

Scribe of Uraba First 10

written by

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**FADE IN:**

**EXT. VILLAGE OF SAN JOSÉ (COLOMBIA) - DAY**

Dew on large green leaves. Tropical heat.

ALCIRA, 10, strolls down a row of banana trees, sliding instinctively past rural farmers tending the crop.

She steps out into an open field, walking at the same gentle pace as the breeze through the wild grasses.

Ahead, the small village of San José is nestled in the thick jungle of Colombia's far reaches. Community members work in yuca fields, cook over open fires...

A sense that life here has been the same for generations, humanity aligned with nature in lush, organic harmony.

Breaking that harmony--

AN INJURED WOMAN stumbles down an overgrown jungle path, knocking into branches, too weak to push anything out of her way. Her gait is stunted, her body contorted, awkward...

Fresh blood spills from a wound in her side, trickling over dried blood on her ragged clothing and the swathed, LIFELESS BODY OF A CHILD held tightly to her bosom...

The Woman exits into the field, growing faint, her head tilting involuntarily up towards a glimmering sun...

She collapses.

From a distance, we see Alcira approaching, running...

Alcira arrives, kneels...

The Woman's eyes open, filling with urgency as she unwraps the small lifeless body -- a YOUNG BOY, bled dry from a stomach puncture, skin stone white, long since dead.

The Woman brushes the boy's hair back as if he could glean some comfort, whispers as if he could hear... then turns to Alcira, her voice faint, broken:

INJURED WOMAN  
*He needs water. Please...*

Alcira is wracked with fear.

**EXT. SAN JOSE - EVENING**

The evening song of cicadas from the surrounding jungle.

GENERAL IGNACIO VÉLEZ, 40s, stands by an SUV as an OFFICER questions a small group of Townsfolk.

Nearby, a PRIEST prays quietly over two fresh graves as other Townsfolk pay their respects.

Alcira stands with her father, ELIAS -- 35, broad shoulders, gentle eyes -- and her older sister, CORA, 12. In contrast to Alcira's sadness, Cora responds to the burial with anger.

Cora notices Elias snap a twig in his hand while eying General Vélez...

Feeding off this, Cora directs her gaze at the General, *SHOOTING DAGGERS WITH HER EYES...*

The General turns to his soldiers. A younger officer, LT. TORRES, steps up. He and the general share an inaudible few words, then the young officer turns to address the crowd as the General returns to his SUV.

LT. TORRES

*Due to rebel activity in your area, General Velez will be instituting a strict communications embargo. No one outside this town is to know what you saw here today.*

Elias and Bananero exchange a look.

LT. TORRES (CONT'D)

*Now, if anyone...*

Lt. Torres looks Cora in the eye.

LT. TORRES (CONT'D)

*Anyone... should hear a whisper, or a rumor of where the rebels might be hiding--? They must inform the military at once so that we may intervene.*

The people are silent.

LT. TORRES (CONT'D)

*That is all.*

The priest returns to the fresh graves as the General's SUV drives away.

**EXT. SCHOOL, SAN JOSE - EVENING**

SOMEONE'S POV, SPYING FROM OUTSIDE: Elias paces anxiously during a communal meeting with the Priest, BANANERO, LUZ MILA, and other Townsfolk.

LUZ MILA

*I won't raise my kids in the slums.*

BANANERO

*Better the slums than not all. If we go to the city, and we stick together, we'll survive.*

ELIAS

*But we won't fully live.*

BANANERO

*They just hit La Esperanza...*

ELIAS

*(ignoring Bananero)  
Not like here.*

BANANERO

*Elias, please.*

Elias paces.

BANANERO (CONT'D)

*We're next.*

Elias stops.

ELIAS

*We can't trust the government. Our neighbors are dead. We're on our own.*

LUZ MILA

*There must be something... someone who can help... Father?*

PRIEST

*I'm thinking.*

ELIAS

*We're on our own.*

BANANERO

*Yes, Elias, we know!*

ELIAS

*So we make it official.*

The other townspeople look at Elias, confused and intrigued.

**EXT. HOME, SAN JOSE - SAME**

We now see the POV is Alcira's, who has been drawing water from a well outside a humble home nearby the open-air school.

Behind Alcira, Cora exits the home with a yuca root and knife, then spots Alcira eavesdropping...

CORA  
*Alcira! Get in here!*

Alcira gathers the water pitcher.

**EXT. SCHOOL, SAN JOSE - NIGHT**

ANOTHER POV, THROUGH JUNGLE FOLIAGE: Elias bids the Priest farewell outside the school, then walks towards his home, passing Cora eating alone outside.

