

ARGENTINA, 1985

Screenplay by
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2021

1 SEQUENCE OF TITLES ON BLACK SCREEN 1

INSPIRED BY ACTUAL EVENTS.

ON DECEMBER 10th, 1983, ARGENTINA RESTORES ITS
DEMOCRACY AFTER SEVEN YEARS OF A BLOODY
DICTATORSHIP.

THE FRAGILE DEMOCRACY TRIES TO COUNTER THE PRESSURE OF
THE ARMED FORCES, WHICH REMAIN ACTIVE AND POWERFUL.

THE COMMANDERS, WHO FEEL LIKE WINNERS OF A WAR
AGAINST SUBVERSION, REFUSE TO BE CONSIDERED
CRIMINALS, AND ONLY ACCEPT TO BE TRIED BY A
MILITARY COURT.

2 INT - STRASSERA'S CAR - NIGHT 2

It's raining in Buenos Aires. Through the windshield, we see a
downtown avenue. The only part of the driver we are able to see
is his hand on the steering wheel, holding a cigarette.

SUPERIMPOSE: "June 24, 1984"

From the viewpoint of the car, we see a young couple rushing
through the crowd. We don't know this yet, but the girl is
VERÓNICA (17) and the man is her BOYFRIEND (29). They lean against
a wall and kiss, then again on different walls, and finally say
goodbye.

3 EXT - STREET / STRASSERA'S BUILDING - NIGHT 3

We follow the car driver from behind as he walks towards a
building, the same one we saw the young girl walk into.

4 INT - ELEVATOR / STRASSERA'S BUILDING - NIGHT 4

For the first time we see the face of JULIO STRASSERA, 55,
thick-framed glasses, bulky mustache, and bags under his eyes. He
combs his wet hair.

5 INT - KITCHEN / STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 5

JULIO walks in very carefully. He dries his wet clothes with a
towel. JULIÁN (13), his son, pops up in his soccer shorts.

JULIÁN

She came in and locked herself in her
room.

JULIO

Locked the door?

JULIÁN

Yes. Just now. She just got here.

Their exaggerated seriousness turns the situation amusing.

JULIÁN

He picked her up at Bettina's. They went to a bar. They spent quite a while there.

JULIO

Which bar?

JULIÁN

Plus Ultra. On Libertad and Arenales.

JULIO shakes his head. He doesn't like the bar thing.

JULIO

And then?

JULIÁN

I don't know... I took off...

JULIO

What do you mean you took off?

JULIÁN

I was out there for an hour... I left.
(...)
I don't like that guy.

JULIO

Me neither.

SILVIA (50) shows up in her robe, ready for bed.

SILVIA

What are you two up to?
What are you whispering about?

JULIÁN answers normally, while JULIO stares at him, opening his eyes wide, trying to indicate that he should shut up.

JULIÁN

We are worried about Verónica...

SILVIA

Why?

JULIÁN

Her new boyfriend is a strange guy.

JULIÁN notices his father is gesturing him to shut up, but it's already too late.

SILVIA

Strange? How do you know he's strange?
How did you come to that conclusion?

SILVIA looks at JULIO, who intervenes.

JULIO

Silvia, I have serious suspicions that this guy might be a service... They may want to use her eyes on me.

SILVIA

A service?

JULIÁN

That's how you call a spy, Mom.

SILVIA

(Irritated)

I know perfectly well what a service is.

(She pauses, rubs her eyes)
Julián, go to bed. Put your pajamas on. Don't sleep in your gym clothes.

JULIÁN obeys and leaves. SILVIA looks at JULIO who behaves like a kid who was just caught being knotty.

SILVIA

I am waiting for your explanation.

JULIO

Apparently they always meet at the Plus Ultra. Doesn't that ring any bells?

SILVIA

None.

JULIO

State Intelligence, Silvia. The HQ is around the corner.

SILVIA

You're kidding, right? Are you following your daughter around?

JULIO

No.

SILVIA

Julio. Have you had your daughter followed?

JULIO

(pretending)

Julián ran into her.

SILVIA

Have you made your son follow your daughter?

JULIO

(Hesitates)

No, I'm telling you I haven't.

SILVIA

You're sick, Julio. We already checked, he is the cousin of that girl from school.

JULIO

Yes... And she is the granddaughter of an aviator.

SILVIA

A civilian one, Julio. He's a commercial pilot.

JULIO

At LADE. They're all kind of military.

JULIÁN

(Shouting from his bedroom)
They volunteered in the war! Father and grandfather!

SILVIA

Do you realize you're raising a lunatic?

6 STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - DAY 6

VERÓNICA, wearing her school uniform and a jean jacket, is putting on some lipstick in front of the mirror by the entrance door. JULIÁN, wearing his blue blazer and gray trousers and carrying his backpack stops next to her, and looks at her.

JULIÁN

Why are you wearing make-up for school?

VERÓNICA

Because I want to and because I can. We're in Democracy, right?

JULIÁN

It's not allowed in my school.

VERÓNICA

How would you know? You never wore makeup in school...

In a quick movement, VERÓNICA tries to put lipstick on him. JULIÁN dodges her swiftly; they struggle and laugh, until he walks out the door.

JULIÁN

Stupid...

JULIÁN leaves the door open. SILVIA and JULIO walk behind their daughter. SILVIA and JULIÁN get in the elevator. JULIO and VERÓNICA take the stairs.

7 INT - STAIRWAY / STRASSERA'S BUILDING - DAY 7

JULIO and VERÓNICA are walking down the stairs. VERÓNICA lights a cigarette.

JULIO
Shall we have lunch?

VERÓNICA
I can't.

JULIO
I didn't say when...

VERÓNICA
Oh, I thought you meant today.

8 INT - ENTRANCE HALL / STRASSERA'S BUILDING - DAY 8

VERÓNICA says goodbye. JULIÁN and JULIO look at each other.

9 INT - PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 9

JULIO walks into the Palace of Justice. A huge building, crowded with people rushing through. He walks up the stairs to the office of the Federal Prosecutor.

10 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 10

JULIO walks into his office. SUSANA (50), his secretary, is waiting for him by his desk.

SUSANA
Good morning. Bruzzo called.

SUSANA is strict, and has a piercing voice. JULIO takes off his coat and hangs it. He doesn't answer her.

SUSANA
Sir, Mr. Bruzzo called. He needs to talk to you urgently.

JULIO
I heard you. And what happens if I don't want to talk to him?

SUSANA
Can you do that, sir?

JULIO
Of course I can.

SUSANA
So, what shall I do if he calls again?

JULIO
Hang up.

SUSANA
I can't do that, sir.

JULIO

Not only you can, you have to. It's an order. You hang up Bruzzo. Do you understand? Because you work for me.

SUSANA

I'm a permanent staff member, sir.
You can't fire me.

JULIO walks into his office, he stops before closing the door.

JULIO

(Suddenly nice)
Please, hang up on Bruzzo.

11 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 11

A cassette player is blaring the overture of Richard Wagner's "Tannhäuser". JULIO smokes, his feet lie on his desk, which is covered with files. The door opens. It's SUSANA, who walks one step towards him but JULIO makes a soft gesture with his hand to stop her.

JULIO

Don't ruin this moment. I beg you.

SUSANA

Bruzzo is coming over.

JULIO

Tell me the truth... You hate me don't you?

SUSANA

No, if I hated you I wouldn't let you know he is, Sir.

JULIO gets up quickly.

JULIO

You're right.
(He checks his watch)
Tell Bruzzo I had to go. I'm having lunch with my daughter.

12 INT - HALLWAYS / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 12

JULIO walks out. He sees BRUZZO approaching. He is tall, big, and walks around with confidence. JULIO walks in the opposite direction, around the main yard. He stops to spy on BRUZZO who walks into his office and, a few seconds later, comes out with SUSANA looking troubled. JULIO smiles and leaves.

14 ARCHIVE FOOTAGE 14

THE SCREEN IS COMPLETELY FILLED WITH THE BLACK AND WHITE IMAGES OF THE SPECIAL CONADEP TV BROADCAST.

SUPERIMPOSE: July 17th, 1984.

SUPERIMPOSE: CONADEP Special Program

A JOURNALIST, EDUARDO VILLARROEL, INTRODUCES WHAT WE ARE ABOUT TO SEE:

VILLARROEL

(Archive)

Right now, on channel 13, we are meeting the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Antonio Troccoli... and the Head of the Commission on the Disappeared, Ernesto Sabato.

JULIO, in OFF, protests.

JULIO (OFF)

National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons. Is it so hard to say it right?

SILVIA, off screen, hushes him. We see TROCCOLI speaking in a low definition, black and white image on an old TV set.

TROCCOLI

(On TV)

In a few moments, you will see a report written by the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons ...

SILVIA (OFF)

There you go...

TROCCOLI

Whose members have been undertaking their task with integrity and a commendable patriotic element...

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF AN OLD BUTTON. THE OLD TV SET TURNS OFF. THE IMAGE FADES INTO A DOT OF LIGHT. IN OFF, WE HEAR JULIO AND SILVIA DISCUSSING.

SILVIA (OFF)

What are you doing?

JULIO (OFF)

I can't stand him. That's not what he thinks.

SILVIA (OFF)

Julio, can you turn the TV on? I want to hear what he says.

JULIO (OFF)

I'm not interested in
watching this phony.

SILVIA (OFF)
Well, I am.

JULIÁN (OFF)
Me too, Dad.

The TV is back on. TROCCOLI is still speaking. THE TV IMAGE IS
FULL SCREEN AGAIN.

TROCCOLI
(On TV)
*...performing a task imbued with the
lacerating drama, with wounds that will
obviously be reflected in the
testimonies you will hear...*

JULIO (OFF)
You'll see... I give him less than five
seconds.

TROCCOLI
(On TV)
*...but what you're going to watch is
only one side of the tragedy of
violence in Argentina.*

JULIO (OFF)
There he goes...

TROCCOLI
(On TV)
*The other face, the other side of it,
started when subversion and terrorism
washed up on the shores of Argentina,
nurtured from distant borders...*

JULIO (OFF)
There you go... This guy
doesn't want the trial
to happen.

TROCCOLI
*...from remote geographies, with a handful
of men who, leading a political project
supported by terror...*

JULIO (OFF)
Why don't they just put Admiral Massera on
TV instead?

ONCE AGAIN, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF AN OLD BUTTON.
THE IMAGE FADES TO A DOT OF LIGHT.

SILVIA
Turn it on, Julián.

15 INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 15

JULIÁN turns the TV on and sits next to SILVIA to continue watching. SILVIA doesn't like what she's hearing.

SILVIA

But, what is he saying?

JULIO

I don't know what you expected...

The bell rings. VERÓNICA walks behind the couch.

VERÓNICA

It's Bettina, she needs some notes from class. I'll be right back.

JULIO stands up to reply, but she has already closed the door. JULIO tries to draw JULIÁN's attention, but he's watching the TV attentively.

TROCCOLI

(On TV)

Many generations were attracted to these Messianic projects and ended up pushed to the evil machinery of death and terror.

SILVIA

What?

TROCCOLI

(On TV)

We must then realize that the Argentine society was overwhelmed and shocked by the subversive irruption...

SILVIA

(Shakes her head)

Subversive irruption? This is like an announcement from the dictatorship.

TROCCOLI

(On TV)

It marginalized it, and demanded the eradication of violence. It gave unequivocal signs saying that this subversive outbreak should be ended...

SILVIA

(gets angry)

¡You were supposed to talk about the disappeared, Mr. Minister!

JULIO
 (to Silvia)
 See what I mean?

JULIÁN
 Hold on Dad, I'm watching this!

TROCCOLI
 (On TV)
*They demanded the State to exercise
 its authority in order to put an end
 to these calamities that were
 unprecedented in the history of our
 country... But what they couldn't have
 foreseen...*

SILVIA
 (shouting at the TV)
 What is he saying?!
 You are blaming the victims,
 Minister!

JULIO has had enough, he stands up.

16 EXT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT / BALCONY - NIGHT 16

JULIO smokes, leaning against the balcony railing as he tries to peek down to the sidewalk. He sees his daughter crossing the street. She meets her BOYFRIEND, and they walk together. He holds her by the arm.

JULIO
 (To himself)
 Hmmmm...

The couple wanders off. THE CAMERA LEAVES THEM AND PANS ON THE NEIGHBORING BUILDINGS. Julio looks at some apartment windows. Families, couples, people alone, almost everyone is watching the special CONADEP broadcast. We see a man crying. JULIO goes inside.

INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JULIO walks back into the living room where SILVIA and JULIÁN are, they are also moved in front of the TV. We see and hear the show, where the mother of a disappeared person (Estela de Carloto) is talking to the camera.

17 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 17

JULIO walks through the Palace of Justice, in a hurry. When he enters the office, SUSANA makes a gesture like saying "he is inside". BRUZZO emerges from Julio's office.

BRUZZO
 Can you do me a favor and get in
 here, Crazy?

18 INT - STRASSERA'S OFFICE / PROSECUTION - DAY 18

JULIO puts out a cigarette and lights another one almost in the same single move. BRUZZO waits calmly.

BRUZZO

Crazy, can you sit down?

JULIO

Why do you want me to sit?

BRUZZO

We have to talk.
There are things
you need to
know.

JULIO

Look, Bruzzo. I don't want to argue with you. I respect you, I am grateful for my designation, and *tutti li fiocchi*. But there is one thing I am not willing to be. You know what? You know what I'm not willing to be, Bruzzo?

BRUZZO

I can imagine, Julio.

JULIO

(He builds up)

A moron. Is that what you were thinking, Bruzzo? I'm not willing to be the moron who is called to be the face of something not Troccoli nor anyone in the government believes in...

BRUZZO

Julio...

BRUZZO doesn't say a word, he knows about his volcanic temper.

JULIO

What happened? Are we suddenly living in Wonderland? All of the sudden dictators go to jail? Who is gonna put them in jail? Spiderman? Do you believe the *Military Justice* will allow Videla be sent to prison? They were part of the dictatorship, Bruzzo!

BRUZZO

And what if the *Civil Justice* were to take over the trial?

JULIO stares at him, as if Bruzzo had said something really stupid.

JULIO

Civil Justice? They call me Crazy but I am not stupid. That won't happen. Troccoli will let that happen?

BRUZZO

I'm just telling you what is going to happen.

JULIO

Oh, please, come on! Why don't you all speak clearly and tell me: "Julio, we want you to be the greatest moron in the Nation. To be that moron that says he's going to throw the dictatorship in the joint and then...Well... We couldn't make it... Maybe next time..." Well, you know what? Don't count me in.

JULIO takes a deep breath. BRUZZO remains calm.

BRUZZO

I'll say it again: is it clear to you that if the judges take the trial, you won't be able to refuse, right?

JULIO

Bruzzo, don't jerk around. You know as well as I do that it's not going to happen...

BRUZZO

(With sudden authority)

If the judges want it, it will happen. Is it clear or not?

JULIO

Stop screwing around, Bruzzo.

BRUZZO

(Raises his voice as he stands up)
Is it clear or not?!

Brief pause. JULIO looks at him.

JULIO

Yes, Bruzzo. I know perfectly well what my job is. I'm a prosecutor.

BRUZZO

That's what I wanted to know.
We will wait for news.

BRUZZO, stern, leaves. JULIO is left alone, somewhat worried.

19 INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT / ELEVATOR - NIGHT 19

JULIO takes the elevator. He smokes. He seems absent-minded, and tired.

20 INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT / STUDIO - NIGHT 20

JULIO goes to his studio. He puts a cassette tape in a rustic player. We hear a whirring version of Tannhäuser. SILVIA walks in. She turns the volume down to the minimum. She looks at him for a few seconds.

SILVIA

Tell me, what happened?

JULIO

Nothing happened.

SILVIA

(she knows)
What did Bruzzo say?

JULIO

Hmm. Don't want to talk about it.

SILVIA

They're doing it, right?

JULIO

Don't want to talk about it, Silvia.

SILVIA

So they're doing it.

JULIO

They CAN-NOT do it.

SILVIA

Yes they can. You know perfectly well that if the judges request the trial...

JULIO

But they won't let them.

SILVIA

You don't know that.

JULIO

Can we not talk about this,
please?

SILVIA

And what subject do you *want* to
talk about, then?

JULIO

Nothing.

SILVIA

There's only one thing
that isn't clear to me...

JULIO

Silvia, please don't make me upset.

SILVIA

I don't understand if you
get like this...

JULIO

Silvia...

SILVIA

...because you're afraid...

JULIO

...you are making me...

SILVIA

... they won't do it...

JULIO

...very...

SILVIA

...or afraid...they **WILL**
actually do it.

JULIO stops. He looks at her.

SILVIA

(Firm)

Sometimes I think...that you're
shitting your pants, that's what's
going on.

(...)

What are you afraid of,
exactly?

JULIO

Everything,
Silvia, everything. Of
being used as a bargaining
chip, of being blown away,

of something happening
to you... and... and...

There's a pause. SILVIA holds her gaze, understanding.

SILVIA
(Sentencing)
...and not being good enough
for this trial?

JULIO doesn't answer.

SILVIA
(Certain)
You'll be able, Julio. You
can do this

JULIO turns up the volume of Tannhäuser all the way up.

21 INT - OFFICE / SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE ARMED FORCES - NIGHT

21 SUPERIMPOSE: September 24th, 1984

SUPERIMPOSE: SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE ARMED FORCES

We see a MILITARY JUDGE who finishes reading the sentence and signs it. He closes a light blue folder.

A MONTAGE DESCRIBES THE PATH OF THE FILE WITH THE RULING OF THE MILITARY COURT.

22 INT - HALLWAYS / SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE ARMED FORCES - DAY 22

A YOUNG MILITARY OFFICER walks on a corridor carrying the light blue folder in his hands. He crosses another one.

ANOTHER MILITARY OFFICER
Have they decided?

YOUNG MILITARY OFFICER
Yes. They're not going to
like it.

23 INT - VAN / STREETS - DAY 23

The light blue folder with the ruling of the MILITARY COURT is on the back seat of a car that is on its way to the Palace of Justice.

24 EXT - FRONT DESK / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 24

The YOUNG MILITARY OFFICER walks with the sentence and approaches the Front Desk at the Palace of Justice. He waits with an arrogant attitude among several civilian court clerks. He gets to the desk.

YOUNG MILITARY OFFICER

Good morning. I bring a ruling
from the Supreme Council of
the Armed Forces.

A FRONT DESK RECEPTIONIST looks at it and stamps it.

26 INT - OFFICE / FEDERAL COURT - DAY 26

Superimposed: FEDERAL COURT.

The light blue folder with the ruling of the Military Court is on the table. Judge SOLANET -40 years old, with a long, carefully groomed mustache- is reading it. The atmosphere is tense.

SOLANET

(Reading. Serious)

This Council informs
that according to its
investigation, the decrees,
directives, orders, and
military procedures to
combat the stateless subversion
were, in both their content and
form, unobjectionable.

ASAD -big man, dark hair, combed-back- interrupts. His voice carries authority and calmness. You can sense a kind of complicity with SOLANET.

ASAD

Unobjectionable?

SOLANET

Just like that.

TROTTA, thin and elegant, rushes him.

TROTTA

Keep reading...

SOLANET

The excesses were
committed by
the subordinates...and
the court should
investigate the
wrongdoings of the
alleged victims in order
to pass sentence.

LOSADA and D'AMICO are listening.

D'AMICO

The wrongdoings of the victims.?
Remarkable...

SOLANET
Enough, right?

They all look at each other. They're afraid.

ASAD
We will take this Trial.

LOSADA
Looks like it...

ASAD
Shall we vote? Do we need
to vote?

Nobody answers. We can see they are tense. VERGARA, bald, with
a hard face, doesn't seem convinced.

