

**I'M STILL HERE**

written by  
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based on the novel by  
Marcelo Rubens Paiva

directed by  
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On black:

**"Rio de Janeiro - 1970  
Under a military dictatorship."**

The low, unsettling thud of helicopter blades starts encroaching on the movie theater.

**EXT. SEA OFF LEBLON BEACH - DAY**

Dark blue, the sea fills the screen. Down below, just past the breakers, a woman is bobbing in the water.

EUNICE PAIVA, 40, slim and elegant in a discreet black bathing suit, floats with her eyes closed.

Her ears in the water, her expression serene, she hears the muffled noise coming closer. The helicopter's shadow passes over her, and she opens her eyes.

The expanse of blue sky is broken by the military aircraft. Eunice shields her eyes against the sun and watches the chopper skirt the packed beach, flying low.

**EXT. LEBLON BEACH - DAY**

The helicopter flies over the sand, which is dotted with SWIMMERS and SURFERS in colorful suits. Among them, MARCELO, 9, is kicking a soccer ball around with a group of boys.

At the net nearby, his sister ELIANA, 15, gets ready to serve in a volleyball match with her friends.

A skittish PUPPY scampers through the forest of legs. It runs out ahead and interrupts the match.

BEACHGOER (O.S.)  
*Whose mutt is that?*

VOLLEYBALL FRIEND (O.S.)  
*Get it off the court!*

Eliana's hands enter the shot and grab the mutt.

ELIANA  
Is he yours?

PASSERBY (O.S.)  
*No.*

She unceremoniously hands the dog over to her brother.

ELIANA

Marcelo, hold him. He's messing up  
the game.

Eliana goes back to the match. Clutching the dog, Marcelo runs over to his other sister NALU, 13. She and her friend CRISTINA, 13, are rubbing Coke on their skin.

MARCELO

Check out our new puppy.

NALU

Mom won't let you keep that  
fleabag.

MARCELO

Where is she?

NALU

Dunno.

Nalu and Cristina go back to their Coke tanning ritual.

CRISTINA

Dalal will kill us if we show up  
tanned at the ballet.

NALU

That's what face powder's for.

Marcelo looks over at Eunice bobbing out in the surf, but runs off in the opposite direction with a mischievous grin.

We follow as he and his friends run across the beachside avenue. At the net, Eliana looks worriedly over.

ELIANA

Careful on the street!

The boys trot toward a two storey house on a corner, with green windows and open doors.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

The boys' sandy feet scamper through the garage, past a red OPEL KADETT. Marcelo, dog in hands, leads his gang up to the door to the living room.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / DINING ROOM - DAY**

MARIA JOSÉ, 30, the aproned maid, and BABIU, 8, are setting the table. As soon as she hears the boys coming:

MARIA JOSÉ  
Wipe your feet. I just swept the house.

They scuff the sand off their feet. Babiu notices the puppy.

BABIU  
Can I hold him?

MARIA JOSÉ  
What on earth is this now?

MARCELO  
Our new puppy.

MARIA JOSÉ  
It's filthy. Does your mom know about this?

MARCELO  
Is Dad here?

MARIA JOSÉ  
In the office, with Mr. Bocayuva. Don't bother him.

MARCELO  
It's urgent.

Babiu and Marcelo run through the cozy LIVING ROOM, its walls covered with abstract paintings, an elegant china cabinet against one wall. They come up to the closed study door.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - DAY**

RUBENS PAIVA, a stout man of 40, cigar protruding from his mustache, studies a blueprint. By his side is "BABY" BOCAYUVA, 50, his business partner and friend.

BOCA  
It was crazy to take on a project this size.

RUBENS  
If it were easy, we wouldn't have taken it on.

BOCA  
I would've.

RUBENS  
I know you would.

They both chuckle. There's a knock at the door.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

Come in.

Babiu and Marcelo emerge, dog in arms.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

No, no dog in the house. No way.

MARCELO

Can we keep him? Please?

RUBENS

What did Mom say?

Babiu looks to her brother, who doesn't blink.

MARCELO

She said to ask you.

RUBENS

What's this got to do with me?

(to Boca)

You take him.

BOCA

Me? No way. Dalal will kick me out.

Rubens can't resist the puppy's charms, and takes him.

RUBENS

I think this little rascal here looks like a...

#### **I/E. PIMPÃO'S DODGE CHARGER - LATE AFTERNOON**

VEROCA

Pimpão! Let me do it, I know how.

VEROCA, 17, tries to put a film cartridge into a Super 8 camera. Next to her, PIMPÃO, 19, is driving with one hand as he tries to grab the camera with the other.

PIMPÃO

If it doesn't click, it won't shoot.

Veroca dodges him, turns the cartridge over and slots it in. In the backseat, HELENA, 17, rolls a joint and REYNALDO, 20, flips through a *Pasquim*, a counterculture magazine.

The stereo breaks into a rhythmic tune: Jimmy, Renda-se by Tom Zé. Veroca turns the sound all the way up. Helena lights the joint. Pimpão puts his foot on the gas.

Veroca sings along and brings the camera up to her eye.

### **SUPER 8 FOOTAGE**

The song continues over the scenes framed by Veroca's Super 8, out of the car window:

Vendors hawking their wares, a cluster of men cheering at a corner bar, workers nodding off on a packed bus. Living fragments of the human geography of Rio in the '70s.

Veroca frames a YOUNG COUPLE with long hair on a motorcycle alongside the car. We're led along the streets up to a tunnel going through a large hill. Darkness takes over the shot.

### **I/E. PIMPÃO'S DODGE CHARGER / TUNNEL - LATE AFTERNOON**

A blinding streak of light and shrill whistles cut into the darkness. Veroca takes the viewfinder away from her eye.

Many cars are parked on the side of the road, trunks open, dozens of people being searched. It's a checkpoint.

The couple on the motorcycle have pulled over. Pimpão shuts off the radio, looking nervous.

PIMPÃO

Kill the joint, Reyna.

Reynaldo stubs out the joint and stuffs it into his jeans. ARMED POLICE OFFICERS point their flashlights at the Dodge, waving. Pimpão pulls over.

OFFICER 1

Cut the engine.

Veroca holds the camera up. A POLICE OFFICER points a gun at her.

OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)

Put that camera down, dammit.

Everyone out. Hands on the wall.

Pimpão and Veroca get out with their hands up. Helena and Reynaldo are yanked out and lined up against the wall.