[Note: The subject of this POV is not revealed.]

**INT. HOME - NIGHT**

A cloth is lifted to reveal a MECHANICAL TYPEWRITER.

Elias circles his hands slowly over the keyboard, then rests his palms ceremoniously on the keys, as if paying reverence.

ALCIRA (O.C.)  
*What are you going to write?*

Elias turns -- Alcira sits on the bed. He considers her question, opting to give her the naked truth:

ELIAS  
*Our testimonies and communal  
declaration of autonomy.*

Alcira tries not to let on she doesn't understand.

ALCIRA  
*Why?*

ELIAS  
*So we can stay in our homes.*

He stands with the typewriter.

ALCIRA  
*I want to help. I've been  
 practicing. I can type fast now.*

ELIAS  
*I know. You're faster than me.  
 (winks, then...)  
 Go on and eat with your sister.*

ALCIRA  
*But she's crazy.*

ELIAS  
 (chuckles)  
*She takes after your mother.  
 (makes sign of the cross)  
 Don't wait up, ok?*

He considers his daughter proudly, then exits.

**INT. HOME - NIGHT**

Cora sleeps soundly in bed next to Alcira, who lies awake, peering through the open door...

Outside, some distance away, Elias types by candlelight in the school as Luz Mila dictates a testimony through a stream of tears. Behind, other community members await their turn.

Alcira watches anxiously...

**INT. HOME - DAWN**

Just before sunrise. A faint pink glow enters from outside.

Elias drapes the cloth back over the typewriter. He straightens out a stack of testimonies, places them into a satchel, then stands, looking over at his sleeping daughters.

He kisses them each on the forehead, then turns to leave...

The CLICK of the door shutting softly; Cora opens her eyes.

**EXT. HOME - DAWN**

The sun emerges from behind the mountains, mist rises from the ground, the evening song of cicadas still in the air...

Elias joins two TOWNSMEN on the road.

In the doorway of the house, Cora now stands, wrapped in a sheet, watching her father walk off down the road...

SOMEONE'S POV, THROUGH JUNGLE VEGETATION: Also watching Elias and the Townsmen walking down the road.

**INT. HOME - MORNING**

*TINK.... TINK.... TINK....* A hollow clanking sound.

Alcira's eyes flutter open, first seeing the typewriter back in its corner, then Cora, seated on the ground, tossing pebbles at a tin can.

ALCIRA  
*Where's dad?*

Cora shrugs as if she didn't care, though -- as is often the case with Cora -- her eyes betray her, conveying her fear.

Alcira sits up in bed, concerned.

**EXT. SAN JOSE - VARIOUS - DAY**

SCHOOLROOM: Kids raise their hands to answer the TEACHER's question, but Alcira's mind is elsewhere.

BANANA FIELD: Alcira passes community members, just like before, but today, there's a palpable tension in the air.

YUCA FIELD: Alcira looks down the road for signs of life.

HOME: Alcira sits with a bowl of yuca, staring at the typewriter, waiting. Cora enters.

ALCIRA  
*Should we do something?*

CORA  
*Eat.*

Alcira forks a piece of yuca, when --

The sound of *COMMOTION OUTSIDE* -- *PEOPLE RUNNING* --

Cora turns to Alcira, terrified, then *RUSHES OUT*...

Alcira follows --

**EXT. SAN JOSE - DAY**

People all scurry up the road in the same direction.

CORA

*C'mon.*

Cora pulls Alcira into the banana field...

**EXT. BANANA FIELD - DAY**

They sprint down rows of banana trees, ducking, weaving, frantic...

**EXT. FIELD - DAWN**

Bananero spots Alcira and Cora emerging from the banana trees and rushes over to keep them back, but it's too late, they've already seen --

HORROR washes over their faces --

Cora *SCREAMS*, but Teacher quickly *COVERS HER MOUTH*, muffling the sound...

In front of them, propped up by a rope around their necks, are the *MANGLED AND HACKED CORPSES OF ELIAS AND TWO TOWNSMEN*.

FOUR BANDANA-MASKED MEN in civilian clothing stand in clear view while a FIFTH *SPRAYS A MESSAGE* on the side of a house.

One Masked Man steps forward, emptying the testimonies out of Elias' satchel for all to see, pours liquid onto the pile and *SETS IT AFLAME*... He places a finger to his lips: *Shhhhhhh*...

All five Masked Men stare directly at the gathering of townsfolk, as if to make sure their message is received... then turn and stroll off into the jungle...