VERGARA
I wouldn't take it so lightly.

ASAD
What do you mean, "lightly"?

VERGARA
I mean we have to be cold, think
about the risks, and whether we can
guarantee that this trial will
follow procedure.

ASAD
Why wouldn't it follow
procedure?

VERGARA
There's enormous pressure.

SOLANET
What do you suggest?

SOLANET takes the military sentence in his hands again.

SOLANET
I'm sorry, but, does anyone
really think we can leave it
like this? They are blaming the
victims!

VERGARA
No, no one does.

ASAD
So what are we waiting for,
gentlemen?

VERGARA

We must act, but not blindly.

ASAD

(Raises his tone again)

If we don't act blindly, and that means now, this trial will not take place.

(Pause)

We will give the military what they didn't give to their victims: a fair trial. OK?

They look at each other. They look happy despite the tension.

TROTТА

And the evidence?

D'AMICO

The evidence are the prosecutor's job

SOLANET

And if they can't find any?

TROTТА

If they can't find any, we will have to absolve.

D'AMICO

Shall we notify the prosecutor?

ASAD gets up and walks towards a typing machine.

ASAD

Notify him.

27 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 27

SUSANA walks into the office, looking tense. She hands a memo to JULIO and leaves. JULIO reads the memo briefly. He puts the piece of paper down on the table. He lights a cigarette. He turns the music off. JULIÁN looks at him.

JULIÁN

Did something happen?

JULIO

Yes.

JULIÁN

What?

JULIO

The trial. It's going to happen.

JULIÁN

(thinks)

Are they going to put Videla in jail?

JULIO
I don't know. We have to try.

JULIÁN
And Massera?

JULIO
Yes, him too.

JULIÁN
And all the others.

JULIO
Yes. As many as possible.

JULIÁN
(Pauses, thoughtful)
And is that dangerous?

JULIO
I guess it is a little bit dangerous.

JULIÁN
They can kill you.

JULIO
I guess they can kill me, yes.

JULIÁN
(Meditates)
And you can't say no?

JULIO
No.

Julio stops looking at him and starts typing.

28 INT - STAIRWAY / RUSO'S APARTMENT - DAY

JULIO stops in front of a wooden door. It has a bronze plate that reads: Alberto Muchnik, Attorney. From the inside, we can hear someone clumsily playing a Schubert concert on a piano. He knocks on the door. The piano stops. We hear some steps. The door opens. On the other side, wearing a *poncho* -quite typical but also very elegant- is RUSO.

RUSO
Mister Prosecutor.

JULIO
Poor Schubert.

29 INT - RUSO'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is warm, messy, somewhat bohemian, full of papers everywhere. Among the papers, an old upright piano. RUSO walks around holding a glass of wine. There is a large oxygen tube, and a mask next to RUSO's chair. Clearly he is sick. He looks at JULIO and laughs out loud.

RUSO

(Laughing)

They fucked you up alright, Crazy!

JULIO

You're a smart guy, tell me... What's all this? Something is off.

RUSO

You thought they were appointing you to sweep the dance floor, but in the end it looks like you're going to have to dance.

JULIO

Ruso, don't pull my leg. There's something strange here. I can't do this.

RUSO

Well, you had to start eventually, right?

RUSO returns to the living room, with a new glass of wine. He leans on the couch, looking at JULIO.

RUSO

What is it you're scared of? That people will talk shit about you? That they accuse you of something? Or that they'll blow you up in the air?

JULIO

That all of this turns out to be a trap.

He sits next to JULIO.

RUSO

(Serious)

Look ... I know what you mean. I've been around for fifty years watching how everything turns to shit. And, you know what? I've learnt only one thing: you are right. Everything is fucked up. Everybody is a pussy, a traitor, and an opportunist. I don't know who is worse. Every new government

says they are going to change things, and immediately gets crowded with the usual motherfuckers.-

JULIO is about to light a cigarette but RUSO makes a sign for him to stop. JULIO stands up.

RUSO

But, you know what? Sometimes something goes wrong, and there's a gap... a minimum one. Something that nobody sees. A crack.
(He separates his fingers slightly)
It doesn't last for long, it shuts right away. But, as long as the crack is open, you can do something. One must hurry, be alert. But, if you manage to do it before these motherfuckers notice it, you can change things a bit. You can do something good. Very good. Good things were done like that, all of the sudden. And they were done by the few people who realized this. The brave ones. That's how they made...

Silence.

JULIO

Go on. They made what?

RUSO

Nothing... nevermind.

JULIO

History. Was that what you were going to say?

(RUSO doesn't respond)

History was not made by guys like me.

RUSO

(Smiles again)

You don't say... And nonetheless, you are going to be the acting DA in the most important trial in Argentine history, you son of a bitch!

JULIO looks puzzled.

30 INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The phone rings insistently. JULIÁN, indifferent, is doing his homework on the kitchen table. VERÓNICA walks by, smoking, with her headphones on. We hear SILVIA's voice from the bathroom.

SILVIA (OFF)
Can someone get that?

JULIÁN, impassive, minds his own business. The phone rings on and on. JULIO walks in the apartment just when SILVIA is yelling again.

SILVIA (OFF)
My God! Someone get that, it's driving me crazy! JULIÁN, can you get that?

JULIO answers the phone.

JULIO
Hello.

On the other side of the line, a sinister voice talks in a menacing tone.

VOICE (OFF)
Julio Strassera?

JULIO
Who is this?

VOICE (OFF)
Is it you? Are you the father of Julián and Verónica?

JULIO
Who is this?

VOICE (OFF)
The one who's gonna off you.

JULIO
Uh-huh...

VOICE (OFF)
But, you know what?

JULIO
What?

VOICE (OFF)
We're going to take care of your son first.

JULIO looks at his son, who is still just minding his own business.

JULIO
Huh...

VOICE (OFF)

Your daughter looks quite nice,
though, so we're gonna keep her.

JULIO

(In a very low
voice)

You son of a nasty bitch,
motherfucker...

VOICE (OFF)

Yes. So we can entertain ourselves.

VERÓNICA is reading comfortably on the sofa, listening to her
Walkman.

JULIO

Why don't you say that to my face?

VOICE (OFF)

Be careful, crazy asshole. So that you
don't dig where it's in your best
interest not to. So you don't have to
regret it later.

JULIO

Thank you very much. I will keep that
in mind.

And he hangs up. He's a bit disturbed. He looks at JULIÁN.

JULIÁN

Who was that?

JULIO

A friend.

JULIÁN doesn't seem to believe him. JULIO hangs his coat.

JULIO

Silvia! From now on, you and I are
the only ones answering the phone
here!

SILVIA comes over to him. She talks as if she is trying
to hide something.

SILVIA (OFF)

Who was that? The gentleman
with the threats again? He's
been calling all day. Nice
voice.

32 INT - CAR / GARAGE - DAY 32

JULIO gets in his car. He is holding the car keys. He hesitates
for a few seconds. He puts the keys in the ignition slowly.
JULIÁN looks at him from the distance. JULIO breathes, looks at

the keys again. He is not sure about starting the car. Finally, he opens the door.

JULIO

Let's take the subway.

EXT - JULIÁN'S SCHOOL / PALACE OF JUSTICE SQUARE - DAY

JULIÁN and JULIO walk out of the subway station. JULIO watches JULIÁN as he goes into the school. Then he looks at the Palace of Justice, right across from the School.

There is a small PARANOID SEQUENCE in which JULIO walks across the park. He crosses paths with several people; each one may be an assassin or a "service".

INT - HALLWAYS / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JULIO walks inside the Palace of Justice. Two suspicious men in civilian clothes intercept him. Julio gets frightened.

HORMIGA

Mr. Strassera. Apologies for the interruption. I've been ordered by Mr. Bruzzo to report to you as Head of your Security Detail.

JULIO

I didn't ask for any security detail.

HORMIGA

I understand you and your family received death threats.

JULIO

Young man, I appreciate it but I won't accept any security.

HORMIGA

I understand, the threats are not important. If someone is going to hurt you, they won't tell you beforehand...and for that reason...

JULIO stands firm.

JULIO

I don't want people from the intelligence services or the police near me and certainly not near my family.

HORMIGA

With all due respect, I have just been at

your home, I introduced myself to Mrs. María Isabel and Miss VERÓNICA, because I am in charge of your security...

JULIO stops and looks at him.

JULIO
What's your name?

HORMIGA
Hormiga (*Ant*), Sir.

JULIO
Your name, officer.

HORMIGA
Hormiga, Sir.

JULIO
Hormiga? Your last name is Hormiga?

HORMIGA
Yes, with an O and two
Gs. Ormigga. And this
is Romero.

JULIO
Well, forgive me, Hormiga. Have
you been with my daughter? Let
me say this upfront, she's a
very independent girl, very
zealous of her privacy.

HORMIGA
I am aware, Sir.

JULIO
(Interested)
What are you aware of?

HORMIGA
The safety of your family is... How
to explain?... relevant to us. We
had to conduct some inquiries.

JULIO
Uh-uh... So?

ROMERO
Nothing to worry, Sir

JULIO
(Thinks)
Nothing? Nothing on my
daughter's boyfriend, either?

HORMIGA

Well, it's not our intention
to go middle in the young
lady's personal life.

JULIO

Please, tell me what you know.

HORMIGA

Nothing that can be
a threat to your
safety.

JULIO

I see. Speak clearly. Let it go...

HORMIGA

Engineer Padilla is a married man.

JULIO

(Shocked)

Married? Does my daughter know?

HORMIGA

I don't believe so, Sir.

JULIO

I'm sure she doesn't.
Come with me.

JULIO gives HORMIGA a gentle tap on the shoulder.

34 INT - PROSECUTION'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 26

JULIO walks into his office and sees BRUZZO who is waiting for
him next to SUSANA's desk.

JULIO

What's up, Bruzzo? Thanks for the
visit, but I have to push the most
important trial since Nüremberg. So,
please, let's not waste our time...

BRUZZO

I came to offer you help.

JULIO

I already got it. Atom Ant.
Very nice.

BRUZZO

I don't mean the security detail.

JULIO

Thanks a lot. If I need any other
kind of help I'll let you know.

BRUZZO

Crazy, don't be stubborn. You can't

do this alone.

They walk into the office.

JULIO

I won't be alone. I'll put a team together. I have the powers to put my team together, right?

BRUZZO

It won't be so easy. There aren't many people in the Federal Justice who agree with what we're about to...

JULIO

First: there is no 'We'. I am about to. Second: I already have people working for me, so...

BRUZZO

I am just saying that there is little time and you won't be able to handle this on your own. And "on your own" includes your friend, the "theater guy".

JULIO

"The theater guy", whom you are mocking, has more trial experience than you and me combined, Bruzzo. He's been working in the judicial system for 30 years. I will do this but I'll do it my way.

BRUZZO looks at him with an expression like saying "I know what I'm telling you".

BRUZZO

If you do it your way, you'll never make it in time. I know what I'm saying. I have someone in mind.

Bruzzo stands up.

JULIO

Don't send anyone. I will call my people: I'll call Telechea, I'll call Fat Salvador, I'll call Sturla...

35 INT - THEATRE - NIGHT 35

A couple of technicians are on the stage organizing the set while an ACTOR is practicing his lines (of the play "First Officer").

SOMI, his hair and beard slightly long, is sitting next to JULIO.

JULIO

Sturla said no?

SOMI

His exact words were: "I won't get into this; I'm too old for this kind of thing".

JULIO

Fat wimp. How old is he?

SOMI

78.

JULIO

That old?

SOMI

Yes. He's old.

JULIO

Hmm... Telechea?

SOMI

He said no.

JULIO

Did he say why?

SOMI

He laughed. He said: "Crazy Strassera wants to put the Military in jail? Why doesn't he face Hands of Stone Duran, on the ring, too?"

JULIO

Very funny.

SOMI

Telechea never liked trouble. And Salvador?

JULIO

Didn't even call him. He signed an open letter against the trial, in favor of guerrilla victims.

SOMI

Really? Is he that big a fascist?

JULIO

He slowly turned into one. Like everyone else...

SOMI

Carrizo?

JULIO

Fascist. He was on Manrique's ticket.

Girardi?

SOMI

Fascist. He sent his children to
Military High School. Bruni?

JULIO

Super - fascist.

They think for a second. They can't think of anyone else.

SOMI

Héctor Alcides?

JULIO

Passed away last year.

SOMI

Shit, I didn't know.

JULIO

He would have said no anyway. He was a
serious fascist.

36 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 36

SUPERIMPOSE: October 3rd, 1985

SUPERIMPOSE: Preliminary Hearings.

Except for a few janitors and court clerks, the courtroom is still empty

There's a young man with a beard, seemingly shy, standing next to the desk reserved for the prosecutor: LUIS. From his perspective, we can see JULIO coming in from the main corridor. When he gets closer, he looks at him.

LUIS tries to approach him when, from the other side of the hall, an older man in a nice suit approaches. It's the defense attorney, BASILE.

BASILE

Crazy Strassera...Prosecutor of the
Republic...

JULIO

How are you, Basile.

BASILE

Here we are. Making a living, like
everyone else. Like you, I guess.

JULIO

Yeah... But there are ways and ways of
making a living, Basile.

The rest of the defense attorneys enter the room while this discussion takes place.

BASILE

If you're talking about my client, you know I was assigned by the Court. I'm a public defender.

JULIO

I don't see that bothering you. One would say you hit the jackpot.

BASILE

If you are asking me if it bothers me, it doesn't. Not at all. What is honestly shocking, Crazy, is that you have suddenly become the defender of the guerillas...

JULIO

I'm a prosecutor: I don't defend anyone, I prosecute criminals.

BASILE

You mean accusing those who defended motherland from the guerilla? Uh-huh.

A voice interrupts them. It's LOZA, the Secretary of the court.

LOZA

All rise, gentlemen.

The Judges walk in: ASAD, TROTTA, VERGARA, SOLANET, LOSADA, D'AMICO.

LOZA

(continues)

I hereby declare the preliminary hearings of Case 13/84 open...

While the judge speaks, JULIO looks at LUIS. Trying not to be too loud, he asks.

JULIO

Excuse me, what are you doing here?

The first time LUIS speaks, it's clear that he has a very strong accent, distinctive of the upper classes of Buenos Aires. He also has a light stutter.

LUIS

I-I-I am *losmonocampo*.
M-my name is *losmonocampo*.

JULIO

"Los monocampos"?

LUIS

(Tries to speak slowly)

L-Luis Moreno Ocampo.

In that moment, another judge announces:

TROTТА

Bring the defendants in.

Meanwhile, on the other side, LUIS goes on:

LUIS

I'm here at your service, Sir.

JULIO

(To Luis, whispering.)

I don't know what they've told you, but we are not looking for auxiliary staff.

LUIS

I was appointed deputy prosecutor.

JULIO

Huh?

LUIS

I'm your deputy prosecutor, Sir.

Then, the nine defendants have just walked into the courtroom: VIDELA, MASSERA, AGOSTI, VIOLA, GALTIERI, LAMBRUSCHINI and the other three COMMANDERS. JULIO and LUIS remain silent. On the other side of the hall, crowded behind a desk, are BASILE, GONZAGA, LAGOS and a dozen other defense attorneys.

CUT TO:

VIDELA and his attorney BASILE are the first ones to make a statement.

TROTТА

Please state your name.

VIDELA

Jorge Rafael Videla. And let me add: Lieutenant General of the Argentine Army.

VIDELA looks at him defiantly. JULIO looks at LUIS. He is open-mouthed. BASILE speaks into the microphone.

BASILE

Your Honor, my defendant requests to read a statement...

VIDELA

(reading)

Your Honors, I don't recognize the legitimacy of this court

BASILE

The defense reaffirms that the alleged crimes he is being accused of correspond to the military sphere, and should therefore be judged by a Military Court.

JULIO listens, quiet.

ASAD

The military court had its chance, and you know perfectly well that it is within the authority of his court to investigate and try the crimes your defendant is accused of -even if he doesn't consider it so. Are we clear?

ASAD is eloquent in its argument. BASILE keeps quiet, VIDELA maintains his challenging attitude, rejecting the court.

37 INT / EXT - PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 37

JULIO exits the Palace, followed by his small entourage: HORMIGA and ROMERO, and now LUIS as well. SOMI arrives in a hurry.

SOMI

So...

JULIO

Videla is much shorter than I expected...

SOMI

Sure, the hat and the boots must add a few extra inches. SOMI notices LUIS walking behind them.

SOMI

Who is this?

JULIO

The help we were so anxious to get.

SOMI

He doesn't look like a bodyguard.

JULIO stops abruptly. He looks at LUIS.

JULIO

Tell me, Luis María Campos. How are you supposed to help us? How many trials have you taken part in?

LUIS

Moreno Ocampo. None.

JULIO

How many prosecutions?

LUIS

None.

JULIO

So, what do you do? You must do
something...

LUIS

I work for the Prosecution, I am a
professor at University...

JULIO

I know. You make a living out of that,
Molina Campos?

LUIS

Sort of.

SOMI

Your mom helps you out?

LUIS

My mom? Actually, if there's one thing Mom
doesn't like is the fact that I am
about to take part in this trial...

JULIO

Why do you do it, then?

SOMI

(Ironic)

Maybe it's precisely because of that.

LUIS

Do you want to know why they
thought of me? I come from a
military family. My uncle is an
Army Colonel.

JULIO

That doesn't make you look good.

LUIS

My mother goes to mass every
Sunday at the same church as
Videla. And for her, Videla is
good man who did the
right thing...and the
disappeared "surely they did
something".

JULIO and SOMI listen, he got their attention.

SOMI

I don't understand...

JULIO

I think I'm gonna go.

They go outside. LUIS catches up with them. He speaks with more confidence.

LUIS

Sorry Sir, I think I wasn't very clear.

JULIO

Yes. You weren't at all.

LUIS

Think about it this way:
this is a government that has
just taken office, a weak government,
with the military breathing down its
neck...right?

JULIO

Right.

LUIS

And they've made the dangerous yet
right decision to bring them to
trial. So I think it's a good idea
to bring in young lawyers, from
wealthy families, instead of human
rights lawyers who could easily be
discredited as communists, not
only by the Military, but also by
the middle class: they're the ones
that have to be convinced for this
trial to have the legitimacy it
needs.

JULIO looks at him.

LUIS

(Finishes his argument)
Considering the middle class'
traditional tendency to justify
any military coup...

Silence. SOMI bursts into laughter. He applauds.

SOMI

(To Julio)

That wasn't bad at all what he said.

LUIS doesn't answer. SOMI and LUIS follow JULIO.

38 INT - BAR - DAY 38

JULIO, LUIS and SOMI are eating on the counter of a downtown bar.

JULIO

We are 3 people, we have 5 months to submit the *irrefutable* evidence against 9 commanders: of homicides, kidnapping, torture, and grand theft.

LUIS

Well, yes...we need to put together a team right away.

JULIO

Exactly, Molina Campos...

LUIS

(Corrects him)

Moreno...

JULIO

And we know we can't trust the police...and that 90 percent of the judiciary staff doesn't want to get involved at all in this trial.

SOMI

99...

LUIS

I think we have to look elsewhere, then...

JULIO

Where? Law School?

LUIS

Not exactly. But kind of...

(SOMI and JULIO look at him)

At the Attorney General's Office, for instance, there are lots of kids who would be willing...

JULIO

Kids?

LUIS

Yes, and in every court, too...

JULIO stays thoughtful; something about that idea starts to make sense.

LUIS

We have to bring people from other places... Young people, with less experience...

JULIO

Less experience than you?

LUIS

Yes, if we must. If the senior staff
won't do it...

JULIO

(finishing his sentence)
We'll bring the juniors in.
(He looks at Luis)
Very well, Moreno Ocampo...