The Officer shines his flashlight straight into Veroca's eyes. She squints as he compares her to a list of photos of YOUNG SUSPECTS, some with glasses, long hair, and beards.

OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)  
(to Pimpão)

ID.

Pimpão takes a step toward the Dodge. Another Officer shoves him, and he falls.

VEROCA  
Hey, you can't do that--

OFFICER 2  
-Shut your trap, kid.

PIMPÃO  
It's in the car. Can I get it?

Pimpão pulls the ID out of the glove compartment and shows it to the Officer, who turns the flashlight on him. Pimpão stares into the light, cowed.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Rubens is balancing on a chair to decorate the higher reaches of the Christmas tree, with Eliana's help. Marcelo plays with the puppy, nosing at the figurines in the Nativity scene.

Eunice, looking out the window, addresses Rubens.

EUNICE  
How long was that movie supposed to be, anyway?

RUBENS  
She'll be home soon. Pimpão must've dropped the others off first.

On the 16-inch TV playing in the background, the broadcast is interrupted for a breaking news bulletin.

ANCHORMAN  
*...kidnapping in Rio de Janeiro...*

RUBENS  
(to Eliana)  
Turn it up, would you?

Eliana runs over to the TV and turns up the volume. The anchor reads a statement from the Armed Forces.

ANCHORMAN

*...Giovanni Bucher's car was intercepted en route to the embassy this morning. Terrorists emerged from multiple cars and captured the diplomat after wounding his bodyguard...*

Rubens steps down from the chair and sits on the couch, next to Eliana. Eunice walks over to the TV.

ELIANA

Didn't they let that guy go already, Dad?

RUBENS

No, that was the German ambassador. This one's Swiss, honey.

ANCHORMAN

*...pamphlets were left at the scene signed by the kidnappers, self-proclaimed National Liberation Alliance....*

Eunice goes back to window. She notices a car outside, driving off.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Eunice walks into the kitchen to find Veroca, on edge, talking to Maria José while Nalu puts the dinner dishes away.

VEROCA

...I'm still shaking, look. It was fucked up--

EUNICE

-Watch your language, Veroca. Where on earth were you?

VEROCA

We got pulled over at a checkpoint coming back from the drive-in. The guys were going nuts, searching everyone. It was awful.

EUNICE

Another ambassador's been kidnapped. We just saw on TV.



VEROCA  
 Luckily, Pimpão had his dad's BBA  
 card.

NALU  
 What does BBA mean?

EUNICE  
 That's why it's good to have a  
 lawyer in the family.

MARIA JOSÉ  
 Sure wish I did.

EUNICE  
 (to Nalu)  
 Brazilian Bar Association.  
 (to Maria José)  
 Can you put the coffee on?

MARIA JOSÉ  
 Sure, Mrs. Paiva.  
 (to Veroca)  
 Want me to fix you dinner?

VEROCA  
 Thanks, Zezé, but I'm not hungry.

Behind Eunice, Nalu mouths to Veroca: *"you're screwed!"*

EUNICE  
 Go talk to your dad. He was  
 worried.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Veroca tries to make it through the living room unnoticed. Marcelo spots his sister going upstairs and runs up to her with the new dog in his arms, grinning.

MARCELO  
 Look! Daddy named him Pimpão.

VEROCA  
 Don't tell him.

Rubens turns toward Veroca, and they exchange looks at a distance. Marcelo runs over to the window.

MARCELO  
 Did he leave already? But I was  
 going for a ride in his dad's  
 Dodge. You promised.

RUBENS

*Wallababy*, I don't want you riding  
in that playboy's car.

VEROCA

Funny, I thought playboys were the  
type that drank whiskey and smoked  
cigars all day.

Rubens laughs at the dig.

RUBENS

No, sweetie. That's who pays for  
your matinées. What did you "not  
see"?

VEROCA

*Blow-Up*. The sound was shitty.

RUBENS

You're going to give your mother a  
heart attack if you keep on  
disappearing like that.

VEROCA

Not my fault if the city's crawling  
with pigs harassing everyone.

RUBENS

Look, while this ambassador thing's  
still going on, I don't want you  
going out at night.

VEROCA

What are you going to do, Mr.  
Congressman? Lock me up at home?

Babiu comes in carrying the coffee tray, engrossed by the  
task. Eunice follows. Veroca seizes the opportunity to  
escape.

BABIU

Who wants coffee?

Eliana is still glued to the TV.

ELIANA

How many prisoners did they ask for  
now, Dad?

Rubens looks over at Eunice, who's keenly awaiting his  
answer.

RUBENS  
I don't know.

EUNICE  
Everyone to bed. Now.

ELIANA  
I wanna finish watching the news.

EUNICE  
No. Bedtime. And Marcelo, the dog goes  
in the garage.

Eliana goes up in a huff. Babiú follows obediently.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
I'll call Dalva to see if Helena  
got in all right. Sounds like it  
wasn't pretty.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / CHILDREN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Marcelo is sleeping in his bunk bed, the dog beside him.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

In his pajamas, Rubens brushes his teeth, leaning up against the bathroom door, as Eunice vigorously brushes her hair in front of her dressing table.

EUNICE  
Dalva's still trying to get us to  
go to London too. But then she  
offered to take Veroca with them. I  
think it might be a good idea.

RUBENS  
(mouth full of toothpaste)  
Do you?

EUNICE  
Next year she'll start college. You  
know how that goes.

RUBENS  
Do I?

EUNICE  
She'll get involved in student  
politics, the way she is.

RUBENS

Let them settle down first. Then we'll see. No rush.

EUNICE

Why are Gaspa and Dalva leaving all of a sudden, then?

RUBENS

Gaspa's paranoid. Thinks he's being watched.

EUNICE

Let's send her with them. At least until this phase is over.

RUBENS

It'll pass soon. Remember the macrobiotic phase? Lasted two weeks.

EUNICE

Yeah, but no one gets arrested for being macrobiotic.

The telephone rings. Rubens spits into the sink and hurries over to pick it up on the nightstand.

RUBENS

(on the phone)

Hello? Speaking. Just a minute.

Rubens rests the phone on the nightstand.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

Work. I'll go pick it up in my study. Hang up for me, will you?

EUNICE

What about Vera?

RUBENS

I'll talk to Gaspa. We'll figure something out. Don't worry.

Eunice smiles, and Rubens goes out. She picks up a book from the nightstand and opens it to a page marked by a black-and-white photo of the couple in a carriage, surrounded by doves.