Behind the bodies, bleeding spray paint reads (in Spanish):

***YOU BROKE THE SILENCE***

***YOU HAVE 24 HRS TO LEAVE***

Cora struggles in the arms of Bananero, tears streaming down her face, desperately trying to lash out at the men --

Alcira has fallen to her knees, emotionally devastated, unable to peel her eyes from the harrowing sight before her.



The sounds of the jungle give way to the heavy hum of INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY.

EXT. WILTED WASTELAND - MYANMAR - DAY

A BULLDOZER pushes several tons of earth over a short drop onto a DUMP TRUCK below. Ten or so other dump trucks do the same. Each bears the logo of TERRE-NOBLE.

SUPER: MYANMAR

EXT. MINING ROAD - DAY

The convoy of dump trucks snakes along the ridges of the mine's excavation.

EXT. MINING CAMP - DAY

The trucks deposit the dirt onto an embankment overlooking a river. There, thousands of impoverished BURMESE MINERS parse through the dirt's contents, searching for shards of JADE. A mix of armed Burmese and European SOLDIERS watch them from ridges above.

Most miners wear only scraps of clothing. Only Terre-Noble workers (drivers and heavy machinery operators, predominantly CHINESE), wear uniforms and hard hats.

INT. TENT - MINING CAMP - DAY

MAUNG THAIK, 19, pulls up a Terre-Noble jumpsuit to his waist. Cold sweat drips from his brow and chin. He stares into infinity as LAO-BO, an older man smoking a cigarette, wraps his abdomen with duct tape, then retrieves an improvised BOMB from a dirty plastic bag and duct tapes it to Maung's chest.

Maung breathes heavily. Without a word, Lao-Bo pulls Maung's arm out, finds a vein, and injects him with heroin.

Maung's anxiety recedes.

EXT. MINING CAMP - DAY

Maung makes his way across the mining camp wearing the full Terre-Noble uniform and white hard hat.

Ahead of him, more uniformed workers line up to enter a shabby Terre-Noble building. Maung approaches and steps in line.

INT. TERRE-NOBLE MESS HALL - SAME

FOOD WORKERS scoop from STEAMING VATS of rice and what-could-be-beef as a line encircles a crowded, decrepit mess hall.

A BURMESE SOLDIER stands by the entrance, watching everyone suspiciously. Maung keeps his head down as he moves with the line.

A Chinese TERRE-NOBLE WORKER at the head of the line argues with a Burmese FOOD WORKER. Neither understand each other.

WORKER  
(in Chinese)  
I didn't get enough rice.

FOOD WORKER  
(in Burmese)  
Move along!

WORKER  
(In Chinese)  
I didn't get any rice!

A Soldier intervenes by slapping the Terre-Noble Worker's tray out of his hands. He barks orders in Burmese.

BURMESE SOLDIER  
Lunch is cancelled. Back of the  
line!

As the worker is shoved out the entrance, the Burmese Soldier notices Maung's nervous demeanor, and perhaps that he's not Chinese.

BURMESE SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
You!

Maung stares down.

BURMESE SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
You!

Maung closes his eyes. The Soldier gets in his face and grabs at the uniform.

BURMESE SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
You're a miner! Who's clothes are  
these?

A cadre of EUROPEAN SOLDIERS enter the mess. Maung trembles in anticipation. He pleads.

MAUNG  
I'm a worker!

BURMESE SOLDIER  
Bullshit!

Maung makes a dash for the entrance, but a European soldier grabs Maung by the collar and pins him against the door frame. Maung closes his eyes.

BURMESE SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
What are you stealing?

EXT. MINING CAMP - SAME

Across from the mess hall, Lao-Bo takes a drag from a cigarette and opens up a FLIP PHONE.

INT. TERRE-NOBLE MESS HALL - SAME

The Burmese soldier pulls Maung's jumpsuit open. He gasps a moment before the bomb EXPLODES.

EXT. MINING CAMP - SAME

Lao-Bo takes a look back, then disappears among the throngs of terrified miners and workers. Their screams fade into--

EXT. AIR FIELD - MYANMAR - DAY

An American woman yawns. She is SAMANTHA MORRIS, 40's, disheveled, bored, wearing professional-- yet appropriately rugged-- attire and aviator sunglasses. She's leaning against a scrappy private helicopter. A JEEP approaching on a dirt road catches her attention.

As the jeep closes in, Sam picks up her knapsack and briefcase.

EXT. MYANMAR MINE ROAD - DAY

Sam is fast asleep as the jeep barrels down a long dirt road.

EXT. MYANMAR MINE ENTRANCE - DAY

The jeep approaches a line of vehicles waiting to enter the mining area. As the jeep slows down, Sam opens her eyes and takes in her surroundings.