Finally, JULIO gets his name right.

39 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 34

FEDERICO (24) is sitting on a chair. The situation seems like an
audition. SOMI is questioning him.

SOMI

Full name?

FEDERICO

Federico Corrales.

SOMI

What do you do, Federico?

FEDERICO

I'm currently unemployed.

SOMI

What did you do before?

FEDERICO

I studied.

SOMI

Law?

FEDERICO

No, I was pursuing a career in the
military.

SOMI

(Surprised)

Right...Which branch?

FEDERICO

The Navy.

FEDERICO

At the School of Mechanics. The ESMA.

It's dead silent now. They look at each other. FEDERICO remains
undaunted. We hear a huge laugh, SOMI turns around.

LUIS

Come on, Fede...

SOMI

You're joking.

FEDERICO

Yes... I'm sorry...

(He laughs a little)

I actually work for the Attorney
General's Office.

SOMI

Ohh... So you're funny...

Who did you vote for in the last
election, funny guy?

FEDERICO

Do I have to say Alfonsín or can I say
the truth?

SOMI

The truth.

FEDERICO

Truth is, I didn't vote.

SOMI

Why?

FEDERICO

I was on vacation.

SOMI

Why do you want to be in this trial?

FEDERICO

Because I grew up reading comic
books about superheroes.

SOMI

Right...

FEDERICO

And it's the country we are going
to get, and this cannot happen
again.

LUIS makes a gesture, saying he is in.

CUT TO:

The shots are identical. The sequence is edited as a succession
of jump cuts. LUCAS (25) is sitting in the same place Federico
was before.

LUCAS

Lucas Palacios.

SOMI

Occupation?

LUCAS
Administrative work at the
Attorney General's Office.

SOMI
Studies.

LUCAS
I'm a lawyer.

SOMI
What do you think about Balbín?

LUCAS
I don't have an opinion, he was an
important politician.

SOMI
What do you think about Perón?

LUCAS
I don't have an opinion, he was an
important politician.

SOMI
What do you think about Winston
Churchill?

LUCAS
What?

SOMI
What about Napoleon Bonaparte? Or
Alexander the Great?

LUCAS
Do I have to answer that?

SOMI
What else do you do? Apart from
studying and working for the
Attorney General's Office.

LUCAS
I play rugby.

SOMI
Uh-huh. Where?

LUCAS
C.A.S.I. San Isidro Athletic Club

SOMI smiles, he likes the answer.

SOMI
Why do you want to be in this trial?

LUCAS

I have three children, a mortgage to pay, and they said you paid overtime here.

LUIS and SOMI look at each other. LUIS nods, accepting the incorporation.

CUT TO:

JUDITH sits on the same audition chair. She has curly hair, she is very young, almost a child, but her look is confident.

SOMI

Let's see, Judith... Who did you vote for?

JUDITH

I didn't vote.

SOMI

You didn't? Why?

JUDITH

I was 17.

SOMI

(Surprised)

How old are you now, girl?

JUDITH

18. I'll be 19 in september.

SOMI

And what are you doing here?

JUDITH

I was told you needed young people and experience was not a requirement.

SOMI

And why do you want to work here?

JUDITH

I work at the Reception Desk of Court #14...And I I see no one really cares about what you are doing. But I do. I want to be a part of it.

SOMI

And aren't you afraid?

CUT TO:

EDUARDO sits on the chair. He is sterner than the others.

SOMI

Any form of political activism?

EDUARDO

Hmm...That's hard. From now?

SOMI

No, from the 15th century. Can you name five members of the current cabinet?

EDUARDO

Yes. Grinspun, uhm... Troccoli... uhm...uhm...

SOMI

(jumps ahead)

Can you name four guests from the last Badía show?

EDUARDO

Los Abuelos were on.

SOMI

Los Abuelos?

EDUARDO

Los Abuelos de la Nada. The band. You don't know them?

SOMI

No. Let's hear it... Sing something to me.

EDUARDO

Now?

SOMI

Yes.

EDUARDO starts singing "Lunes por la madrugada" and the shot ends.

CUT TO:

MACO is sitting on the same chair. He's defiant, and slightly bad-tempered.

SOMI

Who did you vote for in the last election?

MACO

Peronism.

SOMI

Is that so? Why?

MACO

Because I'm a Peronist.

SOMI

You don't say...Why is that?

MACO

Because Peronism is the movement that

best represents the feelings of the working class...and will always stand together with the poor to fight for social justice.

SOMI

Well, that's enough.

MACO

You asked me.

SOMI

But not to have you repeat the same bullshit I hear you say every single day.

MACO

Don't be mean, Dad.

SOMI

You make me mean, Maco.

MACO

Do you want me to work here, or not? Because I'm fine in that courthouse where I work. I'm not thrilled to be here among *Gorilas*.

LUIS jumps in again.

LUIS

Welcome on board, Maco. Your Dad has spoken highly of you. I'm Luis Moreno Ocampo. Deputy prosecutor. You'll be working with me.

MACO

Deputy Prosecutor? Is there such a thing?

40 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 35

Superimposed: October 20, 1984.

Superimposed: The investigation begins.

WE SEE A SERIES OF DETAIL SHOTS. MAGIC MARKERS DRAWING LINES, A RULER, A BIG PAPERBOARD. A BADLY DRAWN CALENDAR. HANDS HANGING THE CALENDAR ON THE WALL.

INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

JULIO (OFF)

OK. First problem: time. We need to conduct the most important trial in history in less time than what it would take to try some petty thief.

He points at a date.

JULIO (OFF)
This is where we are now

He points at another date.

JULIO (OFF)
*And we must have everything ready by
 the time we reach this.*

The marker goes through everyday between one point and the other one. There aren't many days.

JULIO is standing in front of his team, mostly the teenagers who joined in the previous sequence: FEDERICO, LUCAS, JUDITH, MACO, EDUARDO and, of course, LUIS.

JULIO (OFF)
 So, these are how many days we have: not
 one more. So: you know what we'll do?
 We'll do like prison inmates do.

DETAIL SHOT: A STROKE OF MARKER CROSSES ONE DAY OUT.

ELLIPSIS

INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

LUIS hangs a big map of the country on a wall.

LUIS
 OK, second problem: we need to
 prove that it was a systematic
 plan, that is, that they all knew
 what was going on and how did it
 go on; that it was across the
 country, and during the
 governments of all nine
 Commanders. They are responsible.
 We can't investigate through the
 police because they were involved
 in the crimes.

JULIO
 And we know from previous
 experience that many courts are
 reluctant to share the information
 they have, or they can take too
 long...don't forget we have...

JULIO points at the calendar.

FEDERICO
 (Gets ahead as if he had said
 it many times before)
 Less time than if we were prosecuting
 a petty thief...

JULIO

Exactly, funny guy.

LUIS

Let's get organized. What clandestine centers do you know about? La Perla. Where was that?

LUIS puts a pin on Córdoba.

LUIS

In Córdoba. And it was run by the Army.

JUDITH

ESMA.

LUIS

Yes, ESMA.

JUDITH

ESMA of the Navy...In Buenos Aires...

JULIO

What else?!

FEDERICO

Orletti...which was...where was that?

LUCAS

Vesubio...Campo de Mayo...

EDUARDO

Pozo de Banfield...Pozo de Quilmes

EDUARDO, LUCAS, FEDERICO and JUDITH are randomly enumerating the concentration camps they remember about. MACO comes closer to JULIO and whispers in his ear.

MACO

We need to bring in more people.
It's not going to work like this.

41 INT - PIZZERIA - DAY 41

A downtown pizza place packed with people. MACO is on the counter next to ISABEL, a Trotskyist-looking redhead.

ISABEL

(Repeating Maco's words from the previous scene)
No, that won't work.

MACO

That's why I came to see you. I'm asking you as a friend.

ISABEL

How much time do you have?

MACO

Four months and two weeks.

ISABEL

Are you serious? Leave it.
It's impossible.

MACO

No. We can't. Where would you start?

ISABEL

You already know this... First thing you need to do is go to Commission's archives, it's all pretty much there...Talk to María Eugenia, she manages the archives. You can read the testimonies there and make a selection. There is a lot of them, so you'll have to read fast.

42 INT - HALLWAYS / CONADEP'S OFFICE - DAY 42

LUCAS and FEDERICO are following MARIA EUGENIA through the hallways of a public building.

MARÍA EUGENIA

Come with me. This way.

The hallway leads to a huge archive where a small desk has been set up.

MARÍA EUGENIA

You'll be working here.
OK?

The other nod, a bit overwhelmed. The camera follows MARIA EUGENIA who starts among the thousands and thousands of cases.

MARIA EUGENIA

Where would you want to start?

LUCAS

The prosecutors said we must go through every case.

MARIA EUGENIA

All of them? Do you know how many there are?

LUCAS

No, but we have to look at them all.

MARIA EUGENIA

Well, you better choose where to begin.

FEDERICO

Just keep bringing them.

MARIA EUGENIA

Did you pre-select any of them?
 (No answer)
 Watts, Meijide, Daleo, Avellaneda,
 Muñoz, Valenzi...

FEDERICO
 Yeah...all those.

MARIA EUGENIA
 OK.

MARIA EUGENIA comes back with a big pile of files.

CUT TO:

It's already dark outside. FEDERICO and LUCAS are still reading in silence.

Around them, hundreds of files have been piled up by MARIA EUGENIA. LUCAS' eyes are wet, visibly moved. He looks at FEDERICO, whose eyes are also full of tears. MARIA EUGENIA leaves. FEDERICO closes the file he's been reading abruptly.

FEDERICO
 (Pretending)
 I can't do this anymore, I have
 eye strain.
 LUCAS
 Do you want me to read that to you?

FEDERICO
 No.

LUCAS
 I'll read it for you.
 (Reads)
 "And while they were torturing me
 they were also torturing my
 'Negrito'. I was going mad,
 screaming. 'Neither you or your
 kid are going to want to fuck
 around again'. I could hear my son
 Floreal, they were torturing him.
 I was desperate hearing each one
 of his screams, I was torn with
 pain and impotence. Each time he
 screamed they went on harder with
 the 'machine' on me...

After a few lines, he breaks down and starts crying his eyes out. Outside, the experienced MARIA EUGENIA smiles, understanding.

43 INT - PIZZERIA - DAY 43

We are back at the pizzeria, MACO and ISABEL keep talking.

ISABEL

You should contact all the organizations. All of them. Starting with Mothers, Grandmothers, Relatives, CELS...the Permanent Assembly

ISABEL keeps on enumerating. MACO takes notes.

ISABEL

You need to make a good impression there...it's where you'll get direct contact with the victims. The people that need to testify at the trial.

MACO

Got it.

ISABEL

That's the hard part. Getting them to testify.

MACO

Why wouldn't they?

ISABEL

Why? Because the people who kidnapped them, tortured them and killed their relatives are still on the loose, like nothing 's happened. They are all scared.

(Looks at him)

Aren't you?

MACO looks around. Suddenly, he feels he's being watched.

44 EXT - ROOM / MOTHERS' OF PLAZA DE MAYO OFFICES - DAY 44

A poster on the wall indicates that we are in the offices of the MOTHERS OF PLAZA DE MAYO. Inside an office, JUDITH and EDUARDO talk with two officials from MOTHERS.

MOTHER OF PLAZA DE MAYO

I understand, and we will provide you with all the information we have, and help you contact the people...But, I am confused about one thing...you people...which prosecution office do you work for?

EDUARDO

The prosecution office of the Federal Court, madam.

MOTHER OF PLAZA DE MAYO

And what is your job there?

JUDITH
 Assistants to the prosecutor.

MOTHER OF PLAZA DE MAYO
 Assistants to prosecutor Strassera?

JUDITH
 Exactly.

MOTHER OF PLAZA DE MAYO
 So you'll be working in the trial of
 the juntas?

EDUARDO
 Yes, madam.

JUDITH notices the lady is getting uncomfortable.

JUDITH
 Us and a team they formed specifically
 for this.

MOTHER OF PLAZA DE MAYO
 Let's hope Prosecutor Strassera
 behaves better than the way he did
 during the dictatorship.

JUDITH and MACO look at each other.

JUDITH
 But, during the dictatorship he
 didn't do... anything.

MOTHER OF PLAZA DE MAYO
 (Almost at unison)
 ...Anything. That's it. De
 didn't do anything during the
 dictatorship.

JUDITH and MACO are left speechless.

45 INT - PIZZERIA - DAY 45

We are back at the pizzeria, MACO is finishing up a glass of
 beer in front of ISABEL.

ISABEL
 (Affirms)
 No.

MACO

I didn't get to ask.

ISABEL

I know where you're going with this...

MACO

Wouldn't you be interested in joining the prosecution office?

ISABEL

No. No way.

ISABEL takes three sips of her beer without pausing.

46 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 46

DETAIL SHOT: FIFTEEN DAYS ARE CROSSED OUT IN THE CALENDAR

Isabel stands with her arms crossed, next to MARÍA EUGENIA. They have joined the prosecution office.

Everyone else is spread around, crowded: MACO, JUDITH, FEDERICO, EDUARDO, SOMI, LUCAS. SUSANA walks by carrying boxes with stationary supplies.

The map is now full of needles and small pieces of paper that indicate the name of each clandestine detention center. JULIO smokes, leaning against the wall, while LUIS explains something holding a shoebox containing piles of cards.

LUIS

The responsibility under the chain of command lies with the juntas, they were in charge, that part is clear...But it's also the hardest one to prove.

MACO

How is it difficult? If the torture, the killings, the kidnappings, and every crime has already been proved, or they can be proved...

LUIS

But how do you prove they knew about it?

MACO

How wouldn't they?

LUIS

They can just say: "I knew nothing. These were mistakes and excessive actions committed by subordinates. I can't be watching what every subordinate does. It was a war".

MACO

Thirty thousand mistakes?

MARIA EUGENIA

He's right. They can say "I didn't kill anybody. I didn't torture anybody... I didn't order anyone to be disappeared. I don't even know how to operate an electric prod".

JUDITH

Someone must have seen them. A whistleblower, I don't know.

LUIS

(Emphatic)

We have to focus on the plan. We need to prove that they did the same thing everywhere. They abducted people from their homes everywhere, they locked them up in clandestine centers everywhere, they used torture in interrogations everywhere, they made people disappear across the country.

JULIO

There were no mistakes: the subordinates did what they were supposed to do. There were no excessive actions: the military juntas ordered them to do precisely that. Making people disappear. If we prove this, we prove that there was a coordination between the branches across the country, and that there is no way the Juntas were not aware of it. They are ultimately responsible.

LUIS sorts out the cards.

LUIS

So: we pick the cases. We organize each card by branch of the military, region, year, clandestine detention center...

FEDERICO

Region? Are we going to travel?

JULIO

Yes. Where would you like to go?

DETAIL SHOT: ANOTHER WEEK IS CROSSED OUT IN THE CALENDAR

47 EXT / INT - BUS / ROAD / - DAY 47

A big wide show shows us a long-distance bus moving through a desert landscape.

ISABEL and FEDERICO are sitting in one of the last rows, checking their list of witnesses and their addresses.

EXT - NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

ISABEL and FEDERICO walk under the morning sun in a desert area.

They clap in front of a modest home. Nobody answers.

They clap again in front of another home. They don't answer either.

ISABEL knocks on the door of a third home. Nothing happens either.

47B EXT - SUGAR MILL - DAY 47B

FEDERICO and ISABEL are standing at the gate of the biggest sugar mill in the area. The shape of the smoking chimneys stands out against the blue sky. FEDERICO distracts one of the security guards at the gate while ISABEL takes advantage of a truck that is entering and walks into the mill.

FEDERICO spots ISABEL in the distance, she is talking to someone who seems to be a union member.

50 EXT - AIRPORT / CORDOBA - DAY 50

A plane lands in the city of Córdoba.

LUIS, LUCAS and MARIA EUGENIA are all alone. No one came to pick them up.

MARIA EUGENIA

It was obvious. Everyone in Córdoba is a fascist.

LUIS

Let's take a taxi.

They walk up to a cab.

EXT - COURT / CORDOBA - DAY

A sign indicates that they are in front of a state courthouse. LUIS comes out angry. MARÍA EUGENIA and LUCAS are waiting outside. They have a group of WITNESSES with them.

LUIS

We can't work here.

MARÍA EUGENIA
Fascists, I told you so.

LUCAS
What should we do?

LUIS
We need to go somewhere else.

MARIA EUGENIA looks up, there is a café on the other side of the park.

INT - CONFITERIA / CORDOBA - DÍA

A WOMAN sitting at a table is reading an article in a local newspaper with a headline that reads: The prosecutors from the Trial of the Juntas visit the province. The picture shows JULIO. She lowers the newspaper and indeed sees LUIS hearing a CÓRDOBA WITNESS. MARÍA EUGENIA and LUCAS are doing the same in other tables.

Several paint bombs explode against a window. Everyone gets scared and hides under the tables.

53 EXT - CITY OF ROSARIO - DAY 53

We see a couple of iconic images of the city of Rosario with the river in the background. MACO and JUDITH walk through a boulevard.

54 EXT - RADIO STUDIO / CITY OF ROSARIO - DAY 53

JUDITH and MACO are sitting in a small radio studio. We vaguely hear the words of a RADIO HOST broadcasting the information MACO is asking him to. A police officer knocks on the door. They try to open it, but it's locked. The HOST continues.

DETAIL SHOT: ANOTHER WEEK IS CROSSED OUT IN THE CALENDAR

55 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 55

JULIO greets SUSANA. We follow JULIO as he walks into the Prosecutor's Office, which is crowded with people. On a few desks, MACO, FEDERICO, EDUARDO, LUCAS, MARIA EUGENIA and ISABEL are transcribing the testimonies of different witnesses.

WITNESS 1

...As I was coming home, I see a car approaching, a few men with guns come out, all dressed as civilians...

WITNESS 2

They insult me violently, they beat me, they call me a whore, they say they're going to...

WITNESS 3

...They cover my eyes, they shackle my ankles and they give me a number, X96. They tell me that my name was no longer Mario Villani, but X96...

WITNESS 4

...The first interrogation lasted half a day, half a day on electric shocks... I couldn't drink water afterwards because I was all charged up...

WITNESS 5

...what they call 'the submarine': They put your head in a bucket full of dirty water, until you can't hold it anymore...

WITNESS 6

...they asked me absurd questions: what is communism?...I have no idea... If I knew where Firmenich lived, or other leaders in the *Montoneros* movement, of whom I knew nothing about...

JULIO is watching everybody with a certain sense of pride.

CUT TO:

An arrogant and coarse OLDER WOMAN approaches JUDITH.

OLDER WOMAN

Hey girl. Is this the prosecutor's office? I'm looking for Strassera.

JUDITH

(smiling)

Good afternoon, ma'am. Thank you for coming. Follow me.

OLDER WOMAN

Follow you, little girl?

JUDITH

Yes. This way.

JUDITH indicates her to sit at a table.

JUDITH

Please, take a seat. Eduardo will hear your testimony...

The OLDER WOMAN is shocked.

OLDER WOMAN

But... He will be taking my testimony? Am I not going to speak with the prosecutor?

JUDITH

Eduardo is an assistant to the Prosecutor. They are the ones taking testimonies.

OLDER WOMAN

But... You are all babies! How old are you people?

JUDITH and EDUARDO look at each other. MACO quickly intervenes.

MACO

The same age as the guys who judge Aramburu, Madam.

The OLDER WOMAN smiles for the first time.

MACO

(complicit)

You better talk to me, these are all *gorilas*.

The OLDER WOMAN, impressed, sits with MACO. JULIO comes in and introduces himself.

JULIO

Julio Strassera...This is my staff.