A few seconds later, she hangs up the receiver.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - NIGHT**

The door is ajar. Someone outside the study watches Rubens as he puffs on a cigar and speaks in a low voice.

RUBENS  
 (on the phone)  
 ...If I'm not here, you can leave  
 it at the office downtown. You have  
 the address, right?

A noise at the door catches Rubens' attention. He turns back and covers the receiver with one hand.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 (on the phone)  
 We'll talk tomorrow.

He hangs up and goes over to the door. Marcelo is standing there in his pajamas.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 Might I know what you're doing up  
 at this time of night?

MARCELO  
 I couldn't sleep and I smelled your  
 cigar. Who were you talking to?

RUBENS  
 Dad's on a secret mission. You know  
 what it is?

Marcelo shakes his head.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 To find out what are the odds of  
 you beating me at foosball.

The kid cracks a smile.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Rubens and Marcelo play foosball. Rubens celebrates a goal, Marcelo picks up the ball and puts it on the table. Father and son, exhilarated, get back to their game.

**EXT. PLOT OF LAND IN JARDIM BOTÂNICO - LATE AFTERNOON**

Through the viewfinder of Veroca's Super 8, we see the Paivas on the grounds of an old quarry, surrounded by dense forest. They're visiting the site of their future home.

The footage is silent.

The family gathers around the scale model of the new house. In Rubens' hands is the blueprint. He gesticulates, guiding two LABORERS who put down markers across the plot.

Marcelo runs over to the edge of the area marked out by the stakes and points at the statue of Christ the Redeemer up on top of Corcovado and grins at the camera.

Babiu tries to go after her brother, but trips and falls on a mound of sand. Eunice comes into the shot to pick her up.

At the other end of the plot, Eliana points to the lagoon, off in the distance. Rubens takes the camera from Veroca and films his daughter, who hides behind Nalu, smiling.

**INT. DINER - NIGHT**

The room is packed with FAMILIES and YOUNG COUPLES enjoying a night out. At a large table, Eunice and the children share fries and milkshakes.

ELIANA

You'll meet the next John Lennon  
and never come back.

VEROCA

Of course I'm coming back. I want  
to major in sociology here.

EUNICE

But you don't have to choose now.  
Decide after the trip.

VEROCA

I've already made up my mind, Mom.

Rubens comes over with an ice cream cone, hands it to Eunice, and sits down next to her.

RUBENS

Rum raisin for my *Mediterranean*.

MARCELO

What did you call Mom?

RUBENS

*Mediterranean*, Son. A mix of  
Italian, Spanish, Greek, and  
Turkish. Your mother, the most  
beautiful woman in the world.

He kisses Eunice, oblivious to the children's wrangling. An intimate moment in the midst of the hubbub.

**EXT. GASPARIANS' BOOKSHOP - NIGHT**

The OPEL KADETT is parked outside a small, charming bookstore, which is closed. A light shining out from the display window hints at life within.

**INT. GASPARIANS' BOOKSHOP - NIGHT**

Babiu and Marcelo run down the corridors of empty shelves. Helena and her sister chat with Eliana and Veroca. Standing by Eunice, DALVA GASPARIAN, 40, hands Nalu a book.

DALVA

This one's for you.

NALU

Thank you, Dalva.

EUNICE

Veroca promised not to give you any trouble.

DALVA

She'll be no trouble at all.

NALU

I can always go in her place.

EUNICE

When the house gets off the ground, we'll all go.

DALVA

Yeah, right, once you move into that house, you'll never leave Rio again.

At the back of the store, FERNANDO GASPARIAN, 40, is sealing up boxes of books. Rubens, crouched down beside him, is as lighthearted as the rest.

RUBENS

I'm sending Veroca first to see if it's not a scam.

GASPA

It's gotten too dangerous here, Rubens. We are sitting ducks. You should really come with us.

RUBENS  
Offering shelter for a whole family in  
London?

GASPA  
You're family, too.

RUBENS  
You'll be back soon, reopen the  
bookstore, the publishing house. It  
won't be long. You'll see, Gaspa.

The friends exchange a moved look. In the backdrop, Dalva and the kids say their goodbyes to the Paivas, heads hung low.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / GIRLS' BEDROOM - DAY**

Veroca is packing. Nalu, in the bed beside her, pays close attention as her sister rifles through a wooden box.

NALU  
Are you taking that all?

Veroca picks a necklace.

VEROCA  
Just this one.

She offers the box of costume jewelry to her sister.

NALU  
Seriously?

VEROCA  
Just don't let Eliana touch it.

Nalu crosses her fingers and kisses them, sealing the pact.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Eunice reaches for a hatbox on a high shelf in her closet. She puts her hand into a wool cap and pulls out an envelope with some foreign currency.

EUNICE  
Don't spend it all on records. Buy  
some boots. You need a good pair in  
the cold.

VEROCA  
Thank you. Do you still have that  
brown coat?



EUNICE  
Which one?

VEROCA  
The fur-lined one.

Eunice picks out a worn suede coat lined with sheep's wool in the armoire.

EUNICE  
But it's so old. A gift from your dad. Honeymoon in Bariloche.

VEROCA  
Looks brand-new. Can I borrow it?

Eunice puts it on Veroca. She admires her daughter in the dressing table mirror.

EUNICE  
You'd better behave there. Dalva has enough on her mind.

VEROCA  
I can take care of myself, Mom.

EUNICE  
All right. Take care of my coat, then, I'll want it back.

VEROCA  
I promise.

Victorious, Veroca gives her mother a kiss before leaving.

EUNICE  
Don't run off right away. I'm going to make a soufflé for you all.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - EARLY AFTERNOON**

Marcelo and his friends play soccer on the street outside. GUESTS are trickling in through the open living room door, dressed in bathing suits and casual clothes.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON**

*Je t'aime... Moi non plus*, by Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg, spins on the turntable. Nalu and Cristina dance, giggling. Babiu watches from the stairs, somewhat bemused.

BEATRIZ RYFF, 60s, e DALAL ACHCAR, 34, drinks in hand, chat as they shimmy their shoulders to the music.

DALAL  
Anyone interested in this house?

BEATRIZ  
You, right?

DALAL  
I'm looking for a place like this, round here.

BEATRIZ  
Rubens hasn't even started the new house. But I can introduce you to a great realtor.

DALAL  
Please. Our townhouse can't handle the new students.

Eunice comes back from the kitchen with ice for their drinks.

EUNICE  
I don't know how Dalal manages to run a school alone.

DALAL  
I don't have five kids, right?

