROSIE cover JOHN JUNIOR and PAQUITO's EYES respectively.

PAQUITO
I wanna see! I wanna see!

Maria joins the band and SINGS the next number. EVERYONE CHEERS!

JENNY comes up to SVEN and kisses him on the cheek.

AL holds up a glass of champagne at his son from a distance. USMAIL smiles and waves to him.

CACHITA hugs USMAIL and SVEN. More FRIENDS show up. There's a PARTY atmosphere, as EVERYONE DANCES to the music provided by RICKY & *"Los Marimberos"*. On a crescendo --

BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. NENA'S NEW HOUSE - CUBA - NIGHT

In Cuba. NENA wakes up in her living room easy chair to the sound of LIGHT RAIN. Some of the pictures NENA had in her apartment in Hialeah, are now spread around this new home, which has a distinctly Cuban feel in decor.

But new pictures abound: NENA AND THE CAPTAIN GETTING MARRIED at a SMALL CEREMONY -- that "Sears looking" posed shot, where they're both holding a corsage. Another of a brilliantly smiling NENA, the CAPTAIN, USMAIL, SVEN, JENNY and RICKY with their new baby.

Finally, a picture of the THREE SISTERS on the ship. Nena rises and closes a window -- through which she sees BUFFY in the house one door over.

Behind her is AL, on a recliner chair, fast asleep and drooling. BUFFY waves at Nena. She kindly waves back. Nena checks the rooms of the house --

INT. JENNY'S BEDROOM - NENA'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

She peers in. JENNY and RICKY sleep with their NEWBORN in between them.

INT. USMAIL'S BEDROOM - NENA'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

USMAIL sleeps with SVEN, in a small full bed. Their nude bodies covered only by a white sheet.

INT. NENA'S BEDROOM - NENA'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

Finally, the CAPTAIN in the master bedroom, snoring loudly. This makes her wince. She sighs, and walks back to the living room. She takes a small box and opens it to reveal fresh cigars. She takes one.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: The tip of the CIGAR is lit.

Nena takes a couple of puffs, and notices one last piece of flaking skin on her arm. She looks out past a mirror, and sees, a blur in the mirror --

An amorphous image shows up. Nena spies it out of the corner of her eye. She looks again, and this time, she plainly sees her father. He's leaning against a door frame, smoking a cigar. He smiles at her and nods affirmatively:

FATHER
(Spanish w/English subtitles)
I'm proud of you Nena.

She extinguishes her cigar, shivers and rocks in the chair, finally and for once -- satisfied and at peace. A single tear rolls down Nena's cheek.

INT. NENA'S LIVING ROOM - NENA'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

The CAPTAIN OPENS HIS EYES, mumbling to himself and opens a nearby drawer. He puts on one of Nena's pink, frilly negligees over his boxers and undershirt, while babbling nonsensically.

Nena, who can see him from the living room, rolls her eyes and nods her head -- what has she gotten herself into now? She sits in her rocker and observes a muted news report of old black and white footage of FIDEL CASTRO.

NENA
Ay Fidel --
(sighs)
Those were the *good* old days.

CAPTAIN
(sleep walking in drag)
Land ahoy!

The CAPTAIN walks in and sits on the couch, staring into space, speaking nonsensical orders that you'd yell on a ship.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
Squab the deck and clean the mast! Ahoy! Can't go back to Miami, there's a storm comin', you fool!

Nena gives him a double-take and gets up.

ICE CUBES. RUM & COKE poured into a short glass. A CUBA LIBRE. Nena sits back on her rocking chair -- cigar in one hand and drink in the other.

She POUNDS her leg on the floor. The needle on the record player falls, and the first few beats of "HISTORY REPEATING" play.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)
How many times does this shit have to happen for you to believe me?!

Nena shakes her head, and sips. She rocks in the chair placidly -- eyeing the Captain. As she turns her eyes toward the television, it displays images showing the facial evolution of a young new POLITICAL CANDIDATE:

ELIAN GONZALEZ, INTERCUT with CASTRO and images of his revolution.

NENA
Look at him! He's still *alive*!
(to the TV)
Sometimes a cigar is just a... big *pinga*.
(giggles at herself, sighs)
If only we knew... If only we knew.

Nena scowls with disdain. The MUSIC gains intensity, she clicks the TV off with the remote.

An orange butterfly glides in through the open window and comes to rest momentarily on her shoulders.

Entranced by the MUSIC, she dances, swinging her hips in a "hippie"-like bodily groove she picked up sometime in the 1960's -- a jig in her flowered muumuu. Nena smiles up at the heavens, undulating and writhing with a subtle sexuality; the hurricane enjoying itself, spinning its mature, post-menopausal hips.

ASHES fall off the tip of her cigar.

THE NEEDLE rides its vinyl groove. Nena's SMILING EYES follow the butterfly through the room, and exit out the window.

Nena does a funky, “thumb jerking” undulation dance move to the BEAT, holding her triumphant burning cigar aloft! Drink tipping in her careless hand.

Her TONGUE licks her lips. She tokes on that sweet cigar. Her rounded puffs of smoke dance in the air, in a slow motion...

FADE OUT.