56 INT - STUDIO / STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 56

JULIO walks into his apartment and heads to the room where he usually works. He is surprised by the presence of VERÓNICA, who is there waiting for him.

JULIO

Hi, honey... what's up?

VERÓNICA doesn't answer. JULIO approaches her and kisses her cheek.

VERÓNICA

I was waiting for you.
We need to talk.

VERÓNICA'S voice is firm, as if they had inverted their roles, and she is the one telling her father off.

JULIO

Did something happen?

VERÓNICA

Please, sit.

JULIO sits slowly.

VERÓNICA

I'm not seeing Abel anymore.

JULIO

Who?

VERÓNICA

Dad...

JULIO

Honey, I'm sorry...but I don't like that you are seeing that man. You know he is...

VERÓNICA

(jumps to it)

Married, yes. I'm not dumb. I always knew he was married.

(Pauses)

And in all the time we were together, he never asked about you. In fact, I think he doesn't even know about your work.

JULIO looks at her, he doesn't know what to say for himself.

VERÓNICA

Don't have me followed, especially not by Julián. Don't you see you're scaring him? Making him paranoid?

JULIO

Honey, you're right, but...

VERÓNICA

(Keeps telling him off)

I know I'm right; of course I'm right... And you have much more important things to do. Much more important than who I'm seeing or not!

JULIO

Ok, honey...

VERÓNICA

Focus on the trial...

JULIO

Ok.

VERÓNICA comes closer, hugs him and kissed him. JULIO notices SILVIA who is laughing in the back and closing the door.

57 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - DAY 57

DETAIL SHOT: ALL THE DAYS IN THE CALENDAR ARE CROSSED OUT. WE HAVE REACHED THE DAY THAT WAS INITIALLY SET AS THE DEADLINE.

SUPERIMPOSE: February 15th, 1985.

SUPERIMPOSE: Submission of evidence.

We see a wheelbarrow full of files, envelopes with tags, paperwork. The image is really impressive. MACO's hand is piling up the bundles.

MACO

16, 17, 18, 19. Done.

The shot widens. MACO, FEDERICO, SOMI, JUDITH, LUCAS and EDUARDO, ISABEL and MARIE EUGENIA observe the wheelbarrow. LUIS approaches and hugs them. They clap their hands.

LUIS

Mr. Prosecutor, here is your evidence.

16 volumes, 4000 pages, 709 cases, more than 800 witnesses.

JULIO looks at the wheelbarrow. They are all expecting him to say something. His inexpressive face doesn't show any emotions. He puts a cigarette in his mouth. He barely mumbles.

JULIO

Congratulations. Good job.
Submit it.

They all look at him. They drag him outside.

58 INT - HALLWAY / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 58

MACO carries the wheelbarrow through the silent hallways of the Palace of Justice. Behind him, JULIO, LUIS, SOMI, JUDITH, MARIA EUGENIA, FEDERICO, ISABEL: EVERYONE. BASILE the attorney walks towards them from the opposite direction, together with two other defense lawyers. They are the exact opposite of the prosecution team. BASILE stops, and gives them a derisive look

BASILE

A professional and mature team,
Crazy. Congratulations to you.

An alternation of shots and reverse shots. Indeed, the prosecution team doesn't look very professional.

BASILE

Where did you find them? That show
Sundays for the Youth?

JULIO looks at his team, and then at BASILE, angry.

JULIO

You don't need to worry about the young age of my staff, but the eloquence of the evidence these young people have gathered, Mr. Defender.

BASILE looks down, the wheelbarrow is filled with folders. He exchanges looks with the other attorneys. The prosecutors start

walking. Suddenly, as they turn on a corner, a group of journalists starts running towards them.

CUT TO:

JOURNALIST 1

Sir, can I ask you a few questions, for SOMOS magazine?

JOURNALIST 2

Please, for La Razón...

SIETE DÍAS PHOTOGRAPHER

I'm sorry, could you come back again with the wheelbarrow, so we can capture the whole sequence?

LUIS is more than happy to jump into the sea of JOURNALISTS. JULIO observes them, terrified. They take several photos and ask questions.

JULIO

The evidence that we have compiled -and let me tell you we have done this in a record period of time...

WE SEE A SEQUENCE OF PHOTOS. THE PROSECUTION'S YOUNG TEAM NEXT TO STRASSERA. JULIO AND LUIS SMILING. LATER WE SEE THOSE PHOTOS ARE PUBLISHED ON MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS. WE SEE HEADLINES INTRODUCING THE PROSECUTOR AND HIS YOUNG ASSISTANTS. AND ANNOUNCING THE TRIAL. IN THE END WE SEE A COVER OF THE 7 DIAS MAGAZINE THAT COVERS THE ENTIRE SCREEN. IT SHOWS JULIO AND LUIS.

60 INT - LOBBY / BUILDING - NIGHT 60

LUIS' MOTHER is elegantly dressed, waiting by the door. LUIS comes in in a hurry. He greets her with a kiss.

LUIS

Sorry.

LUIS' MOTHER

Very nice, your article on the magazine.

They walk towards the elevator.

LUIS

Thank you.

LUIS' MOTHER

I'm being ironic.

LUIS

You didn't like it?

LUIS' MOTHER

Luis. There's not one person in this church

who hasn't read it.

LUIS
Is that so bad?

LUIS' MOTHER
Come on, get in.

LUIS' MOTHER
Don't even look at him.

However, LUIS keeps looking at him.

LUIS' MOTHER
Don't. Look. At. Him.

LUIS
You explained to him that
this isn't against him.

LUIS' MOTHER
No

LUIS
Why not?

LUIS' MOTHER

Because he thinks it's against him,
against the family, and against the
country.

61 INT - WEDDING RECEPTION - NIGHT 61

LUIS stands on a side in a room filled with people wearing military uniforms. Waiters go by carrying glasses and sandwiches. LUIS looks like a castaway among so many uniforms. He can't stop looking at his uncle BUBBI, who is having a group conversation. LUIS' MOTHER approaches.

LUIS' MOTHER
There's your uncle.
Don't even look at him.

However, LUIS keeps looking at him.

LUIS' MOTHER
Don't. Look. At. Him.

LUIS
You explained to him that
this isn't against him.

LUIS' MOTHER

No

LUIS

Why not?

LUIS'MOTHER

Because he thinks it's against him,
against the family, and against the
country.

LUIS'MOTHER

Could you at least stop it with
the boring face and say hello
to someone?

Someone comes to say hello to his mother. LUIS sets his eyes on his UNCLE BUBBI and walks towards a small group of party guests that includes his uncle UNCLE BUBBI, who looks at him with an indifferent gesture.

LUIS

Uncle, may I speak with you for a second?

His uncle responds with an arrogant smile.

BUBBI

What did you call me? How did you
address to me? I am Colonel Mayor
Ocampo to you, young man.

LUIS

Colonel, can we talk?

BUBBI

(He addresses the people around him
with an ironic tone)
Do you know who this young man is? He
is one of the lawyers who want to
imprison the commanders who fought
against subversion. Brave, isn't him?
(Changes his tone)
May I aks you a question, counselor?
Do you think you are going to win
that trial?

LUIS

You think the Military Juntas did the
right thing?.

BUBBI

Of course they did.

LUIS

How do you justify the
kidnapping and torturing of
innocent people inside military
institutions?

BUBBI

Those are lies.

LUIS

That is why this trial is important, Colonel. So we can find out the truth. Whatever it turns out to be. I just say to you that these men have disrespected the military institution, these men are criminals... and my duty as a lawyer is to help justice be done.

BUBBI

Justice should be served by the war tribunals. It was a war, counselor.

LUIS

A war waged by the State against society?

Silence. His MOTHER intervenes.

LUIS' MOTHER

What is happening here? Luis, come with me please.

His MOTHER walks away with him.

LUIS

You told me to say hello to someone.

LUIS' MOTHER

But I told you, specifically, not him, Luis.

LUIS

I'm sorry Mom, but he also needs to understand. Everyone here needs to understand.

A MAN WITH A MENACING LOOK stares at him from the distance.

INT - HALLWAY / ELEVATOR - NIGHT

LUIS, pretty tense, walks to the building's old elevator. He gets in and pushes the ground floor button. As the elevator goes down, he loosens his tie.

INT - HALLWAY / BUILDING - NIGHT

The elevator reaches the ground floor. There is a SUSPICIOUS MAN waiting by the door. LUIS hesitates for a few seconds and starts

walking. ANOTHER SUSPICIOUS MAN comes out from behind, where the stairs are. One of them waits for him by the door, the other one walks behind him as if escorting him. They reach the door. LUIS tries to open it, but it's jammed. He tries again, pretending not to be desperate. Then he looks at them.

LUIS
It's locked.

The one who was waiting by the door smiles and pushes a button that unlocks the door.

LUIS
Oh, that was it.

LUIS opens the door slowly, pretending to be calm.

EXT - BUILDING / STREETS - NIGHT

A nervous LUIS opens the door, escorted by the TWO SUSPICIOUS MEN, and as soon as he puts a foot on the sidewalk, he starts running away. He runs fast without looking back, without thinking where he is going, just runs, as fast as he can. He turns the corner and looks back. No one is following him. He slows down and finally stops. He looks around, very agitated. No one is following him. No one on the streets. He takes his hand up to his forehead. Smiles briefly and starts walking back in the direction he came. A car shows up in the corner. LUIS gets startled. The TWO SUSPICIOUS MEN are in the car.

SUSPICIOUS
MAN 1
Everything OK, Prosecutor?

LUIS
Yes, fine.

SUSPICIOUS
MAN 1
Do you need a ride?

LUIS
No, thank you. That's very kind of you.

The car speeds away. A shape is looking at him from the back seat, using his hand to gesture a gun firing at him. LUIS is left alone, in the middle of the street.

64 INT - COURTROOM - DAY 64 SUPERIMPOSE: April 22, 1985.

SUPERIMPOSE: Beginning of the public hearings.

A PHONE RINGS PERSISTENTLY; NOBODY PICKS UP.

LUIS and JULIO walk into the courtroom from one of the side entrances.

JULIO

Luder is here. We have to go slow today.
We have to stay calm.

LUIS

Yes.

JULIO

The Foreign Office says Clyde
Snow will arrive tomorrow,
that he will be protected, the
embassy is collaborating.

LUIS

Yes.

JULIO

So we'll be fine. The French
are solid too. It will all help
us establish neutrality. We'll
be fine.

JULIO

That is what we need. Let's not
push it, let's stay calm. It's
the first week.

LUIS

Yes, yes.

JULIO

Are you going to say yes to
everything?

LUIS

What? No...yes...I don't know.

Something draws LUIS' attention as he approaches slowly: he sees
a suspicious guy that looks familiar. It's the MAN who sat on the
backseat of the car in the previous sequence: he is sitting in the
back row of the room, which is still empty.

LUIS

Excuse me, Secretary, what is that
man doing there?

LOZA looks at LUIS. He also finds that presence
strange. LUIS asks again.

LUIS

(To the SECURITY GUARD)

Is that man with you?

The SECURITY GUARD shakes his head. Since LUIS looks at him
insistently, the SECURITY GUARD walks towards the SUSPICIOUS GUY.
He notices they are watching him, so he cordially waves goodbye
and leaves. THE PHONE HAS NEVER STOPPED RINGING, NOT FOR A
MOMENT. WHEN THEY ARE SILENT IT BECOMES EVER MORE EVIDENT.

The SECURITY GUARD walks back. LUIS keeps looking at him,
disapproving.

LUIS

So? You're going to let him go?

JULIO

Can someone pick up that phone?!

SOMEONE FINALLY ANSWERED THE PHONE. A JANITOR approaches. He talks to LOZA, seemingly scared.

JANITOR

Secretary...

65 INT - OFFICE NEXT TO COURTROOM - DAY 65

The phone is on the table. LOZA comes in and picks it up.

LOZA

Yes?

LUIS and JULIO look at him from the door. LOZA, very serious, listens for a long while. He finally hangs up.

INT - GREEN ROOM / CÁMARA FEDERAL - DÍA

We follow JULIO and LUIS from behind as they walk towards the room where the judges are. They go in abruptly. ASAD, TROTTA, VERGARA, SOLANET, LOSADA, D'AMICO are all very serious. Also there are BASILE and GONZAGA, two defenders of the military.

JULIO

Oh... I see you've already been doing your thing.

GONZAGA

Relax, Strassera. It's a serious situation.

JULIO

Your Honors, with all due respect. There is no bomb. I guarantee you.

BASILE

How will you guarantee that? Based on what?

JULIO

It's obvious, Your Honors. It's an operation designed to terrorize society.

BASILE

That is an insult and nonsense, Your Honors. The duty of this chamber is to carry out a safe

procedure...with safety... for
everyone... defendants and
witnesses...

JULIO

A safe procedure? What kind of
joke is that? We and the
witnesses are the ones who have
been threatened for the past six
months!

ASAD looks thoughtful, he doesn't intervene.

TROTTA

(Points out at the defendors)
The defense claims that the
circumstances can't guarantee the
physical safety of the defendants.

LUIS

Your Honors: the threat is coming
from the defendants. It's obvious.

GONZAGA

The only thing we are asking is to
postpone the beginning of the
trial.

SOLANET

(Ironic)

...indefinitely.

BASILE

Until the proper circumstances
exist.

SOLANET

(Repeats)

Indefinitely.

ASAD keeps quiet, JULIO attacks.

JULIO

(Trying to stay calm)

Your Honors, this is the first day!
You can't adjourn on the first day.
If you adjourn today, if there is
no trial today, it will never
happen! All they need to do is call
once a day with a threat and that's
it...!

ASAD

(Overlaps)

Strassera, would you shut up!

Silence.

JULIO looks at him surprised.

ASAD
(Decided)

We will continue.

He looks at the other judges, they are also convinced.

BASILE
(surprised)

What?

ASAD
Indeed. We will proceed normally.
This court guarantees the safety of
the trial. The trial is happening
and it starts today.

BASILE
What about the bomb?

ASAD
...let it go off.

SOLANET
Boom.

They all look at each other, ASAD has made a decision.

BASILE
You realize the decision you are
making...

ASAD
I am aware, counselor.

JULIO
You heard it: He is very aware.

BASILE mumbles his resentment.

GONZAGA
One more thing...Those women must
take off their white handkerchiefs.

ASAD
Those are the Mothers of Plaza de
Mayo, counselor. The handkerchief
is a symbol of...

GONZAGA
Political emblems are not
allowed...and the defense will not
admit the presence of people in
disguise in court.

EVERYONE looks at him, annoyed. ASAD looks at LOZA. He makes a
gesture with his head. He seems to understand. LOZA leaves.

ASAD

Anything else?

BASILE

Nothing else, Your Honors.

BASILE leaves. He comes across JULIO, who whispers to him:

JULIO

Such a talent for being an asshole.

INT - COURTROOM - DAY

JULIO is chatting politely with a WOMAN who wears the white handkerchief with pride. LUIS is next to him. The WOMAN first, and then two others, all agree to take off their handkerchiefs.

CUT TO:

67 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 67

JULIO and LUIS are sitting behind their desk. We hear ASAD initiating the trial. JULIO puts his wristwatch neatly on the upper part of the desk. LUIS looks at the second hand, ticking.

ASAD

We hereby begin the first hearing of
case 13 / 84

JULIO

Are you calm?

LUIS

Yes.

JULIO

Don't be afraid. There is no bomb.
I promise.

LUIS

I know, I know.

They both look at the watch. THE AMBIENT SOUND IS GONE. WE ONLY HEAR THE TICKING OF THE WATCH. The former minister ITALO LUDER, first witness, walks into the courtroom. He takes his oath.

ASAD asks him a question. LUIS and JULIO look at both sides. Someone in the AUDIENCE stands up. LUIS now focuses on the large clock on the wall above the main entrance. LUIS thinks he spots the SUSPICIOUS MAN in the audience. He tries to tell JULIO, but he is posing his first question. LUIS looks at the wristwatch, then at the audience again. The SUSPICIOUS MAN is gone. LUIS scans the courtroom with his eyes. A door closes, and the banging sound resonates in the courtroom. LUIS is startled. He keeps looking. He spots the SECURITY GUARD who is leaning against a wall and then walks towards the exits. The second hand on the wall clock is moving. The one on his wrist watch too. LUDER continues testifying. LUIS takes the watch in his hand. He sees a

briefcase on an empty chair that looks abandoned. LUIS nudges JULIO and points at the briefcase. JULIO looks at it. They look at the Judges again. A slow zoom in the briefcase.

CUT TO:

An exterior shot of the courtroom shows the big stained-glass window from the street. A car drives by, slowly, too slowly (A Ford Falcon?) and goes off frame.

CUT TO:

Back inside, someone places heavy files on a table, causing another bang that resembles an explosion and LUIS is startled again. With the bang, the ambient sound comes back. We leave the feeling of an imminent catastrophe behind. A hand takes the suspicious briefcase and leaves. There was no bomb in it. BASILE asks a question.

BASILE

... the atmosphere of instability and violence in the country is what lead you to sign that decree?

LUDER

Yes, police forces were unable to contain the subversive violence.

BASILE

And you believed the Army would be able to do it?

LUDER

Well, I thought it would help...

BASILE

Help in what way? By annihilating the subversive groups that were terrorizing the country, right?

LUDER

Like I said, the situation was out of control...

BASILE picks up the papers with the decree and speaks to the judges.

BASILE

So, we should stress that the order of annihilation was decreed during the government of María Estela Martínez de Perón, requesting the help of the Armed Forces because we were on the verge of a civil war. Isn't that right, Dr.?

LUKAS

I never said anything about a civil war.

BASILE

How would you define it then?

LUDER

I never said war...

BASILE

But it's clear that there was an enemy compromising national security.

LUDER is speechless. JULIO charges immediately.

JULIO

Let the witness say what is his sense of this word the defense deems so important. What does the witness understand by "annihilate"?

ASAD

Please clarify the question, Mr. Prosecutor.

JULIO

(Emphatic)

May the witness clarify if for him 'annihilating' means to obtain information at any cost, torturing with an electric prod, kidnapping, and physically eliminating a helpless individual?

ASAD

You may answer.

LUDER

In no way it means a physical annihilation, nor a violation of the legal system that ruled the country. The decrees in no way imply repression outside the law.

LUDER breathes with relief. BASILE and JULIO exchange looks.

68 INT - COURTROOM - DAY 68

We enter the courtroom following a man who comes at the last minute. The room becomes dark all of the sudden. Silence, then some whispering.

CUT TO:

We see a slide projected on a screen, showing a skull with several bullet holes. CLYDE SNOW, an American medical examiner, is testifying.

CLYDE SNOW

This metal marker is pointing to the

sternum, where you can see a circular hole that corresponds to a bullet that penetrated the back of the sternum to touch its front; and even though the bone is still in the ground, we can already know that this guy was shot in the back...

STRASSERA looks at the audience. He spots his daughter VERÓNICA in her school uniform, next to one CLASSMATE, watching the trial: they're bored.

INT - LUIS' MOTHER APARTMENT - NIGHT

A TV REPORT FEATURING ARCHIVE FOOTAGE THAT INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY OF ANTOINE SANGUINETTI. A news speaker is talking about the witnesses of the week. LUIS' MOTHER is watching it on her TV.

70 INT - COURTROOM- DAY 70

EDUARDO is running through a hallway carrying a file, heading towards the courtroom. We hear BASILE talking in VO.

BASILE (V.O.)

Vice-Admiral, as a Minister of Foreign Affairs, how did you proceed with the requests made by governments and international organizations regarding the alleged disappearances of persons?

BUSTOS

I never received any formal complaint, neither from Human Rights Organizations, nor the OAS, nor the UN, against the Argentine Government.