BEATRIZ  
What a delicious smell. How do you keep it from sticking to the pan?

EUNICE  
You run a knife around the edge, put it in a very hot oven and don't open it.

DALAL  
Look how sweet, the girls dancing. I'm glad they don't understand French.

Eunice spots Nalu, who hurries to turn the record over. A peppier pop song comes on.

NALU  
I was just showing Cris.

EUNICE  
Seen Veroca?

NALU  
Isn't she in the bedroom?

Eunice goes over to Babiu, who's wiggling her loose tooth.

EUNICE  
Don't put that dirty hand in your  
mouth.

BABIU  
It's about to fall out.

EUNICE  
Let it fall out on its own. Anybody  
upstairs?

Babiu shakes her head. Eunice heads over to the study.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - EARLY AFTERNOON**

The room is swirling with smoke. Eliana, T-shirt over wet bikini, is sitting on the arm of Rubens' armchair.

Around them, Boca, the journalists RAUL RYFF, 60, and FELIX, 30, and the lawyer LINO MACHADO, 50, smoke cigars, drink whiskey and talk over one another.

RAUL  
Brasília is a ticking time bomb.  
The military will hit hard.

BOCA  
Seventy prisoners for an ambassador  
is unheard-of, they're playing with  
fire.

LINO  
General Médici is going to be out  
for blood, you can take that to the  
bank.

RUBENS  
How are things at the paper?

FELIX  
Worse by the day.

ELIANA  
If the military say no, will they  
kill him?

The men look at each other, at a loss for words.

RUBENS

No, honey. I bet right now Mr. Switzerland's playing cards and smoking cigars.

Rubens' belly laugh is contagious.

ELIANA

How would you know, Dad?

Before he can answer, Eunice cuts in.

EUNICE

Soufflé's in the oven. Who's hungry?

LINO

Don't need to tell me twice.

The men start into the living room.

EUNICE

Wet bikini on the couch, Eliana? Go change.

ELIANA

It's too hot.

RUBENS

Go on, do as your mother says.

He strokes Eliana's hair, and she runs upstairs.

EUNICE

Have you seen Veroca?

RUBENS

I'll find her, don't worry.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / GARAGE - EARLY AFTERNOON**

Hidden in the garage, Veroca, Pimpão and Reynaldo chat while drinking whiskey straight from the bottle.

VEROCA

... a photo of me crossing Abbey Road, just to make you jealous.

Veroca takes a swig just as Rubens opens the door.

RUBENS

How about some ice?

When she spots her father, she clumsily puts the bottle down and knocks it over. Pimpão tries to wipe up the mess, looking self-conscious.

PIMPÃO

We didn't mean to bother.

RUBENS

Lunch is almost ready.

VEROCA

We're just heading out to the lagoon--

RUBENS

-This is your going-away party, Vera. C'mon.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON**

Eunice's soufflé is greeted enthusiastically by all. The guests serve themselves and eat, scattered around the house.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

The puppy is napping next to one of the speakers. The record on the turntable plays mellow British rock. Rubens' hand lifts the needle, cutting the song off.

VEROCA

Hey! Isn't this my party? I get to pick the music.

RUBENS

What happened to peace and love, Vera? You'll get tired of this gringo music.

Rubens picks out another record and puts it on. Take Me Back to Piauí, by Juca Chaves starts up. The dog flees as the music floods into the room.

The guests liven up. Babiú, dozing on Eunice's lap, wakes up and joins Marcelo, who's dancing with Nalu, showing off. Rubens goes over to Pimpão.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

Might I have the honor of a dance with this young lady?

VEROCA

Why are you asking him?

RUBENS

Will you put me on your dance card?

VEROCA

No way.

Rubens pulls his daughter up as she rolls her eyes and laughs. They start dancing. Eliana joins them.

Pimpão notices Eunice looking on with a smile on her lips and invites her to dance. The two start whirling around the room.

Rubens, feeling a prick of jealousy, swaps partners. Eunice murmurs in her husband's ear.

EUNICE

Can you believe our Vera's going away?

RUBENS

Soon it'll be just you and me.

Rubens gives Eunice a passionate kiss. Babiú interrupts the moment, showing off the tooth in her palm.

BABIU

My tooth fell out!

Everyone celebrates.

**EXT. LEBLON BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON**

The sun is setting behind the mountains, bathing the beach in orange. The party has moved out onto the sand.

Marcelo and friends fly a kite. Rubens, at a distance from the group, is helping Babiú bury her baby tooth.

BABIU

What if someone finds it?

RUBENS

Not a chance, sweetheart. Look at the size of the beach.

BABIU

What if we don't find it?

RUBENS

Oh, we will. I counted the steps from home to here.

They both pat the sand down over the spot where the tooth is buried. From afar, Eunice, camera in hands, waves them over.

EUNICE

Come on, let's take a picture.

Babiu runs over to her mother. Rubens quickly digs up the tooth and puts it in his pocket.

Eunice frames the guests in the viewfinder, their backs to the sea. Lino comes up to her and puts out a hand.

LINO

Let me. You have to be in the photo.

Lino takes the camera. Rubens pulls Eunice to the middle of the group photo, next to Veroca.

RUBENS

Nobody serious, okay? Attention.  
"Ditch the Ditchtators"!

Everyone bursts out laughing. The photo is snapped, and the group disperses.

Eunice is the only one to notice three ARMY TRUCKS rumbling down the avenue in front of the family's house.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON**

Eliana is doing homework on the living room table while Maria José and Babiu talk in the kitchen. The phone rings.

ELIANA

I'll take it, Zezé.

Eliana runs into the study to pick it up.

ELIANA (CONT'D)

(on the phone)

Hello? He's not at home. Who's this?  
Hello?

The call cuts off. She puts the receiver down, suspicious.

**INT. ENGINEERING FIRM / RUBENS' OFFICE - DAY**

Leaning over his drafting table, Rubens squints as he revises calculations. In front of him on the desk is a framed family portrait. A COWORKER comes over.

COWORKER

Rubens, someone left this for you.

The man hands him a brown envelope.

RUBENS

Thanks.

Rubens' plump hands rip open the package. Inside are a few letters with no return address. One is from Veroca, accompanied by a roll of Super 8 film and a 7-inch record.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Pimpão the dog, fatter after months with the family, observes Eunice's well-manicured hands adjusting the Super 8 in the projector. Nalu holds the turntable needle over the record.

NALU

Can I?

RUBENS

Hold your horses, Miss Mess, she said we had to start it at the same time as the movie.

Eunice keys up the film and signals to Babiu, who turns out the lights and scampers over to the sofa with her siblings. Nalu lets the needle drop. Eunice flips the projector on.

Rubens, standing next to a screen on a tripod, waits to read the letter in his hand. A grainy image of Veroca appears, wearing Eunice's coat. Everyone's eyes shine with delight.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

(reading letter)

Guys, this is no ordinary letter. It's a sensory experience, like a *Mutantes* concert.

Eunice ably adjusts the focus. Rubens waits for the next scene. The Gasparians' house in London appears onscreen.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

(reading letter)

Look at our house, straight out of *Blow Up*. All of the other ones on the street are exactly the same. It's really funny.

The footage now shows Gaspa, Dalva, and their children in a snowy park. The kids are building a diminutive snowman.



RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 (reading letter)  
 It's a little weird to spend  
 Christmas without the beach, but  
 snow is pretty cool, too. We even  
 got to make our first snowman.

Veroca runs over to the snowman and puts a leaf under the nose to make a mustache and a twig in its mouth for a cigar.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 (reading letter)  
 Remind you of someone?

Rubens lets out his belly laugh. On the screen, Veroca and Helena emulate the cover of *Abbey Road*.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 (reading letter)  
 And how about this street? It was  
 so exciting. Can you believe my  
 feet touched the same ground as  
 John Lennon, Nalu? Hard to believe  
 the Beatles ever recorded here...

Now Veroca enters a record store, camera in hand. She focuses in on the T.Rex single that came with the letter.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 (reading letter)  
 Look at this musical wonderland. I  
 could camp out in here. I only  
 bought one single, and it's for...  
 (skips a beat, irritated)  
 ...for Pimpão, who's going to get a  
 kick out of this glam rock stuff.

Hearing his name, the mutt looks quizzically over at Rubens. The film ends with Veroca and Helena on Portobello Road.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
 (reading letter)  
 I hope you're all well. Love,  
 kisses, miss you all, Vera Lennon.

The projector lights up the screen, illuminating the Paivas' smiling faces. Marcelo gets up, excited.

MARCELO  
 Put it on again, Mom!

Eunice rewinds the roll. Nalu hurries to start the song over.

ELIANA  
Can I read this time, Dad?

RUBENS  
Sure.

Rubens hands her the letter, sits on the couch and lights a cigar. Tendrils of smoke pirouette up into the beam of light, casting curlicues onto the screen as the film starts over.

ELIANA  
(reading letter)  
Guys, this is no ordinary letter.  
It's a sensory experience...

Eunice goes over to Rubens and strokes his head.

RUBENS  
Sit with me.

The children make room, and Eunice sits down next to Rubens. The family watches the movie again, enraptured. After a few seconds, the doorbell cuts into the happy moment.

EUNICE  
Expecting someone?

RUBENS  
Just a sec.

Rubens goes off. Eunice tries to concentrate on the film, but can't. She turns to see her husband handing the package he received at the office to someone she can't see.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING**

A ray of sunlight makes its way onto Eunice's sleepy face. She turns over drowsily and notices that Rubens' side of the bed is empty.

She walks decidedly over to the window, and opens the blinds. Light rushes into the room, bathing it with gold, and Eunice smiles at the sight of the sea shining in the distance.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - DAY**

The dog noses at the model of the house on the desk. Eunice puts the Super 8 roll away in a box filled with photographs.

EUNICE

If I don't organize these photos once and for all, I'm going to get hopelessly mixed up.

She shoos Pimpão away, and her eye is caught by the model.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Can't we put air conditioning in the kids' room?

Rubens, in shorts and a linen shirt in his armchair, is staring intently at the pieces on a backgammon board.

RUBENS

The house will be breezy. There's a cobogó wall, a big veranda.

He makes his move. Eunice joins Rubens and lights a cigarette. The phone rings. She stays put, eyes on the board.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

Pick it up, honey.

EUNICE

I'm playing.

She rolls the dice. He gets up to answer the phone.

RUBENS

(on the phone)

Hello? That's right, at the corner of Almirante Guimarães. We'll be here all afternoon. Thanks.

Eunice finishes her move. Rubens sits down and rolls.

RUBENS (CONT'D)

Is there a good movie at the Pax?

EUNICE

We have dinner at Dalal's. Boca didn't say?

RUBENS

We can go to the movies afterward.

Rubens finishes his move and picks up the culture section of the newspaper.

Eunice rolls the dice and pulls the last pieces off the board, victorious. She gets up, and Rubens playfully pulls her onto his lap.

RUBENS (CONT'D)  
Where are you going?

EUNICE  
To start the soufflé.

He gives her a kiss as the door opens and Maria José comes in, trying to stay calm.

MARIA JOSÉ  
There's someone to see you, sir--

DR. SCHNEIDER, short, in a sweat-spotted shirt, marches into the room. Behind him are SIX MEN in plainclothes with revolvers and submachine guns. Eunice springs up, petrified.

RUBENS  
What's going on?

DR. SCHNEIDER  
Congressman Rubens Paiva?

RUBENS  
I think there's been some mistake.  
I haven't been in Congress for  
years now.

DR. SCHNEIDER  
No mistake, sir, you'll be coming  
with us.

EUNICE  
Where are you going to take my  
husband?

DR. SCHNEIDER  
To give a deposition. It's routine.

EUNICE  
A deposition about what, Rubens?

RUBENS  
(to Eunice)  
It's all right, don't worry.  
(to Schneider)  
I just need to change.

DR. SCHNEIDER  
(to two Men)  
Escort Mr. Paiva.

Two Men follow Rubens out of the study.

DR. SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)  
Anyone else at home?

EUNICE  
Just my children. They're upstairs.  
There's no need for weapons.

Schneider gestures to the Men, who hide their guns under their shirts.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Eunice and Maria José walk in, trailed by Schneider. Men pull the curtains shut and mutter into two-way radios.

Nalu comes in from the beach with Cristina, their hair wet. They are oblivious to the Men moving around the house.

NALU  
Hi, Mom. Where's Daddy?

EUNICE  
Hi, dear. He's in the bedroom.

Nalu runs up the stairs. Cristina stays in the living room.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Nalu doesn't blink at finding two strangers with her father, who's putting on a tie and struggles to act naturally.

NALU  
Can I borrow a shirt, Dad?

RUBENS  
Sure, Miss Mess. But give me a kiss first.