EDUARDO rushes in and gives the file to LUIS, who hands it out to JULIO.

LUIS

(in a low voice)

Here they are.

JULIO takes the documents and holds them high up, as if they were a torch.

JULIO

Your Honor, attached to the inquiry files you will find the numerous reports and international complaints received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, making it clear that our witness is committing perjury.

ASAD

Mr. Strassera, wait for your turn. Admiral, proceed...

BUSTOS continues.

INT - HALLWAYS / PALACE OF JUSTICE - ~~DAY~~ NOCHE

FROM A BALCONY WE SEE PEOPLE EXITING THE COURTROOM

JULIO and LUIS smoke in the hallway that leads to the prosecutor's office. Their faces look tired, and somewhat worried.

JULIO

So?

LUIS

What?

JULIO

How are we doing?

LUIS

(Not especially enthused)

I'd say... well...

JULIO

Hmm...What's not convincing you?

LUIS

I haven't said anything...
Actually, I said we're doing well!

JULIO

Tell me what you're thinking!

LUIS

I'm not thinking anything!

JULIO

Anything good...Talk...

LUIS

I don't know what you want me to say.

JULIO

Why do you think we're doing badly?

LUIS

I didn't say that.

JULIO

But that's what you're thinking.

LUIS

I think we're doing well.

JULIO

But...

JULIO

So?

LUIS

Nothing.

JULIO

What did she say?

LUIS

Nothing. The usual.

JULIO

What's the usual?

LUIS

She thinks the foreign experts are the same as the subversives. You know...the Anti-Argentina campaign.

JULIO

(Irritated)

Luis, we can't have your mom as a parameter. Your mom went to mass with Videla. We will never convince her.

LUIS

Yeah, of course...

JULIO

If our mission is to convince people like your mom, we're screwed. We can't do that.

LUIS

Never.

JULIO looks at him. He's pissed.

JULIO

You think we can.

LUIS

I think we can't!

JULIO

We are never going to convince people like your mom! Never!

LUIS

No, never. You're right.

JULIO

Oh, you're so stubborn! We can't talk like this.

JULIO goes back into the office. LUIS is left alone, without a clue of what just happened.

73 EXT - ENTRANCE ON URUGUAY ST. / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 73

ADRIANA, a woman in her 40s walks up to the entrance with her SON. She is welcomed by a POLICEMAN. She hands him her ID without saying a word. JUDITH, always in a hurry, intervenes.

JUDITH

Adriana, welcome. You spoke with me

yesterday. You're early.

ADRIANA looks at JUDITH. She looks like a little girl, but she acts with authority. They shake hands.

JUDITH

Come, walk with me. There's a room where you can wait.

ADRIANA

(Speaking for the first time)
Can he stay with me?

JUDITH

No. It's for witnesses only. You have to wait there until the moment of your deposition.

ADRIANA

In isolation?

JUDITH

Yes, you can't talk to anyone.

ADRIANA

Like incommunicado?

JUDITH

No, but it's what the Court has established. You can't be with other people.

ADRIANA

Are you going to put a hood on my head too?

JUDITH looks at her, confused. It takes her a few seconds to get her irony.

JUDITH

It's for your safety.

ADRIANA

Nice of you to think about my safety. I've been getting death threats every day for the last month.

JUDITH

Didn't you get a security detail?

ADRIANA

A patrolman came by once. He never came back...Anyway, that's better. I stay away from the police.

(About her son)

And him?

JUDITH

He stays with me. All day. Don't worry.

JUDITH winks at him. The SON smiles, almost ashamed. ADRIANA walks into the witness room.

JUDITH
Your mom is funny.

SON
She is the least funny person in the whole world.

74 INT - WITNESS ROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 74

The witnesses wait for their turn in silence. From that room, we can hear the voice of Secretary LOZA announcing the beginning of the hearing. He asks everyone: "All rise".

LOZA
The Court calls Adriana Calvo de Laborde.

We follow ADRIANA as she walks into the Courtroom. The audio of the judge jumps in while she walks into the courtroom.

ASAD (V.O.)
State your full name.

ADRIANA (V.O.)
Adriana Calvo de Laborde.

ASAD (V.O.)
Were you affected by the military forces that were conducted by the defendants?

ADRIANA (V.O.)
Yes, sir.

ASAD (V.O.)
Were you deprived of your freedom?

ADRIANA (V.O.)
Yes, sir.

ASAD (V.O.)
Describe to this court the circumstances and ways in which this happened.

75 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 75

JUDITH and SANTIAGO are crowded together on a side of the Courtroom.

ADRIANA
On the 4th of February, 1977, while at home, I was abducted...

JULIO smokes and observes her. LUIS writes some notes while examining her file.

ADRIANA
They put me in a car. Just as the car

turned around the corner, they put a sweater over my head, threw me on the car's floor and put their feet on me. Then the threats started, they said they were going to kill me...

(...)

They got me out of the car, they took off the sweater, covered my eyes with a rug, tightly tied, and cuffed my hands behind my back. At the time, I was six and a half months pregnant, so, quite a late-term pregnancy...

(...)

They tortured me despite of my condition, they kept me a prisoner for months.

A MONTAGE SEQUENCE STARTS, ALTERNATING TESTIMONIES FROM THE FIRST WEEKS OF THE TRIAL. WE WILL SEE ARCHIVE FOOTAGE AND OTHERS RE-ENACTED FOR FICTION.

ADRIANA CALVO DE LABORDE'S TESTIMONY WILL BE THE ANCHOR OF THE SEQUENCE, ALTERNATING WITH THE OTHERS. THE SEQUENCE WILL BE PAIRED WITH SIMPHONIC MUSIC, SOMETIMES AT THE FOREFRONT, SOMETIMES FADING.

76 INT - PALACE OF JUSTICE - NIGHT 76

The door that leads to the central hall of the Palace of Justice opens. Several JOURNALISTS run, making their way through the crowd coming out of the courtroom. The journalists race down the stairs at full speed.

77 EXT - LAVALLE SQUARE - NIGHT 77

We see the group of JOURNALISTS running in different directions. The different payphones of the area are being taken. Finally, an OLD JOURNALIST sees they're all taken and walks to a more distant payphone. He takes out a small bag of tokens and puts a few of them in.

OLD JOURNALIST

Hello... Yes, I know... I had trouble finding a phone... Let's do it, come on.

78 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 78

JULIO looks at MARÍA KUBIK, who walks into the room and is sworn in before the judges.

LOSADA

Madam, I inform you that the court will hear your testimony in the process against the members of the military juntas in the so-called Process of National

Reorganization, and that your testimony will be given under oath. Do you swear to tell the truth about anything you know about and you are questioned about.

MARIA KUBIK

I do.

79 EXT - LAVALLE SQUARE - NIGHT 79

The OLD JOURNALIST starts making his report. We see different JOURNALISTS issuing the same report.

OLD JOURNALIST

Good evening, Juan Carlos. In the seventh day of the trial of the former Commanders, the day started with the heartbreaking deposition of María Kubik, the mother of disappeared young girl Maria Cristina Lefteroff.

CUT TO:

We see ANOTHER JOURNALIST using a different payphone.

JOURNALIST 1

María Cristina Lefteroff, who was abducted and taken to the Quilmes Brigade. Hours later, Mrs. Kubik de Marcoff herself was abducted.

CUT TO:

We now see a YOUNG FEMALE JOURNALIST, on another payphone.

YOUNG FEMALE JOURNALIST

The most moving moment of the day was when Mrs. Kubik addressed the President of the Court.

CUT TO:

Next to her, a YOUNG MALE JOURNALIST narrates the same event:

YOUNG FEMALE JOURNALIST

"The only thing I want, Your Honor...

CUT TO:

INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

Almost at unison MARIA KUBIK's voice overlaps, she is sitting in front of the judges, testifying.

MARIA KUBIK

... is to know if my daughter is alive or dead.

MARÍA KUBIK awaits for an answer. You could hear a pin drop in the crowded Courtroom. For a second, the JUDGES sitting in the front row don't know how to respond to the woman's claim.

LOSADA

Unfortunately, Madame, this Court cannot answer that.

MARIA KUBIK looks back at the Judge, sad.

81 INT - OFFICE / PROSECUTION'S OFFICE - NIGHT 81

FEDERICO, MARIA EUGENIA and JUDITH are working afterhours organizing the evidence. JUDITH opens up a file, she finds pictures of mass graves. She notices a detail shot of a foot. It shows a *Topper* sneaker on an ankle that seems to belong to a woman. Then she looks at her foot, she is wearing the same kind of sneaker. She starts to cry. The others look at her without understanding what's going on.

INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

IMAGES OF THE DEFENDORS IN A LOW-ANGLE SHOT. WE CAN'T HEAR WHAT THEY SAY. JUST THE V.O. FROM THE RADIO.

JOURNALIST X (V.O)

The insistence of the defense attorneys was such that the witness said: "I ask Your Honors to let the record show that this form of interrogation reminds me of the one they used on in the torture room".

82 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 82

From one of the corners of the courtroom, behind the prosecutors, MACO and FEDERICO, JUDITH, and JULIÁN are watching the testimony of ALFREDO FORTI, a 24-year-old young man.

ALFREDO FORTI

I was the oldest and I was 15. My brothers were 13, 11, 10 and the youngest one was 8.

JULIÁN glances at his father, who is focused on the testimony.

ALFREDO FORTI

We were forced to get out of the airplane, they walked us through the airport and made us get into a vehicle where they put a hood on our heads. I didn't know where we were until we got to this place, which years later I recognized as *El Pozo de Banfield*... run by the Army...

D'AMICO

Did they mention any detention orders,

any warrant, any cause?

ALFREDO FORTI

Absolutely none, Sir.

LUIS looks at the audience. Everyone is silent.

ALFREDO FORTI

We were told my mother was going to be transferred to Tucuman... She is still disappeared today... When we were released, my brothers and me, we were told not to remove our blindfolds, because we were being watched... It took us over fifteen minutes until one of us dared to peep... We were on the street, my brothers were crying, asking about our mother. I saw that right across the street from us there was a restaurant full of people... They looked at us... Nobody helped us. How could someone believe that a group of children could be dangerous?

JULIÁN sobs, but he conceals it from JUDITH, who gives him a comforting pat.

83 EXT - PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 83

A mobile unit of Channel 11 is outside the Palace of Justice. A CHANNEL 11 JOURNALIST talks to the camera.

CHANNEL 11 JOURNALIST

The news today is that, as requested by the witnesses, the prosecution's office will stop releasing the list of witnesses for the day, in view of the repeated threats received by the witnesses who testify day after day...

We see OTHER JOURNALISTS in the back, in identical situations. The trial becomes a massive news story.

84 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 84

PABLO DIAZ, a man in his 20s, is testifying.

PABLO DIAZ

One day, I asked if I could talk to her, to one of the guards who was, all things considered, quite humanitarian. He takes me to Claudia's cell. I lift my blindfold, Claudia says: 'Pablo, thank you for the strength you give me'. I had told her that, when we

get out, we would start a relationship, she and I, like dating, I wouldn't know how to call it. Then, at a certain point, she tells me: 'don't touch me, because I've been raped. They raped me, when they were torturing me, they flipped me over and raped me, from the front, from the back.

(...)

The night before they released me Claudia said one thing I will never forget: that on every December 31st, New Years Eve, I should raise my glass for her and for everyone, because she was already dead.

85 EXT - PHONE BOOTH / LAVALLE SQUARE - NIGHT 85

Close up of several phone tokens dropped into an orange ENTEL payphone.

JOURNALIST 2

At the end of his deposition, Priest Graselli, who was a military chaplain, stated: 'You are learning about all these things now. I found out at the time they were happening...'

He also revealed that, as early as 1976, he already had 2,500 files of disappeared persons.

86 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 86

We go back to ADRIANA, who continues her clear testimony to the Court.

ADRIANA

...I will tell you the case of someone I didn't know. Someone who was tortured for days. The gang tortured him day and night, with no mercy, will all the methods I have explained and many more. They finally left him alone and left. They left him lying on our corridor. We could hear him gasping, Your Honor. When the gang left, the guards started a barbecue. And they started drinking wine, and getting drunk. And then one of them had the idea to torture this prisoner. And they started torturing him again. This time they didn't want any information, Your Honor. They were having fun, shouting. It was an orgy. And the only thing they wanted, my apologies Your Honor for what I am about to say, but the only purpose of this torture that

lasted for hours and hours was to have this prisoner say 'I eat dick and my mother is a bitch'. For hours, Your Honor, they were torturing him, trying to have him say that. And he didn't say it.

I'm sorry to have had to say those words, but I think it is important because people have talked about excessive actions, and, supposedly, for the defendants these are the alleged excessive actions, the rest, the normal: cold torture.

ASAD

Madam, if you could please just describe the facts without characterizing them.

ADRIANA

Your Honor, this was a fact.

EXT - HOTEL - NIGHT

JULIO and MACO rush into a modest downtown hotel.

88 INT - ZELAYA'S ROOM / HOTEL - DAY 88

JULIO and MACO observe the messy room, and the half-made suitcase, open on the bed. JULIO opens an envelope and takes out some photos. JULIO and MACO look at them. These are photographs of him and his family.

ZELAYA

We have been followed for months...

MACO

We will report this, Sir. Right now, we'll escort you to another hotel.

ZELAYA

I'm going back, Sir.

MACO

Your deposition is tomorrow, and it's a very important one...

ZELAYA

(Firm)

I'm not going to testify.

MACO looks at JULIO, who doesn't say anything. He looks at the photos and at the strong yet scared man in front of him.

MACO

Zelaya, let's sit down for a moment. Calm down...

ZELAYA

(calmly, tired)

The bus leaves in 40 minutes.

MACO sits on a chair in front of him. JULIO, standing, lights a cigarette. He thinks.

MACO

(to ZELAYA, in a low voice,
convincing)

You have to testify. People need to know what they did to you. It's your chance... If you don't testify, an opportunity to let the country hear about these criminals who have done you wrong...

From where he is, JULIO makes a subtle gesture with his hand indicating MACO not to push it.

ZELAYA

The criminals that have done me wrong? One of my torturers works for the Mayor's office... The doctor who used to check if I could stand more electric shocks is the Chief Physician at the Public Hospital... I have to live among these people... I don't know what I'm doing here, I don't know why I came.

MACO

Zelaya, we can request a security detail for you, we can protect you.

ZELAYA throws his hands to his head. JULIO steps in.

JULIO

No, we can't protect you. The truth is we can't. We can't protect anyone.

(MACO and ZELAYA look at
him, surprised)

Not while these guys are out there. We can't Maco.

There's an awkward, embarrassing silence.

JULIO

Do you have money for the bus ticket?

JULIO gestures MACO.

JOURNALIST (OFF)

*The Federal Prosecutor,
Strassera, reported new
threats...*

89 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JUDITH picks up the phone. She receives a threat.

JOURNALIST (OFF)

A member of the Comando Tricolor told a member of the Prosecution staff that the Prosecutor would be executed in less than 48hs.

90 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 90

JUDITH observes from a distance.

JOURNALIST (OFF)

In turn, the defense attorneys joined their voices saying that they are threatened daily by anonymous calls made by people connected to the subversives, and requested the prosecution to provide details of the alleged threats.

The courtroom is noisy. BASILE has approached the judges. D'AMICO calls the room to order.

BASILE

...in any case, the prosecution should file a formal report or provide more details about the threats...

JULIO gestures to JUDITH to approach him. She does, shyly.

JULIO

(To Judith)

Speak...

JUDITH, completely shy, approaches the microphone.

JUDITH

He called minutes before noon and said to be a member of the Comando Tricolor.

BASILE

There's no such Comando. Could you say something more specific? A name? Any traits?

JUDITH

Of course, since this was an anonymous, threatening phone call, I can't provide any names or physical traits...

BASILE

What was his voice like?

JUDITH

It was a strange, raspy, sort of ridicule voice...

JUDITH looks to the sides. JULIO makes a gesture encouraging her.

JUDITH

...like that of a fascist...

BASILE

What do you mean by that?

JUDITH

(To BASILE)

Like yours, Counsel.

JULIÁN laughs among the audience. BASILE bursts, offended as if he had been accused. The courtroom is in chaos again.

91 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 91

JUDITH and SANTIAGO look at ADRIANA, who continues talking.

ADRIANA

On April the 15th I went into labor. As it was my third child, I knew it was going to be quick.

(...)

A patrol came, they put me inside and we left the 5th precinct.

(...)

I was lying down in the car, blindfolded and with my hands tied behind my back. They insulted me, I told them my child was coming, that I couldn't hold it any longer. I told them to stop, that it wasn't my firstborn and I knew it was time. They didn't do anything, the driver and the one next to him kept laughing. They told me it made no difference, they were going to kill me anyways, and my child too, what did I care? Finally, I don't even know how, I managed to take off my underwear, I really don't remember how. I screamed: 'It's coming, I can't wait anymore'. And, indeed, my baby girl was born, she was born. I was shouting them to stop the car. They finally stop on the verge of the road. My baby was healthy, she was very small. She was hanging from the umbilical chord. She

fell off the seat; she ended up on the car floor. I asked them to please give her to me, to let me hold her. They didn't. They tied the umbilical chord and we kept going. Three minutes had gone by and my baby was crying. My hands were still tied behind my back, and I was blindfolded. They didn't want to give her to me.

(...)

We get to a different place, and they take me out of the car. I walk into a large shop with marble countertops. They had placed my baby on one of the countertops. She was dirty, crying, feeling cold. I begged them to let me be with her and nobody answered me.

They brought two buckets of water and made me clean everything. I had to do all that naked, in front of the guards, who were laughing.

Only after that they let me hold my baby...

Your Honor, that day I made the promise that, if my baby and I lived, I was going to devote the rest of my days to see that justice is done...

92 EXT - CASA ROSADA (GOVERNMENT HOUSE) - NIGHT 92

On one of the sidewalks of Plaza the Mayo, there is a parked Ford Falcon. We can see the Casa Rosada in the back. Suddenly, the car explodes. It starts catching fire while a thick black smoke comes out of the engine. Among the debris, there are photos of JULIO, newspaper articles about the trial and images of the president.

EXT - PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

Several armed trucks and police men are guarding the front of the Palace of Justice.

JOURNALIST

Security at the trial has been doubled after the bomb that went off in Plaza de Mayo...

93 EXT - PAYPHONE / LAVALLE SQUARE - NIGHT 93

SEQUENCE OF CLOSEUPS OF TOKENS AND PAYPHONES. DIFFERENT VOICES SPREAD THE NEWS ON THE TRIAL.

OLDER JOURNALIST

The aggressive strategy of the defense...

INT - RADIO STATION - NIGHT

FEMALE JOURNALIST

The defense counsel basically blamed the witness for their own abduction, proving that the defense...

INT - TV STUDIO - NIGHT

BALD JOURNALIST

The defense seemed to suggest that the former detainee was responsible for his detention, and even for the torture inflicted on him.

94 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY 94

ADRIANA is finishing her deposition.

ADRIANA

(Continues)

A month later I was released...we lost our jobs, we lost our house, we lost our friends, we lost everything, we had to leave the country. They managed to terrorize me, Your Honor. Fortunately, they did not manage to terrorize the people. There were relatives, there were mothers, there were grandmothers, who faced them, Your Honor. And today, thanks to them, I'm here demanding justice. I think I don't have anything else to add...

ASAD

Prosecutor. Any questions?

JULIO looks serious but he is moved. LUIS holds his head between his hands.

STRASSERA

No questions, Your Honor.

JUDGE LOSADA

Does the defense want to make any questions?

Nobody answers.

ASAD

Your deposition is over. Thank you very much.

ADRIANA stands up, still shaking. The courtroom is silent, moved.

95 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT 95

FEDERICO, MACO, ISABEL, are working, sorting out the material for the next hearing. A phone rings. SUSANA, already wearing her coat and bag, makes a gesture like saying, "I'm off" and doesn't answer the phone. JUDITH picks up the phone.

JUDITH

It's for Luis. Your mom.

LUIS looks at JULIO in shock.

JULIO

Let's see...

LUIS goes to the other room, sits on the chair and answers the phone.

LUIS

Hello Mom. Fine, I'm very well. We had a good hearing today. Oh, you heard it. On the radio?
Of course I knew, I didn't know you were listening to it every day.
Really?...And what do you think?

The first one to lean through the door is JUDITH, paying attention to the phone call.

LUIS

Adriana Calvo de Laborde.

JULIO picks up another phone and starts listening too.

MOTHER (OFF)

Is it true, everything she told?

LUIS

Yes, it's true.

MOTHER (OFF)

How can someone be so cruel? Showing no mercy to a pregnant woman... making her suffer so much... Not caring even about a baby. Dreadful, honestly. Dreadful. I never thought I would hear something so...dreadful.

LUIS

Me neither, Mom.

LUIS can't help himself; he has tears in his eyes.

MOTHER (OFF)

Oh, Luis. I know I told you ugly things. It's not easy for someone who has her own ideas to see her son doing things she strongly disagrees about.

LUIS

Well...

MOTHER (OFF)

It's the way I've always thought.
Because of my
Education, my religion, the people
I know...because I've always
respected the Army...
But now...
I think you're right...

LUIS

I'm right?

MOTHER (OFF)

Yes... Videla should go to prison.

LUIS can't hold it anymore and starts crying.

MOTHER (OFF)

Luis?

LUIS

Yes, mom... He should go to prison.

MOTHER (OFF)

Are you crying?

LUIS

No.

LUIS takes the phone to his ear again. JULIÁN walks in and observes the situation.

JULIÁN

(in a low voice, to Julio)

Why is this one crying?

JULIO makes a gesture telling him it's not important, and softly pushes him towards a different area of the office.

INT - RUSO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A vinyl record is playing an opera. JULIO returns from the kitchen with a plate of fruit. There are leftovers on the table. RUSO looks deteriorated yet excited with his friend's visit.

RUSO

That's why the case of Hilda Cardozo
is crucial: she was detained in
Rosario, went through ESMA, and
disappeared in Cordoba.
Interconnection between the different
branches.

JULIO sits down and starts peeling off a tangerine as he listens to him.

JULIO

I got it, Ruso.

RUSO

And the Bettinis. You have all the crimes in one single family. The entire state terrorism apparatus, condensed. First, the son is murdered, then the father is kidnapped, and then the grandmother, now for financial reasons.

JULIO

Exactly.

RUSO

The kidnapping is an excess by itself—the fact that it was an old lady only adds to the horror. And on top of that, they did it to steal their assets.

JULIO hands him the tangerine, tries to tone down the conversation.

JULIO

Relax, Ruso. We are doing good.

RUSO

Hmmm.

JULIO

Seriously, we're doing good.

RUSO

I don't like to hear you say that.

JULIO

That we're doing good?

RUSO

Not because you aren't. I just don't like to hear you say 'we're doing good'. You don't have to think you are doing good...because right when you believe you're doing good...

JULIO

Don't be an asshole. You know I don't like to say that: I'm even more superstitious than you, but...

RUSO

You have to be sharper than ever now.

(Takes a deep breath)

Up until now: you got the attention and you got the

emotion. Perfect. But now...now comes the ESMA, now comes Massera, Julio. And that one is crazy, perverse, dangerous.

A cough interrupts him. He choaks for a moment.

JULIO

Are you OK?

RUSO is short of breath, he suffocates.

RUSO

No.

(Joking)

But your not OK either. Understand?

JULIO comforts him.

JULIO

OK.

RUSO

Julio, listen to me. The ESMA is hard. I know the turf. ESMA is tough.

JULIO

I know, I know.

RUSO

(Softer, with a weak voice)

No. You don't know. Listen to me...

RUSO keeps talking, JULIO listens.

RUSO

They had Air Force and Prefecture operatives there. Five thousand people disappeared there...Five thousand there alone. Massera himself led the operations...to show them how it was done.

(Thinks)

Wait for me here.

(Stands up)

I'll show you...

JULIO is left alone, pensive.

INT - CAR - NIGHT

JULIO puts the key in the ignition and hesitates before starting the car. He remains thoughtful. Afraid. Finally, he turns the key. The car starts.

100 INT -STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 100

An envelope with Navy letterhead is lying on the dining room table. In the background we hear a door opening and SILVIA, JULIÁN and VERÓNICA walk in. They leave their stuff at the entrance. VERÓNICA walks by but stops when she sees the letter. She grabs it.

VERÓNICA

Mom. There's a letter here: From the Argentine Navy, Mom

SILVIA

What's it doing there?

VERÓNICA

I don't know, someone left it here.

SILVIA

(Hiding her fear)

Call Hormiga.

VERÓNICA does that while SILVIA reads the letter addressed to JULIO.

VERÓNICA

Are they going to kill us?

SILVIA

No, honey.

SILVIA doesn't answer, she is worried. The typed letter announces a new death threat to Julio.

101 INT - CAR / BUS TERMINAL - DAY 101

The entire family is in the car. JULIO, SILVIA, JULIÁN and VERÓNICA. JULIO stops the car at one of the bus terminal entrances. Behind them, in another car, we see HORMIGA and ROMERO, who hurry up to help them with their things.

JULIO

It's only two weeks.

VERÓNICA

You said one...

SILVIA

Doesn't matter what he said. Let's do this quick.

VERÓNICA

I'm not scared.

JULIÁN

If someone is going to do something to you, they don't threaten you, Dad. Everyone knows that.

JULIO

They broke into our home, and I have a hearing in an hour. Please, I beg you.

HORMIGA y ROMERO observe the family discussion a bit surprised.

JULIO

It's the most difficult day of the trial. The last thing I want is for something to happen to you. Two weeks. Until we are done with ESMA...That's all I'm asking. Until we're done with ESMA!

Everyone remains silent.

SILVIA

Let's go, kids...Let's go.

102 INT - CAR / BUS TERMINAL - DAY

JULIO speeds up and looks at this family with their bags through the rear view mirror.

103 EXT - LAVALLE ENTRANCE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JULIO faces a female TV reporter who intercepted him on his way to the Court.

TV REPORTER

Sir, today all the media is reporting a new threat you have received. This time it was a letter and in your home.

JULIO

It's a meaningless event; I believe it was mostly meant to intimidate the witnesses and not so much myself. And it's a rather clumsy action, because if they did anything to me, there's always going to be someone who will replace me...

TV REPORTER

So you believe the threats. Have you reported them? Is there someone investigating them?

JULIO

The corresponding court will manage the investigation.

TV REPORTER

According to the information the threat was a letter with the Argentine Navy's letterhead. Can you confirm that?

JULIO

I have to get ready for the hearing,
Miss. Thank you for your concern.

JULIO leaves. The TV REPORTER goes on.

TV REPORTER

That was Prosecutor Strassera, who today faces what is likely the hardest moments in the trial of the former commanders: the testimonies of people detained at the Navy School of Mechanics, probably the largest clandestine detention center...

104 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

On the table, a photo of the ESMA façade, maps of the compound, official Navy documents, photos of repressors.

LUIS

Look, I don't want to lie to you. Everything you brought in is very good, but your case is...how can I say this...special.

BARRASA, a robust, balding man with a mustache is sitting across the table, looking at LUIS and smoking.

LUIS

Let's see... don't take this the wrong way. Your situation is different from the other detainees. And the defense...

BARRASA

(Gently, but sounding nervous)

I don't follow you, Sir. What do you mean by "different"?

LUIS

Let me be clear. We are trying to look out for you... I'm trying to prevent...

BARRASA

Tell me, why is it different?
Let's see.

Leaning against the wall, JULIO just observes the situation.

LUIS

The defense will try to prove that you weren't a victim, but an employee of the ESMA.

BASTERRA

But it's the truth... I worked for them... They forced me to work for them...

LUIS

Precisely. And we understand the context, the torture, the threats... Our intention in this meeting is to warn you...

LUIS is looking at JULIO trying to get him involved, but he keeps aside.

LUIS
What I mean is... There are other ways, we could submit your deposition in writing so we don't risk difficult questions...

BASTERRA
(firmly)
I can answer any question.

LUIS
Yes, the idea is not to put you at risk.

BARRASA
But I have already risked myself, a lot... taking this evidence out... precisely for this, for this trial...
(He looks for the words)
They kidnapped me, they tortured me, they forced me to rat out comrades, some of them disappeared because of me... then they forced me to work against my will, forging documents and IDs.
(...)
I spent many years lying to the military and lying to myself. I am not going to lie now. I'm a victim and I must be heard.

JULIO jumps in, finally.

JULIO
It is crystal clear.

105 INT - COURTROOM - DAY

JULIO and LUIS are on the desk assigned to the prosecution. LUIS is shaking his head, saying no. Something is not going right. BARRASA is on the witness stand. GONZAGA (Massera's defender) is cross-examining the witness.

GONZAGA
Can you describe what that compensation was?

BARRASA
Money to buy a few items and visits to my family...

GONZAGA

What was the reason, in your case, for granting you to visit your family?

BARRASA

I believe it was part of a compensation.

GONZAGA

Let the witness answer if that compensation he just described could be considered as a retribution for his work at ESMA?

The courtroom is silent, the atmosphere is tense. BARRASA hesitates.

BARRASA

I was forced to use my knowledge for a task that I knew perfectly well to be illegal, the forgery of Ids. And I was forced to do it.

GONZAGA

According to the witness' statements, every detainee at ESMA was forced to perform tasks, yet not all of them were allowed to leave for family visits, as the witness was.

BASTERRA looks in the direction of LUIS and JULIO, who are also tense.

GONZAGA

As far as you knew, did your exits and entries had the same characteristics as those of the rest of the ESMA staff, such as NCOs, or troops?

BARRASA

Not at first. But later on, yes, since I had a badge... It was quite similar...

LUIS leans forward to JULIO.

LUIS

They are trashing him.

JULIO asks to speak, somewhat hesitating.

JULIO

Your Honor. The evidence provided by the witness is eloquent enough to make the court put a stop to this incredible harassment from the

defense...to prove if he was a
slave or not...

LOSADA

(Stops him)

Mr. Prosecutor. Are you
suggesting that the defense
should be denied their right to
cross-examine?

JULIO

No, but these questions are
biased... and...

LOSADA

Mr. Prosecutor. The defense has
the right to ask the questions
they deem necessary...and is
the court's right to decide
whether they are appropriate or
not.

JULIO

Precisely...

BARRASA is alone on the stand, looking at both sides.

106 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

MACO, concerned, walks into the office. LUCAS, ISABEL and JUDITH
are sitting in their places, not talking. They are eavesdropping
on a discussion between LUIS and JULIO in the other room. They
all look at MACO, who makes a gesture asking what is going on.
FEDERICO replies with another gesture indicating a fight.

LUIS (OFF)

It looked as if they were
questioning a suspect. If you
heard the trial today, it
looked like the ESMA was a club
where detainees were just
strolling around...

ISABEL, shy, closes the door. A few seconds later, FEDERICO opens
it again.

107 INT - JULIO'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

JULIO smokes, looking serious, indecipherable. For the first
time, he seems calmer than LUIS.

JULIO

...If I have to start crying
for every witness that
becomes complicated, for
every question from the
judges, or for every time the
defendant's pressure, I'd
have to retire... It's their
job...

LUIS

And ours is to win this trial! To win it at the indictment, at the sentence, and in the streets.

JULIO

In the streets? Which streets? Talcahuano or Paran a?

LUIS

Don't patronize me.

JULIO

You need to understand the limits of our job, Luis!

LUIS

(Calming down)
Witnesses are heroes, and we have to take care of them...

JULIO

We are officials of the Judiciary. Officials! We don't get involved with witnesses, we don't get involved with judges, and we don't let anyone pressure us. Is that clear?

LUIS

You know better than anyone, some officials wash their hands off- and played dumb during the entire dictatorship...

JULIO's face turns. He seems almost offended. Or about to have a violent outburst, but he refrains himself. He can see the prosecution kids in the next room, surprised, looking at them. JULIO slowly approaches the door and closes it.

JULIO

For instance... who played dumb?

LUIS

You know perfectly well what I'm talking about.

JULIO

No, I don't. Explain.

LUIS

I mean that being an official means nothing if you don't...

JULIO

(Interrupting)
No, don't beat around the bush. What are you talking about, Luis?

LUIS
 ... About the fact that even if you are an official you have to take risks, and not be condescending.

JULIO
 So I don't take risks, and I am condescending?

LUIS
 I didn't say that. But it's not time to...

JULIO
 (interrupts him)
 Yes! You said I don't take any risks, that I am condescending, that I am useful to the reigning power, and that I've spent the dictatorship playing dumb!

LUIS
 I never said that, Julio. I'm talking about something different.

JULIO
 You're inches away from throwing the files of the habeas corpus I didn't investigate on my face, Moreno Ocampo.

LUIS
 I'm talking about something else!

JULIO
 No. ;You're not talking about anything else! I understand perfectly what you're talking about. What the fuck do you think we were doing during the dictatorship? Partying in Punta del Este? Making shitloads of money? Being protected by the fact that we belonged to a noble family? With an uncle who's a Colonel? With a mother who went to mass with Videla?

108 INT - PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

The atmosphere is still very tense. Everyone is eavesdropping by the door. ISABEL and LUCAS look at the phone ringing. A silence. Also inside JULIO's office.

FEDERICO
 It's death threat hour.
 Who is going to get that?

109 INT - JULIO'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - NIGHT

The phone keeps ringing, insistently, as JULIO unloads.

LUIS

I can't answer for my family, but I can answer for myself.

JULIO (CONT'D)
Fuck you, Moreno Ocampo!

LUIS
Fuck you, Strassera!

JULIO
I can answer for myself too!
(Picks up the phone)
Hello. Strassera.
(...)
OK... OK.... OK....
(...)
OK... OK... OK...

LUIS stares at him, still furious.

JULIO
OK...Tomorrow...OK.

JULIO hangs up the phone. He looks up. He and LUIS exchange looks for a few seconds.

JULIO
Bruzzo.
LUIS
What.
JULIO
I don't know.

JULIO walks through the two offices. The kids say goodbye, quietly.

INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The elevator stops. JULIO searches for his keys inside his pocket and opens the door. He turns on the light by the entrance, as he notices a sound that surprises him. It's actually a whisper, in which there's laughter, as if it were a gathering. His family hasn't left, they're all sitting around the table, having dinner. HORMIGA is with them.

SILVIA
Julio! I know, I know... We didn't go.

JULIO approaches. VERÓNICA hugs him and kisses him.

VERÓNICA
We couldn't bear it! We want to be with you, no matter what.

JULIO
(To Hormiga)

We'll talk to you later.

JULIO sits at the table. SILVIA grabs his hand.

JULIO
(In her ear)
You're an asshole.

SILVIA
I love you too.

INT - MEETING ROOM - DAY

JULIO is alone sitting at a big meeting table. He's tense. BRUZZO suddenly walks in, he is restless. The scene is almost the opposite of the ones from the beginning.

BRUZZO
The first thing I have to say
is congratulations...

JULIO
Thank you.

BRUZZO
What you did brought hope to
many in this context. Not
just me, everybody is very
proud of the work you're
doing.

JULIO
Thank you.

BRUZZO
The President himself told
me what you are doing is an
example. n Historical.

JULIO
Tell the president I
appreciate it.

JULIO looks sharply at him. There's a silence. BRUZZO suddenly stands up, energetic.

BRUZZO
Coffee? A nice coffee...

BRUZZO stands up, goes up to a phone.

BRUZZO
Can I have two coffees
please...

JULIO
Bruzzo...
Can you tell me what you
want? Can you just give me
the bad news you have to give
me? What did Troccoli ask you
for?

BRUZZO looks at him, somewhat confused. He slowly walks closer to JULIO.

BRUZZO

Uhhh...Look...There's an issue that's been bugging me and I need your help ...

JULIO

My help?

BRUZZO

Yes, it's a delicate matter...

BRUZZO closes the drapes on the window that leads to the hallway, he sits close to JULIO, who is listening very serious.

111 INT - RESTROOMS / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

LUIS is nervous, talking to the closed door of a bathroom stall.

LUIS

Can you tell me *exactly* what Bruzzo said in the meeting?

JULIO

I already told you three times, Luis. He asked me to...how should I put it... "to back down"

LUIS

Let's see...You're saying that, but I need to understand whether this is an assumption you made or an objective fact.

JULIO (OFF)

I wasn't born yesterday, Luis. If Bruzzo summons me to his office and says to me that...

LUIS

Right... Says what?...Tell me what he said to you, word by word....

JULIO (OFF)

I'm in the toilet...

LUIS

Maybe you are assuming he tried to said something, and it wasn't really like that...

JULIO (OFF)

Luis...

LUIS

Can you please tell me what Bruzzo said!

JULIO (OFF)

He told me to be careful
with our conviction
requests.
(repeats bitterly)
"Careful"...

LUIS
What does it mean, 'careful'?

JULIO (OFF)
For example, right now I'm
carefully wiping my ass.

We hear a toilet flushing. JULIO opens the door.

LUIS
And what did you tell him?

JULIO
I told him that he would
only learn about the
conviction requests at the
indictment hearing...and
that the judicial is
independent.

JULIO washes his hands, then combs his hair.

LUIS
And what did he say?

JULIO
He said that if the
Judiciary doesn't act
responsibly, it could
be worse for democracy
... And that the Air
Force must come out
clean.

LUIS
(unbelieving)
Did he say that?

JULIO
More or less...

LUIS
How so? Did he say "The Air
Force..."?

JULIO
(Cutting in)
No. He didn't say that, but
he meant it...

LUIS
So the words "careful" and
"Air Force" weren't in the
same sentence.

JULIO steps out of the stall and LUIS stares at him.

JULIO
Trust me: we are on our own.

LUIS doesn't quite follow. JULIO pats him in the back, as if consoling him.

JULIO

We tried. You did a hell of a job.

112 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JULIO and LUIS sit behind their desk. They observe the DEFENSE ATTORNEYS, holding back their anger.

JULIO

(to LUIS, in a low voice)
Look at those sons of bitches, the Air Force's attorneys. They're mocking us.

JULIO, furious, makes an obscene gesture, consisting of introducing his index finger in a phallic way into a whole made by the index and thumb of his other hand.

LUIS

Julio, stop...

Off screen, we hear the voice of the AIR FORCE ATTORNEY complaining.

AIR FORCE ATTORNEY (OFF)

Your Honor, could you request the Chief Prosecutor to refrain himself from making insulting gestures to the Defense?

JULIO looks at him, biting on his anger.

115 INT/EXT - CAR / STREET - DUSK

LUIS looks worried. He's driving his old *Dodge* on the street. It's springtime: the *Lapacho* trees are blossoming. He stops at a traffic light. Two girls on a motorcycle stop next to him. They look at him, smiling. LUIS looks at them, not understanding.

WOMAN

It's you, right?

LUIS

Me?

WOMAN

I mean, are you that prosecutor?

LUIS

Yes, it's me... I'm the prosecutor.

WOMAN

Too bad you're a lefty.

The woman winks. The car drives away. LUIS freezes, he doesn't react. The cars behind him start honking.

WE START HEARING "FUGA Y MISTERIO", BY ASTOR PIAZZOLLA. A voice says:

ANNOUNCER

These companies, which
care about the
country, present
Bernardo Neustadt and
Mariano Grondona in
"Tiempo Nuevo"

INT - TV STUDIO - DAY

BERNARDO NEUSTADT is interviewing JAIME GONZAGA, Massera's defense attorney. The image fills the screen.