She gives him a peck and adjusts his tie.

NALU  
Where are you going all dressed up?

RUBENS  
Up to the office for a bit.

NALU  
But it's a holiday.

RUBENS

I'm just going to help these gentlemen. I'll be back soon, sweetie.

Rubens hands her a shirt with **R.P.** monogrammed on the pocket.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Nalu runs down the stairs wearing her father's shirt. Rubens comes after her, followed by the Men.

RUBENS

Tell Sebastião not to be a stranger, Cristina.

CRISTINA

I will, Uncle Rubens.

EUNICE

I changed my mind, honey. Sleep at Cris's house and tomorrow you can go to ballet together, all right?

The girls hurry out, elated. Rubens picks up the car keys.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

(to Schneider)

Can I go with him?

DR. SCHNEIDER

Your husband will be home soon.

RUBENS

I'll be back in time for the soufflé.

He gives his wife a kiss and leaves. She goes out after him. Schneider follows her.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

On the porch, Eunice picks up Pimpão as he tries to follow Rubens. Two Men get into the backseat of Ruben's OPEL KADETT as he takes the wheel.

EUNICE

Where's the deposition?

DR. SCHNEIDER

I'm not privy to that information.

The Opel Kadett sets off, tailed by another unmarked car. Eunice looks over at Schneider, who's standing by her side.

EUNICE  
And what about you all?

DR. SCHNEIDER  
We'll keep you company, ma'am.

She walks back in, followed by Schneider. The door swings shut.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Marcelo, drowsy and in his pajamas, comes down the stairs.

EUNICE  
Morning, honey. Did you sleep well?

MARCELO  
Who are these guys?

EUNICE  
They're from pest control. C'mon,  
let's get you something to eat.

Marcelo joins Babiú in the kitchen, who's eating breakfast with Maria José.

MARCELO  
Is Dad at the beach?

MARIA JOSÉ  
He went out for a bit.

Maria José whispers to Eunice.

MARIA JOSÉ (CONT'D)  
I'm a bundle of nerves, Mrs. Paiva,  
my hand won't stop shaking.

Eunice takes the maid's hand in hers and looks into her eyes.

EUNICE  
Stay calm. You take care of the  
kids, and I'll deal with these men.

The telephone rings. Eunice turns back to the door and finds herself face to face with Schneider.

DR. SCHNEIDER  
Where's the extension?

EUNICE

One in the office and another  
upstairs.

Schneider signals for one of the Men to go upstairs, and for another one to go into the study. The phone rings again. Before Eunice picks it up, Schneider looks straight at her.

DR. SCHNEIDER

If it's for your husband, he's out  
of town.

Eunice nods and brings the receiver up to her ear.

EUNICE

(on the phone)

Hello? Hi, Dalal. Yeah, but today  
won't work. Rubens had to travel  
last minute.

She stammers, hesitant.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

(on the phone)

Nothing serious. It's a family  
matter, he'll be back tomorrow.

Eunice looks over at Schneider, who stares back soberly.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Okay. I will. Give Boca my best.

She hangs up, tense, and tries to lighten the mood.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

We haven't been introduced yet. I'm  
Eunice.

DR. SCHNEIDER

Schneider.

EUNICE

Have you gentlemen had lunch?

DR. SCHNEIDER

Oh, we wouldn't want to bother,  
ma'am.

EUNICE

I insist.

(to Maria José)

Get the chicken out of the freezer.  
We'll make a fricassee.



**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATER.**

At the table, Marcelo and Babiú are eating with Zezé. Eunice smokes and bounces her leg, studying Schneider and his Men on the couch, plates on their laps, watching TV.

POLICE CHIEF (O.S.)  
*...this wave of car thefts that's  
 taking over the city...*

EUNICE  
 What is it that you do, exactly,  
 Dr. Schneider?

DR. SCHNEIDER  
 (chewing)  
 I'm a parapsychologist.

EUNICE  
 A parapsychologist?

Eliana comes in, baseball cap and T-shirt over her damp bikini. Eunice notes the Men's eyes following her.

ELIANA  
 Why's the house all closed up?

EUNICE  
 Come have lunch, sweetie.

Eliana runs over to the kitchen and comes back with her volleyball.

ELIANA  
 I'll eat after practice.

As she's midway to the front door, Schneider calls out.

DR. SCHNEIDER  
 Can't go out now.

She keeps on heading for the door, but one of Schneider's Men blocks the way.

ELIANA  
 Move.

DR. SCHNEIDER  
 No one leaves til your dad comes  
 back.

ELIANA  
 Where did Dad go?

Eunice hastens over to her daughter, placing herself between Eliana and the Man.

EUNICE

He went out. Let's go to your room.

ELIANA

But Mom, they're waiting for me at the net.

EUNICE

You can play later. Now come on, let's get you into some dry clothes.

Eliana notices her mother's strained tone. She lets the ball drop and heads upstairs with her, under Schneider's watchful gaze.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / GIRLS' BEDROOM - DAY**

Eunice shuts the door, which is plastered with Beatles posters. On the nightstand between two twin beds, a portable record player and a sticker album from the 1970 World Cup.

ELIANA

Who are these guys? Why can't I go out?

EUNICE

Shhh. They took your father.

ELIANA

Where to?

EUNICE

I don't know. They said he had to answer a few questions.

ELIANA

Are they policemen?

EUNICE

I think they're from the army.

Eliana knows what this means, and can't hide the fear that overcomes her.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Calm down, honey. It'll be okay. Just don't tell the little ones. They don't know what's going on.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Eliana bounces her leg and watches Marcelo playing foosball with one of the Men. Schneider talks into his radio. She notices the bulk of his gun under his shirt.

Eunice comes down the stairs.

EUNICE

That's enough, Marcelo, come to bed.

MARCELO

In a minute.

EUNICE

No, Maria José just finished putting Babiu down.

MARCELO

(to the Man)

We can finish tomorrow.

EUNICE

These gentlemen won't be here tomorrow.

The Men exchange glances, in silence.

MARCELO

(to the Man)

All right, then, you win.

Marcelo goes upstairs, pouting.

EUNICE

Is there anything else I can do for you gentlemen? There's food in the fridge, if you're hungry.

DR. SCHNEIDER

We'll get by all right, thank you.

EUNICE

Could you call in and check when Rubens will be back? It's getting late and I'm worried.

DR. SCHNEIDER

Can't do that. Unfortunately.

Eunice realizes she's not going to get anywhere with him.

EUNICE  
C'mon, sweetie, let's go up to bed.

The Men settle down on the couch and around the living room floor. Eliana goes up the stairs with her mother, whispering.

ELIANA  
They're armed, Mom.

EUNICE  
I know.

ELIANA  
Can I sleep in your bed?

EUNICE  
Best stay with your sisters.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / CHILDREN'S ROOM - LATE AT NIGHT**

From her bed, Eliana looks over at Marcelo and Babiú sleeping in their bunk bed. She rolls over, but can't get to sleep.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - LATE AT NIGHT**

Eunice smokes a cigarette as she leans on the windowsill, staring out at the dark beach and the still, silent sea.

A car pulls up and parks in front of the house. She stubs the cigarette into an overflowing ashtray and hurries off.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATE AT NIGHT**

Eunice rushes down the stairs and finds a new GROUP OF MEN coming into the living room.

DR. SCHNEIDER  
Just a shift change, Mrs. Paiva,  
you can go back to bed.

EUNICE  
I'm not tired.

Eunice heads up to the study. The Men watch her go.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - LATE AT NIGHT**

Trying not to make any noise, Eunice rummages through the desk drawers in search of any potentially suspicious material. All she finds is an address book, papers from Rubens' work, a few sketches and handwritten notes.

She picks up some scattered photos and puts them into a box with the rest. Through a crack in the door, she sneaks a glance at the Men dozing in the living room. Then she notices that one of them is staring back at her from the couch.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / GIRLS' BEDROOM - DAY**

Eliana is sleeping, curled up in her bed.

EUNICE (O.S.)  
*Eliana. Wake up, sweetie.*

Eliana opens her eyes and sees her mother.

ELIANA  
Is Dad back?

EUNICE  
Not yet. They want to ask us some questions.

ELIANA  
Me too?

EUNICE  
Yes, sweetie. But don't worry, we'll be back soon.

Frightened, Eliana sits up and rubs her eyes. Eunice goes to the chest of drawers.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
C'mon, get dressed.

She hands her daughter a change of clothes and hurries out. Eliana notices Babiu in her bunk bed, eyes wide open.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - MORNING**

Eliana and Eunice, purse in hand, are escorted by Schneider and his Men. On her way out, she speaks to Maria José.

EUNICE  
Stay with the children, please.

They are guided into the backseat of a POLICE CAR next to a CREAM-COLORED VW BEETLE. The cars take off. Maria José looks on uneasily from the porch, flanked by Schneider.

**I/E. POLICE CAR - MORNING**

The POLICE CAR speeds down the busy streets, siren wailing. In the backseat, Eunice holds her daughter's hand.

The cars pull over abruptly. One of Schneider's Men reaches for something in the glove compartment and then holds out two black hoods.

SCHNEIDER'S MAN  
Put this on, please.

EUNICE  
There's no need for that.

SCHNEIDER'S MAN  
It's protocol, ma'am.

Eunice takes the hoods and holds one out to Eliana. She nods and covers her own head. Eliana does the same.

In the darkness, we hear the car taking off again. The roar of the engine bleeds into all of the other city sounds, in a stifling, crescendoing cacophony.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / INTERROGATION ROOM - UNKNOWN**

The hood is pulled off. Eunice is sitting in front of a table under a bare lightbulb. There are two MILITARY OFFICERS with her, one of them in the shadows at the back of the room.

EUNICE  
Where is my daughter?

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
Eliana's outside. Sorry about the hood, Mrs. Paiva. Cigarette?

The Officer offers her a pack of cigarettes. Eunice shakes her head no. She notices a piece of fabric covering the place where the officer's name is sewn onto his uniform.

EUNICE  
Where is my husband?

He lights a cigarette, takes a drag, and flips through a folder of documents on the table.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
How long have you been married?

EUNICE  
I want to see him.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
Here it says eighteen years. Was he associating with communists back then?

EUNICE  
My husband was in the Labor Party, and I'd like to call my lawyer.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
No need. These are just routine questions.

EUNICE  
I'll answer them after I see my daughter and my husband.

The Military Officer takes another drag and exhales slowly.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
He's upstairs. He's already told us everything he knows. You just need to confirm.

EUNICE  
Confirm what?

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
That he left the country in '64 for conspiring against the revolution.

EUNICE  
Rubens was a congressman. He was ousted and had to go into exile. But since he came back, he hasn't been involved in politics.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
So why is he still fraternizing with terrorists?

EUNICE  
He never--

A desperate cry is heard outside the room.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / HALLWAY - UNKNOWN**

A PRISONER struggles as he is dragged along by SOLDIERS. They go by Eliana, sitting on a bench, face covered and arms cuffed behind her.

PRISONER  
(muffled under a hood)  
You can't do this, you bastards--

The Prisoner is punched in the stomach and starts coughing. He's pulled into a room at the end of the hallway. A metal door slams shut. Under her hood, Eliana sobs in terror.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / INTERROGATION ROOM - UNKNOWN**

Eunice stays stock-still until the coughing fades away. The Military Officer continues his questioning, unfazed.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
How does your husband keep in touch  
with the terrorists?

EUNICE  
I'll take that cigarette now.

He holds out the pack again, she takes one, and he lights it.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
Rubens is an engineer, a husband  
and father. He's got nothing to do  
with terrorists.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
We've been keeping an eye on the  
comings and goings at your house  
for a while now, Mrs. Paiva.

EUNICE  
We like having friends over.

The Military Officer who's been in the shadows comes up and puts an album down on the table. The Interrogator opens it up. The pages are full of black-and-white ID pictures.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
And are any of those friends here?

Eunice quickly casts her eyes over the page.

EUNICE  
No.



The Officer draws closer and looks into her eyes.

MILITARY OFFICER 1

Mrs. Paiva, all I'm trying to do is make sure you can keep taking care of your home, driving your kids to school and playing your backgammon. That's my job.

The Military Officer drops his cigarette and stamps on the butt. Eunice notices, under his polished combat boot, a dried bloodstain on the concrete floor.

MILITARY OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)

How's Vera doing in London?

EUNICE

Did you do something to my daughter?

MILITARY OFFICER 1

Did she do anything wrong?

EUNICE

Of course not. What sort of a question is that?

MILITARY OFFICER 1

Well, then there's nothing to worry about. Shall we try again?

He points to Rubens' picture in the album.

MILITARY OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)

Who is this man?

EUNICE

Rubens.

MILITARY OFFICER 1

See, it's not that hard. Who else do you recognize?