BERNARDO NEUSTADT

*What would you say
today to someone who
is watching the trial,
and hears day-in,
day-out, that Admiral
Massera is a murderer?*

GONZAGA

*I would tell them to
think about how
Argentina was ten
years ago. To think
about the guerrillas.
To think about
Argentina under
Isabel. About the
Argentina of the
montoneros. I would
ask that person: What
would have happened if
the Admiral had lost
that war? If the
government was in the
hands of the
montoneros? Where
would president
Alfonsín be? And the
judges? They would be
in jail, or executed.*

116 INT - DINING ROOM / LUIS' MOTHER APARTMENT - NIGHT

116

LUIS speaks from the dining room, holding a glass of wine.

LUIS

That's not right.

LUIS' MOTHER

What?

LUIS

What he is saying.

LUIS' MOTHER

What do you want him to say?
He is Massera's lawyer, he
has to defend him.

LUIS comes closer.

LUIS
They can't keep saying
those things in that
show.

LUIS' MOTHER
(Casually)
You guys go then...

LUIS
What?

LUIS' MOTHER
You guys should go...

LUIS
No way. Julio hates
him.

LUIS' MOTHER
Julio is crazy.

LUIS
I'll talk to him, we
can't leave that spot
to them.

LUIS sits on a sofa, his image reflects on the TV screen.

We see LUIS reflection on the TV screen.

117 INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A phone rings in the kitchen. JULIO approaches and answers.

JULIO
(Monotonous)
Hello... no... no... no... I
said no. What do you mean,
why? Don't you think "just
because" is enough? Ok.
Neustadt was the
dictatorship's ministry of
propaganda. That guy is just
as guilty as the commanders.
(...)
Do whatever you
want. Bye.

JULIÁN and SILVIA arrive, she looks at him without understanding.

JULIO
Moreno Ocampo. He wants
to be on TV. The
Neustadt show.

SILVIA
What did you say to
him?

JULIO
Nothing. He can do
whatever he wants. He
is a big boy.

SILVIA
They're going to rip
him a new one. That's
what they do.

JULIÁN spies the conversation from a side when the phone rings
again. He rushes to pick it up.

JULIÁN
Hello. Yes, that's
correct. Yes, he is
here.
(He opens his eyes
wide. It's
important)
I'll put you through.

JULIÁN goes up to his parents.

JULIÁN
Dad. Telephone.

JULIO
No.

JULIÁN
It's not Moreno Ocampo.

JULIÁN looks at him, serious: he puts his hand together in the
typical way Alfonsín does.

118 INT / EXT - CAR / STREETS - NIGHT

JULIO sits on the passenger seat, seemingly worried. HORMIGA
starts driving in one direction.

JULIO
You know where we're going?

HORMIGA
Yes, sir.

JULIO
Oh, you do? How do you know?

HORMIGA
I was in the minister's
security detail.

JULIO
You don't say... Well, I'm
not meeting him.

HORMIGA
That's clear.

JULIO
What's clear?

HORMIGA
That you're not meeting
the minister.

JULIO
And who am I meeting, then?

HORMIGA
I don't know.

JULIO
You don't know?

HORMIGA
It's not my place to know.

JULIO
But you do...

HORMIGA
I can't answer that.

JULIO
You can at least tell
me how you know.

HORMIGA
Neither. It's delicate.

JULIO
What's delicate, Hormiga?

HORMIGA
The way I got my information.

JULIO
You're worrying me, Hormiga.
You tell me right now how do
you know, or...

HORMIGA
(Admitting)
Julián told me. He wants a
thorough report.

119 INT / EXT - CAR / ELEGANT BUILDING / PARKING - DAY

HORMIGA and JULIO arrive at the building on a downtown street. Standing by the door, a SECURITY GUARD in black suit and sunglasses awaits. As he sees them coming, he gestures to them to drive into the garage.

121 INT - ELEGANT APARTMENT - DAY

JULIO walks into a spacious apartment. A MINISTER welcomes them.

MINISTRO
(Friendly)

Mr. Prosecutor, apologies for the inconveniences of this meeting, but I'm sure you'll understand that we couldn't do this in the Government House.

JULIO

I understand perfectly, Minister.

The MINISTER leads JULIO to an office. He opens the door of a studio with a desk covered with books and invites JULIO to enter. BRUZZO is sitting on a chair, looking at him from a distance. BRUZZO gets up. He indicates where to sit. A hoarse voice speaks off frame:

ALFONSÍN (OFF)

Counsel Strassera, thank you very much for coming.

122 INT - CAR - NIGHT

JULIO looks out the car window, thoughtful.

123 INT - KITCHEN / STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JULIO is stirring a cup of instant coffee while telling SILVIA about the meeting. SILVIA behaves as if she is trying to decipher a secret message.

JULIO

It was brief. Fifteen minutes, or less.

SILVIA

And you told me Bruzzo was there.

JULIO

But he didn't say anything.

SILVIA

And why was he there then?

JULIO

I don't know. Maybe at Troccoli's request.

SILVIA

OK, and what did the president say?

JULIO

He said 'I don't have any instructions for you'.

SILVIA

Hmmmm...

JULIO

Indeed...

SILVIA

Isn't it strange, that the President of the Nation calls me to a meeting and then he has nothing to say? It's strange, isn't it? The President of the Nation summons you to a secret meeting to tell you he has no indication for you?

JULIO

Very strange.

SILVIA

So?

JULIO

We talked about the trial.

SILVIA

But what exactly? Can you be more specific?

JULIO

He talked about the testimonies. Some of them in particular. That he was moved. That he had met some of the witnesses. He did all the talking.

SILVIA maintains her questioning attitude.

SILVIA

And you didn't tell him anything?

JULIO

I did... I asked what he expected from the trial.

SILVIA

(Excited)

Good. Very good. What did he say?

JULIO

That's when he said 'I don't have any instructions for you.

SILVIA makes a gesture of disappointment. She shakes her head. Julio shrugs.

SILVIA

That's it? He must have said something else.

JULIO

In the end, when I
was leaving, he said
something...

SILVIA
(paying a lot of attention)
There it is: What did he say?

JULIO
He said: "I am looking
forward to hear your
indictment".

SILVIA
He said that?

JULIO
Yes.

SILVIA thinks for a few seconds.

SILVIA
Hmmm.
Crystal clear.

JULIO
What do you think?

SILVIA
Separation of powers.
It's perfect.

JULIO
What do you think?

SILVIA
(she gets enthused)
I think that you will have
to write a nice indictment,
a hell of an indictment. It
needs to be striking.
Because many things depend
on that. EVERYTHING depends
on that.

JULIO
OK...I get it...please,
don't make me even more
nervous.

He steps out to the balcony, escaping.

124 EXT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT / BALCONY - NIGHT

SILVIA follows JULIO. She approaches him from behind.

SILVIA
Julio, I'm going to tell you
something I never told you
before. And the fact that I
never said it says a lot. And

I want to say it now, before
anyone...

JULIO
Come on, Silvia.

SILVIA
I'm proud of you!

JULIO
You are not helping me
with that.

SILVIA
Well, I don't care. This beat
up country needs people like
you.

JULIO
Like me?

SILVIA
Do you know what it is like
for me, that I always
thought I was married to a
skeptical, apathetic, grumpy
man.. . to now have
everybody tell me I'm
married to a national hero?

JULIO
(Surprised)
Who tells you that?

SILVIA
It doesn't matter, they do.
They say you are a hero of
the nation.the nation.

JULIO
Leave the nation aside.

SILVIA
Well, have it your way...

JULIO
And heroes don't exist.

SILVIA
Maybe they do...
Julio. Maybe...

JULIO is slightly moved, SILVIA hugs him and kisses him on the
mouth.

126 INT - TV STUDIO - DAY

We start hearing "Fuga y Misterio". A MAKEUP GIRL finishes working on LUIS. An ASSISTANT yells:

ASSISTANT
We're on soon, we're
on soon!
Where is Bernardo?

NEUSTADT
(OFF, from the distance)
Coming, coming.

NEUSTADT sits at the table. He stares down, like focusing.

ASSISTANT
On air in 3, 2, 1!

We hear "Fuga y misterio". NEUSTADT, as if possessed by force that wasn't there before, looks at LUIS.

NEUSTADT
Luis Moreno Ocampo. Tell
me, do you hate the
military?

LUIS
(confident)
Not at all. I... have
great respect for the
military.

NEUSTADT
It doesn't look that way.

LUIS
Pity, because I feel part
of the military family.

NEUSTADT
Is that so? Are you aware
that most of the military in
this country hate you?

LUIS
Well, I don't know if
it's most of them.
Some military may not
like what we are
doing, but others do.

NEUSTADT
Do you think there are
military who like...?

LUIS
Let me ask you a
question, Bernardo:
Do you know who
Francisco Ortiz de
Ocampo was?

NEUSTADT
A relative of yours, I take
it...

LUIS

Indeed, my great grandfather. The first Commander in Argentine history. The very first one. Do you think I could have anything against the military institution? The thing is, I am a lawyer, the law is my obsession... and I cannot allow those who broke it to get away with it. What prosecutor Strassera and I want is, on one side, to provide apart from giving justice for the victims, is to help restore the prestige of the military institution. To put and end to the use of death as a political tool. That's what we all want, isn't that so?

NEUSTADT

Yes, of course...

LUIS

That's what the country needs: Respect and Justice.

127 INT - SOMI'S THEATRE - DAY

MACO walks into the place and sees SOMI leaning on stage, reading something out loud from a notebook. They are notes for the indictment.

SOMI

(Pompous, farcical)

The River Plate. What if we could interpret its dun, muddy, brown color? A predestination for which Argentine Hydrography and History have prepared us. A brown river...!

JULIO (OFF)

That's enough, Carlos.

SOMI

(stops reading)
No good?

LUIS

No, man, it's not.

SOMI

(Explains)
Is it because of the shit?

JULIO

(Smoking)
I got it. It's a trial, Somigliana.

SOMI steps down from the stage. JULIO throws his hands to his head, worried.

JULIO
A direct, simple
start. Something like
this:

(Dictating)
The Argentine
community... and the
law... have commended
us the mission of
coming before you to
demand justice...

JULIO speaks in chunks, but confidently. MACO, on a side, doesn't dare speak.

JULIO
Also, that it's impossible
to talk about all the
thousands of individual
cases, and that the chosen
cases don't represent the
magnitude of the...

SOMI
Genocide.

JULIO
Genocide, yes.

JULIO looks at SOMI, arms crossed, who isn't doing anything.

JULIO
(To Somi)
What are you doing? Aren't you
writing it down?

SOMI
(Speaks quickly)
No. I'm attentively
listening to the innocuous
prose of a court official,
imagining the amount of
people yawning among the
thousands of people in
Argentina -and the world-
that will be listening to
you, live...

JULIO
(Interrupts him)
Again: We are not staging a
theater play, Carlos!

SOMI
Neither reading a case file, Julio!

They both light cigarettes, almost offended.

MACO
Calm down...

JULIO

Yes, let's calm down.

SOMI sits next to MACO.

MACO
I thought what Julio started
to dictate was good. It's
formal, but solid.

JULIO sits next to SOMI, who is now between them.

JULIO
Thank you, Maco.

SOMI
Let's start by talking
about the violence...

JULIO
Yes. ... We start talking about
the history of violence in
Argentina... but without your
river of shit metaphor.

SOMI
No metaphors.

JULIO
And then, the reaction of the
military government.

SOMI
A fierce, clandestine and
cowardly response.

JULIO
(Repeats, emphatic)
Fierce, clandestine and cowardly!
Perfect!

SOMI takes out a small notebook and writes the first notes.

128 INT - STUDIO / JULIO'S APARTMENT - DAY

JULIO's index fingers are tapping on his old Olivetti's keyboard at full speed. He writes a sentence. He reads it again. He takes the paper sheet out. He hands it to SILVIA, who reads it carefully, correcting some phrases here and there.

129 EXT - STREETS / CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

JULIO walks down the street, in a hurry. SOMI is with him. He takes out the last cigarette of a pack and throws it away. He stops and lights the cigarette.

JULIO
So, how would it be?

SOMI
Wait, let's see. You said
misery, horror and what
else?

JULIO
Ehh... abjection, I think...

SOMI
I'd say: Abjection,
misery and horror.

JULIO
Abjection, misery and
horror. It's good.

JULIO arrives at a stand and asks for three packs of cigarettes.

130 INT - APARTMENT OF LUIS' MOTHER - DAY

A black and white image of LUIS in a new TV interview fills up the screen.

LUIS (ON TV)
The emblem they used, which
was a synthesis of the
emblems of the three
branches, is a clear symbol
of what I am saying: the
only ones capable of
authorizing that a person
who was kidnapped by the
Army would then be taken to
a Navy clandestine center
and "transferred" on an Air
Force plane was the Military
Junta. This is why they
carry the ultimate
responsibility for every
crime.

LUIS' MOTHER smiles while seeing his son talking on the TV with
one of her friends. LUIS looks satisfied.

131 INT - STUDIO / JULIO'S APARTMENT - DAY

JULIÁN reads out a fragment of the indictment that JULIO writes.

JULIÁN
(Reading)
Because, how many of the
victims of repression were
guilty of illegal
activities? How many were
innocent? We will never
know, and that's not the
victims' fault.
(...)
When due process was
eliminated, a real juridical
subversion took place:
official reports were
replaced by betrayal,
questionings were replaced
by torture, and reasoned
sentence was replaced by...
Nero's gesture?

JULIÁN stops reading. He looks at his son, who looks at him,
perplexed.

JULIO
What?

JULIÁN
Nero's gesture?

JULIO
Emperor Nero. The thumb down.

JULIO shows him Nero's gesture. JULIÁN imitates him. They look at each other with their thumbs down.

JULIÁN
It's not clear, dad.
What about 'Nero's
thumb-down gesture'?

JULIO starts writing. He whispers to himself.

JULIO
Ne-ro's thumb-down ges -
ture...

132 EXT - RESTAURANT / DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

132

It's late at night. The restaurant is closing. JULIO and SOMI are still working on the indictment. HORMIGA eats an ice cream and listens attentively.

SOMI
(Reading)
Now that the Argentine
people has recovered the
government and control of
its institutions, I assume
the responsibility to
declare in its name that
sadism is not a political
ideology, nor a war
strategy, but a moral
perversion...

They look at each other, then at HORMIGA.

JULIO
Did we go off the rails?

HORMIGA, always chewing his pizza slice, gives them a thumbs up. LUIS arrives. He sits with them.

SOMI
Cacho Fontana in the house.

JULIO
Want to read?

LUIS
(To Julio)
Can I?

JULIO
Of course, Cacho...

JULIO nods, he slides a finger over his face, picking up some makeup.

LUIS
They said it's because of the gloss...

JULIO

You were brilliant, anyways.

SOMI winks at LUIS. Through the window, we see the three of them working. LUIS takes out a pen and starts underlining parts, under JULIO's attentive look.

133 INT - STUDIO / JULIO'S APARTMENT - DAY

JULIO continues typing with a cigarette hanging from his lips. Next to him, there's an untouched sandwich.

134 INT - JULIO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JULIÁN and LUIS are sleeping on a couch. JULIO is going over the final fragment of the indictment. He is nervous, there is something he doesn't like.

135 INT - KITCHEN / JULIO'S APARTMENT - DAWN

The sun is rising over the city of Buenos Aires. A radio announces it's the day of the hearing. JULIO is smoking by the window holding the indictment papers. VERÓNICA walks in, and settles in to watch beside him.

VERÓNICA

You didn't sleep?

JULIO shakes his head to say no.

VERÓNICA

Are you worried?

JULIO

Very.

VERÓNICA

Why? What's the worst that could happen?

JULIO

(Sparing, no emphasis)

Do I have to answer that? An acquittal.

VERÓNICA keeps quiet for a second.

VERÓNICA

(Shocked and scared)

Acquittal? Can they absolve them?

JULIO

Yes.

VERÓNICA

Really?

JULIO

Yes.

VERÓNICA

And if they are acquitted,
can they come back to power?

JULIO

It's a possibility.

There's a brief silence.

VERÓNICA

After all the
depositions?
And all the evidence
you've presented? They
can't acquit them.

JULIO

They can.

VERÓNICA

They can't!

JULIO

It's within the possibilities.

VERÓNICA

No! It's not!

VERÓNICA seems outraged, moved. She takes her hands to her eyes to dry some tears before they fall.

JULIO

Honey. Listen to me.
Right now, I'm
afraid, nervous. I'm
not sure how we'll
do, but we might do
ok. But there's also
something I want you
to know: they can
always come back.
Even if it looks like
they are gone
forever, they can
always come back.

VERÓNICA hugs him. JULIO nods, takes a step towards the door, but VERÓNICA grabs him by the arm, pulls him down towards her and whispers into his ear:

VERÓNICA

Make them go away for
good.

JULIO nods, slightly strokes VERÓNICA'S face and walks out.

INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE- DAY

JULIO is sitting alone in the courtroom, which is still empty. He got in before anyone else arrived. His eyes are staring, impenetrable.

SUPERIMPOSE: September 18, 1985

SUPERIMPOSE: The Indictment.

A few janitors, security staff and administrative staff start walking around the place without paying attention to him.

A CAMERAMAN arrives and positions himself in a corner. He takes out his gear. Stabilizes the camera. He looks at JULIO, who is absent-minded.

CAMERAMAN

Looks like I got here early.

JULIO

Looks that way.

CAMERAMAN

What do you think? Are they coming or not?

JULIO

What?

CAMERAMAN

The military. Are they coming or not?

JULIO

Today, they have to come. Today they are.

CAMERAMAN

Looks like I got here early.

JULIO re-reads the final fragment of the indictment. He doesn't like something. He shakes his head.

CUT TO:

Several elliptical shots show us how the courtroom starts to fill up while JULIO awaits his moment.

CUT TO:

In the last shot (on the opposite side of the axis) we see LUIS walking in, startled.

LUIS

Julio. We were waiting for you.

LUIS and JULIO look at the defenders who start to settle in, all crowded on the right side of court.

LUIS

Are you OK?

JULIO

Yes, I don't know.

LUIS
Relax, everything is going to be OK.

JULIO
I don't know.

LUIS
Yes, you'll see. Don't be afraid.

JULIO
I'll be right back. I need to go to the bathroom.

JULIO gets up in a rush, LUIS watches him stunned as he is left alone in the prosecutor's desk. SOMI watches him leave.

139 INT - RESTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JULIO walks in circles in the empty restroom. He thinks. Suddenly, he appears to have an idea. He takes the final statement and scribbles some notes with a pencil, on his knees in front of a toilet with the lid down.

140 INT - COURTROOM / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JULIO returns. SOMI awaits together with LUIS, MACO and JUDITH.

~~LUIS~~
SOMI
So?

JULIO
Now it's ready.

SOMI
It's lighter?

JULIO
Yes, it's better.

SOMI
Great, relax.

The conversation gets interrupted when all the defendants walk in. Some are wearing their uniform, others are dressed as civilians. MASSERA, VIOLA, LAMI DOZO, GALTIERI, AGOSTI, ANAYA, GRAFFIGNA, LAMBRUSCHINI and VIDELA sit on a bench facing the judges. STRASSERA is less than six feet away from VIDELA, but he doesn't look at him. LUIS does. SECRETARY LOZA, enters the courtroom. He walks up to the microphone.

LOZA
All rise.

The doors open and the six judges walk in: LOSADA, TROTTA, VERGARA, SOLANET, ASAD, D'AMICO. The nine defendants stand up and look at the judges walking in. Only when the judges have taken their seats, they sit down again.

The courtroom goes quiet. JULIO looks down. He is waiting for his moment. It's time.

JULIO (OFF)
Your Honors: The Argentine community in particular, but also the universal juridical

conscience, have entrusted me with the huge mission of standing before this court to demand justice.

SILVIA watches him.

JULIO

Technical and factual reasons, such as the absence of a specific definition in our domestic law that could accurately describe the type of crime that is on trial today, and the impossibility to consider one by one all the thousands of cases have led me to decide to hear the depositions, through 17 dramatic weeks of the trial, of only 709 of the thousands of cases that certainly do not cover the bloodcurdling number of victims of what we could describe as the greatest genocide in our country's young history...

SOMI and the Prosecution Office's kids are watching him.

JULIO (CONT'D)

Violence ruled throughout the country, when three of the defendants decided, once again on behalf of the Armed Forces, to take the government by force, paying no heed to the people's will.

We see Strassera through the monitor of one of the cameras in the room. His reflection on the camera lens, as he speaks.—His image in a broadcasting booth.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF INSERTS SHOWS US THE LIVE BROADCAST OF JULIO STRASSERA'S CLOSING ARGUMENTS. WE SEE PEOPLE IN FRONT OF A TV SHOP, AT HOME IN THEIR LIVING ROOMS, IN A DOWNTOWN OFFICE, IN A RURAL HOME, IN A RESTAURANT. JULIO SPEAKING ON DIFFERENT TV SCREENS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

JULIO

And what was the State's response to the subversive guerrilla after this Coup? To describe it, Your Honors, I can do with three words.

CUT TO:

A close-up on JULIO, who goes on with his indictment.

JULIO

*...ferocious, clandestine
and cowardly.*

A slow lateral traveling shot moves from the audience sitting on the side grades down to the desk from where JULIO is speaking. We see the faces of the DEFENDANTS listening to him.

JULIO

The guerrillas kidnapped,
tortured and killed. What did
the State do to fight them?
Kidnap, torture and kill, in
an infinitely larger scale,
and what is even worse,
outside the legal system.
And, from then onwards, Your
Honors, much more serious
consequences emerged.
Because, how many of the
victims of repression were
guilty of illegal activities?
How many were innocent? We
will never know, and that's
not the victims' fault.

JULIO is speaking with determination, at times reading, at times improvising.

JULIO

When due process was
eliminated, a true juridical
subversion took its place:
official reports were
replaced by denunciations,
questionings were replaced by
torture, and reasoned
sentence was replaced by
Nero's thumb-down gesture.

JULIÁN does the thumb-down gesture. JUDITH, not understanding, has her thumb up, indicating that he was doing well. The audience listens carefully.

JULIO

(he changes the tone slightly)
"We will not tolerate death
roaming free in Argentina.
Slowly, almost in such a way
that we wouldn't notice, a
machinery of horror unleashed
its iniquity over the unaware
and the innocent, amidst the
disbelief of some, the
complicity of others and the
stupefaction of many".

(He looks up)
This was the statement of
Admiral Emilio Massera on
November 2nd, 1976, at the Navy
School of Mechanics".

We see the defendants, looking serious, tolerating the prosecutor's words with a hard face. VIDELA, very close to STRASSERA, is absorbed in reading a small religious book.

JULIO

On that date, Cecilia Ines
Cacabellos was lying on a mat
in the Officers' Club at

ESMA. She was 16. She had been blindfolded, her hands tied, and cuffed. She had been captured thanks to the information provided by her sister, who was told they were only going to interrogate her; she thought she was saving her sister's life. Cecilia Inés Cacabellos is, still today, disappeared.

The JUDGES listen to the statement carefully.

JULIO (CONT'D)

This process has meant, for those of us who have had the painful privilege of knowing it deeply, a sort of descent into dark areas of the human soul, where misery, abjection and horror reach depths which are hard to imagine in advance, and impossible to understand afterwards. Dante Alighieri, in "The Divine Comedy", saved the seventh circle of hell for the violent ones: for all those who hurt others through the use of force. And in that same hell, he submerged, in a river of boiling and nauseating blood, a specific type of doomed people the poet described as follows: "These are the tyrants who dealt in bloodshed and pillaging. Here they lament their pitiless mischiefs".

Several people in the courtroom are getting emotional.

JULIO

For all this, Your Honor, this trial and its conviction are important and necessary for the Argentine Nation, which has been offended by atrocious crimes. Their very atrocity turns the mere hypothesis of impunity into a monstrous one. Unless the moral sense of the Argentines has descended to tribal levels, nobody can allow that kidnapping, torture and murder become 'political incidents' or 'collateral damage' in combat. Now that the Argentine people have recovered the government and the control of its institutions, I take the responsibility of stating on its behalf that sadism is neither a political ideology nor a war strategy, it is a moral perversion.

We see SOMI, almost crying, listening to the last part of the speech.

JULIO

This trial and the sentence I am advocating for, make us responsible for the establishment of peace. A peace not based in oblivion but in memory; not in violence but in justice. This is our opportunity: it might be the last one.

There is a pause. JULIO looks to the sides, looks at the audience, recognizes some of the witnesses. The silence in the courtroom is absolute. He looks at his papers and finds the last handwritten notes he made. LUIS is looking at him, waiting for him to go on. SOMI and SILVIA too. Finally, he reads.

JULIO (CONT'D)

Your Honors: I want to deliberately relinquish any pretension of originality to close this indictment. I want to use a phrase that doesn't belong to me, because it already belongs to the Argentine people.
(...)
Your Honors: '*Nunca más*'
(never again).

The CAMERAMAN, with tears in his eyes, is the first one to clap. As he lets the camera go, it tilts forward and loses the shot.

The entire Courtroom bursts into applause. SILVIA, VERÓNICA, SOMI, are all moved to tears and clapping their hands. JULIO and LUIS put their papers in order, but they have trouble concealing their joy. The prosecution kids celebrate in tears. Two MOTHERS of Plaza de Mayo are overwhelmed, wearing their scarfs. Bruzzo is also clapping heartily.

Judge ASAD tries to call to order, but the courtroom is overwhelmed with emotion. People shout, there are also a few insults to the defendants.

ASAD

Order in the court! Order!

The cheering and the applause do not fade out, they become louder and louder. ARSLANIAN tries to contain the situation, but he can't. He and the other judges exchange looks and decide to clear the courtroom.

ASAD (CONT'D)

Police officers,
please clear the
courtroom.

The defendants rise and are about to leave the courtroom. VIDELA turns around and looks at the people who are cheering with a proud gesture. VIOLA and other defendants do the same. Some people insult them, and VIOLA loses his temper.

VIOLA

Motherfuckers! You
bunch of motherfuckers!

A POLICEMAN escorts VIOLA out of the courtroom, as he keeps on swearing, hysterical.

LUIS puts an arm around JULIO's shoulders. JULIO is moved. They hug for a long while.

CUT TO BLACK

INT - PROSECUTION'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - AFTERNOON

JUDITH, ISABEL, MACO, SOMI, FEDERICO, LUCAS and MARIA EUGENIA are sitting on different chairs at the prosecution's smaller office. Nobody says a word, we could hear a pin drop. The atmosphere is tense. One of them looks at the time. Another one cracks their fingers or taps a pen on the desk. SUSANA uses a file to fan herself.

SUPERIMPOSE: December 8th, 1985.

SUPERIMPOSE: The sentence.

Suddenly, in that climate, the door opens. JULIÁN walks in.

JULIÁN

Do you have any news here?

JUDITH

Nothing.

JULIÁN

I do.

EXT - PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

ASAD, SOLANET, TROTTA, LOSADA, VERGARA and D'AMICO are walking on Talcahuano street toward Corrientes. JULIÁN, dressed in his school uniform, recognizes them.

145 EXT - BANCHERO - DIA (FLASHBACK)

ASAD, SOLANET, TROTTA, LOSADA, VERGARA, and D'AMICO are sitting at a table in the Banchero pizza place. The scene is filmed from the outside; we see them as if someone was spying on them.

JULIÁN (OFF)

They went to a pizza place.

JUDITH

(OFF)

You followed them?

JULIÁN (OFF)

Yes.

MACO

So?

INT - PROSECUTION'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - AFTERNOON (CONT)

LUIS enters the office, interested about the story of JULIÁN, who keeps talking without noticing him.

JULIÁN

So what?

MACO

What information do you have?

JULIÁN

Not much. I was outside. I couldn't hear anything.

LUCAS

Well you must have seen something. Were they happy? Were they worried?

FEDERICO

Can you be more specific?

JULIÁN

You want me to be more specific?

ISABEL

I'm begging you.

147 EXT - BANCHERO - DAY (FLASHBACK)

From the outside we see the Judges arguing.

JULIÁN

Let's see. They got there at 2 pm. The one with the moustache and the one with dark hair sat at the two heads of the table. The young one and the chubby one with glasses on one side, the skinny one and the fat one on the other. They joked about that.

MARIA EUGENIA (OFF)

What kind of jokes?

We see the hands of the Judges. They pretend they're playing foosball.

JULIÁN (OFF)

Like foosball. Like they were playing foosball.

MARIA EUGENIA (OFF)

Go on.

JULIÁN

They ordered beer. Everyone ordered a pint, except the one with the mustache, who got a glass of wine... or maybe it was a soda, but I doubt it. They ordered two

pizzas: onion and cheese and one with chorizo, or sausage, something like that. Then the bald skinny one ordered two extra slices of ...

FEDERICO (OFF)

OK. No need to be *that* specific.

JULIÁN

You told me to be specific.

FEDERICO (OFF)

Get to the point.

We see the Judges repeating the actions mentioned in OFF

JULIÁN (OFF)

Well, suddenly, the young one seemed to have an idea. The others listened. At first Mustache kept shaking his head, but then he stopped. He lit a cigarette and listened, very serious. He and Eyeglasses kept looking at each other. At one point, even, I think Eyeglasses winked at him. Then they called the waiter and asked for the bill. So, Moustache takes out a paper napkin and writes down a series of things. He signs it. Then he passes it around. They all signed it.

148 INT - PROSECUTION'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - AFTERNOON

They all look at each other, thoughtful.

MACO

He wrote the convictions down.

~~FEDERICO~~

LUCAS

On a napkin.

MACO

(to JULIÁN)

Go on...

149 EXT - BANCHERO - DAY (FLASHBACK)

We see the napkin going from hand to hand. TROTTA is the last one to sign. We hear his voice.

TROTTA
OK. Now, let's talk about Article 30. This sentence needs to be a beginning, not the end.

JULIÁN (OFF)
After that, there wasn't much. The one with the glasses said something like this was only the beginning. He put the napkin in his pocket... and then I left.

JUDITH (OFF)
You left?

SOLANET gets up and heads to the exit. We see -through a FAKE POV SHOT- JULIÁN, afraid to be spotted. He goes to a kiosk and pretends he's buying something. Suddenly, SOLANET is next to him. He looks at him.

SOLANET
You? What are you doing here?

JULIÁN
Nothing. I was buying something.

SOLANET
What did you want? A lollipop?

JULIÁN
Yes.

SOLANET
A pack of Jockey Lights, and a lollipop for the kid.

SOLANET, very serious, looks at him. He offers him a cigarette.

SOLANET
Spies don't eat lollipops.

And he gives him an affectionate pat on the shoulder. JULIÁN walks away.

150 INT - PROSECUTION'S OFFICE / PALACE OF JUSTICE - AFTERNOON

MACO looks at JULIÁN, who remains thoughtful, waiting for more.

ISABEL
So, in sum, we don't know anything.

JUDITH
We know they made a decision.

Then, the door opens again, and EDUARDO walks in.

EDUARDO
I have fresh
information. Earlier
today they reached a
decision at this
pizza place. They
wrote the convictions
down on a...

JUDITH
(continues his sentence)
Yes, on a napkin. They
all signed. Julián
told us.

JUDITH winks at JULIÁN, who smiles, in love. JULIO comes out from his office and joins the kids.

EDUARDO
Oh, you already knew.

JULIO
And the sentences?

EDUARDO
Oh, no... I don't know that...

JULIO
So... What's the prize
for the one bringing
the most useless
information? I'll join
the competition.

Then, the phone rings. They all shut up. JULIO, cautious, picks up the phone.

JULIO
Hi... Yes, it's me.
(...)
Oh, What happened?
(...)
I'm on my way.

JULIO hangs up. He stands up.

JULIO
I have to go.

MACO
But, what is it?
What did they say?

JULIO
Calm down. It's about something else.

They are all clueless.

151 EXT - RESTROOMS / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

JULIO walks in and stands in front of the mirror. LUIS walks behind him.

LUIS
Who was that? Aren't
you going to tell me?

JULIO
It's something else. Relax.

LUIS checks his watch.

LUIS
I also have to go.

JULIO
To the TV?

LUIS
An interview, yes.

LUIS turns around. JULIO stops him.

JULIO
Wait.

LUIS
What?

JULIO
You're not going
on TV with your
tie looking like
that, right?

JULIO carefully fixes the knot. LUIS smiles at him. JULIO does it seriously, showing how important it is.

LUIS
Thank you.

JULIO
Thank you. I mean
it.

LUIS realizes JULIO is being serious. He mumbles, doesn't know what to say. They hug.

JULIO
Go on. Let them hear you.

The camera follows them through the hallways until they reach a crossroad and walk in different directions.

153 INT - WAITING ROOM / HOSPITAL - NIGHT

On a TV set, we can see LUIS being interviewed. JULIO, in a hurry, walks into one of the rooms.

154 INT - ROOM / HOSPITAL - NIGHT

JULIO walks into the room. On the bed, notoriously in a bad shape and all tubed up, is RUSO, happy to see JULIO.

RUSO

Oh, look who came to see me,
our National Hero! I'd stand
up, but...

JULIO

Ruso, looking good... As
good as new.

RUSO

It's the morphine, Crazy.
It's amazing. You have no
idea what we've been missing
out all these years.

JULIO sits. The jokes fade away and lead the way to
sadness. JULIO takes his friend by the arm. They watch
TV. It's the show where LUIS is being interviewed..

LUIS

(ON TV)

*You know, Miss, the kids who
work with us are twenty-five
years old. And they were
born while politics was
banned. They were made to
believe that politics was
dangerous. That there was no
justice, it was something
determined by authority. We
are changing that.*

RUSO

He is a good speaker, he
is smart.

JULIO stands up and turns the TV off. RUSO grabs JULIO's arm.

JULIO

What?

RUSO

Don't play dumb. Or
did you cam to
express your
condolences?

JULIO

Honestly, I don't know
what you're talking
about...

RUSO

The sentences, Crazy.
Cheer me up.

JULIO

I don't know them.

RUSO

Come on, Crazy. Cut the crap.

JULIO

I just came from there. We
were waiting.

RUSO makes a sad face.

RUSO
(Smiling, ironic)
Julio, I can die
tonight.
I won't tell anyone.

JULIO hesitates and smiles back.

JULIO
Well, let's see...
What do you want to know?

RUSO
Everything. We won, didn't we?

JULIO lies to comfort his friend.

JULIO
Yes.

RUSO
All going to
jail? For life?

JULIO
Yes.

RUSO
Air Force too?

JULIO
Yes. Everybody.

RUSO
Of course. Who could
possibly think they were
killing half the country and
these guys didn't have a
clue?

JULIO
Ridiculous, yes...

RUSO
The judges did good,
they went all in.
(Thinks)
Give me your hand...

JULIO extends his hand.

RUSO
Thank you, Crazy. You've
saved my life. And not just
mine.

RUSO lets out a little silent laughter.

155 INT - STREET - DAWN

JULIO walks down the street. It's the break of dawn. The paperboys are delivering their bundles. The newsstands are opening. JULIO walks, thoughtful, and sees a newspaper headline: "Trial of the Juntas: Sentences Are Only Hours Away."

156 INT - STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - DAWN

JULIO walks into his apartment carrying a package of croissants. The whole place is silent. He takes his blazer off and throws himself on the couch. From behind him SILVIA shows up, with a cup of tea. She kisses his head. They stay in silence, until the phone interrupts it. SILVIA stands up and picks it up. There's expectation.

SILVIA

Hello. No, were are still up. Oh, really? Let me get him for you.
(to JULIO)
Bruzzo. The sentences are out.

JULIO walks to the phone. SILVIA stays close to him as they hear the convictions.

157 INT - CORRIDOR / STRASSERA'S APARTMENT - DAWN

157

JULIÁN comes out of his room, half-asleep, in his pajamas, woken by his father's shouting.

JULIO

They shat all over our indictment. They did everything wrong.

SILVIA

Let's wait until we see the arguments for the sentence.

JULIO

Why should I wait? I know what they are going to say.

SILVIA

No, you don't. There must have been a reason.

JULIO

There is no reason. It's wrong. Period.

He sees him next to SILVIA, who is trying to calm him down. JULIÁN rubs his eyes. JULIO looks up and sees JULIÁN.

JULIÁN

Hey.

JULIO

Hi, son.

JULIÁN

How did it go?

JULIO

Bad, son. Bad.

JULIÁN
Really?

JULIO
Yes.

JULIÁN sits down.

JULIÁN
What happened?

JULIO
Graffigna, Anaya, Lami
Dozo and Galtieri...
acquitted.

JULIÁN
Acquitted?

JULIO
That's right.

JULIÁN throws his hands to his head. He is shocked.

JULIÁN
Agosti?

JULIO
4 years and six months.
Almost the same.

JULIÁN
Lambruschini?

JULIO
8.

JULIÁN is thoughtful. He looks worried.

JULIÁN
And Viola?

JULIO
Viola, 17 years.

JULIÁN
That old man won't
last 17 years... he'll
die in jail.

JULIÁN thinks Viola's sentence is a good thing.

JULIÁN
What about Massera?

JULIO
Life.

JULIÁN
(somewhat surprised)

Life sentence?
That's really
good...

JULIÁN smiles.

JULIÁN
Videla?

JULIO
Life.

JULIÁN
Life!

JULIÁN smiles again.

JULIÁN
You've sent Videla to jail!

JULIO
Yes.

JULIÁN
(Adding)
And Massera.

JULIO
Him too..

JULIÁN
For life!

JULIO
Yes.

JULIÁN
Awesome, Dad... Awesome!

JULIO looks at his son. JULIÁN's enthusiasm has its effect. JULIO seems to gradually cheer up.

JULIÁN
What about the
others? Can't you
appeal?

JULIO
Yes. We will appeal.

JULIÁN
You must appeal! They
all have to go to
jail!

JULIO lights a cigarette. In OFF, we hear JULIÁN banging on VERÓNICA's door, trying to wake her up. Julio goes to his desk and sits by the typewriter. He places a sheet of paper in it. SILVIA approaches.

SILVIA

What are you doing?
You need to get some
sleep.

JULIO
No, there's a lot of
work to be done.

JULIO is typing fast using his index fingers.

JULIÁN comes back and sits next to him. VERÓNICA and SILVIA come close. JULIO's index fingers are tapping the keyboard. We see the typing machine's letters hitting the paper.

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSE: THE TRIAL OF THE JUNTAS WAS THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY IN WHICH CIVIL JUSTICE CONVICTED A MILITARY DICTATORSHIP.

158 INT - HALLWAYS / PALACE OF JUSTICE - DAY

The prosecution team (JULIO, LUIS, MACO, JUDITH, SOMI, ISABEL, MARÍA EUGENIA, FEDERICO, LUCAS, EDUARDO) walks through the corridors of the Palace of Justice.

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE ALTERNATES THE MUSIC CONTINUES

CUT TO BLACK.

SUPERIMPOSED: SINCE 1985, IN ARGENTINA, MORE THAN 1,000 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CONVICTED FOR COMMITTING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND THOUSANDS OF CASES ARE STILL ON TRIAL.

END CREDITS