Eunice's eyes flit anxiously across the page.

MILITARY OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)

Look carefully.

She points to a picture of MARTHA, 55.

EUNICE

That's Martha, my daughters' teacher. What is she doing here?

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
Her son provides logistics for the  
subversives in Chile.

EUNICE  
What does Rubens have to do with  
any of this?

He stares at Eunice for a moment before answering.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
Martha was intercepted at the  
airport yesterday, bringing letters  
for your husband. I want to know  
how he delivers them to the  
terrorists.

EUNICE  
I told you, Rubens has nothing to  
do with terrorists.

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
Ma'am, you'd better start  
rethinking your attitude.

A knock on the door. The Officer in the shadows opens it. A  
SOLDIER, 20, head shaved, salutes him and heads to Eunice.

EUNICE  
Will I see my daughter now?

The hood goes over her head again, muffling her voice.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
But you said that If I answered--

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
-We're not done yet.

The Soldier handcuffs Eunice.

EUNICE  
Why the handcuffs?

MILITARY OFFICER 1  
It's protocol.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / HALLWAY - UNKNOWN**

The Officers watch the Soldier take Eunice out of the room.

EUNICE  
Where are you taking me?

ELIANA

Mom?

Eliana, handcuffed, struggles to get up.

EUNICE

Honey, are you all right?

ELIANA

Where are we? What's happening?

The Soldier gives Eliana a shove, and she falls back onto the bench.

SOLDIER

Sit down, kid.

EUNICE

They're just going to ask you some questions, sweetie. We're going home soon.

Eunice is taken away by the Soldier.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Let me stay with my daughter.

Eunice vanishes down the dark hallway. Eliana is breathing shallowly under her hood when Officer 1 calls her in.

MILITARY OFFICER 1

Your turn, Eliana.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / CELL - UNKNOWN**

Eunice's hood is pulled off. The windowless cell has a thin, stained mattress on the floor next to a urinal.

EUNICE

Have you seen my husband? They said he was upstairs. He's in a shirt and tie. He's got a mustache.

The Soldier takes her handcuffs off and leaves the cell.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

His name is Rubens. Please, help me. I need to see him. Please.

The Soldier slides the barred door shut, locks it and starts walking away. Eunice presses her body to the bars.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Rubens!

The Soldier comes back to the cell and speaks in a low voice.

SOLDIER

Quiet. You'll just rile 'em up.

Eunice absorbs this and changes her tone.

EUNICE

Please don't let them do anything  
to my daughter. She's just a child.

The Soldier looks into her eyes before walking away again.

Eunice paces up and down, distraught, until screams come from afar. She sits down on the floor and notices the names, dates, and drawings etched on the wall by previous prisoners.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / CELL - UNKNOWN**

Eunice is asleep on the mattress. A FIGURE comes up to the door and shines a flashlight on her stricken face.

FIGURE

Name?

EUNICE

How long have I been here?

FIGURE

Say your name.

EUNICE

Eunice Paiva.

FIGURE

Full name.

EUNICE

Maria Lucrecia Eunice Facciola  
Paiva. Where's my daughter?

The flashlight goes out and the Figure retreats. Eunice hears his voice pose the same question to the next prisoner.

FIGURE (O.S.)

Name?

In the next cell over, an OLD MAN answers in a tired whisper.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / INTERROGATION ROOM - UNKNOWN**

Eunice, haggard, her clothes dirty, is once again sitting in front of the photo album. A new OFFICER is interrogating her.

EUNICE

Do you have a cigarette--

MILITARY OFFICER 3

-Look again.

EUNICE

Please, I've told you everything I know. I need a change of clothes, couldn't I just--

The Officer turns the page. Eunice runs her tired eyes over it and spots, next to Rubens, a photo of Eliana.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

My daughter, Eliana. Where is she?

MILITARY OFFICER 3

I'm not privy to that information.  
Who else do you recognize?

Eunice looks back at the page. Among the rows of frightened faces, she recognizes her own, on the day she arrived.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / HALLWAY - UNKNOWN**

Handcuffed and hooded, Eunice is led by the Soldier with the shaved head. They walk by a room with the door ajar.

Inside, a FEMALE PRISONER tied to an inclined board has her face covered with a towel. TORTURERS pour water on the cloth. She coughs, choking.

PRISONER

(stifled by the towel)

For God's sake, you're killing me.

Eunice wrenches free and backs toward the door.

EUNICE

Eliana?

The Soldier goes over to Eunice.

SOLDIER

She's not here anymore.

Eunice lets the Soldier lead her. The screams slowly fade away as they walk on ahead.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / CELL - UNKNOWN**

Inside the cell, the Soldier removes the cuffs and hood.

SOLDIER  
Your daughter only stayed one  
night.

EUNICE  
How long have I been here?

SOLDIER  
Three days.

EUNICE  
What about my husband?

SOLDIER  
Don't know about him.

He steps out and locks the door. Eunice sits down on the mat and finds a blank patch of wall. With a fingernail, she scratches out three lines.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / HALLWAY - UNKNOWN**

SOLDIERS wash the bloodstains from the hallway floor.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / CELL - UNKNOWN**

Eunice is lying down, completely still, when the weary voice of the Old Man in the next cell starts to rasp out a samba.

OLD MAN (O.S.)  
*Samba, black, strong, and bold,  
Hounded like hell wherever you go,  
On the corner, in the bar, at  
worship...*

The singing is interrupted by a low thud.

SOLDIER (O.S.)  
*Shut up!*

Terrified, Eunice curls up. On the wall next to her, seven scratches indicate how long she's been imprisoned. In the distance, rain starts to drum on the metal roof.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / CELL - UNKNOWN**

In the dark, Eunice sleeps next to an untouched tray of food. A FIGURE wakes her up once again with a flashlight.

FIGURE

Name?

EUNICE

Maria Lucrecia Eunice Facciola  
Paiva.

The flashlight goes out. Eunice is shrouded in darkness.

**INT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / CELL - UNKNOWN**

Looking much thinner and worn down, Eunice is squatting by the urinal, washing her armpits with dirty water. On the wall beside her are twelve scratches.

The Soldier with the shaved head unlocks the cell. Used to the protocol by now, Eunice goes over to the door and puts her hands through the bars, waiting to be cuffed.

SOLDIER

No cuffs today.

She finds this strange. He slides the door open.

EUNICE

Where are you taking me?

SOLDIER

I want you to know that I don't  
think it's right.

**EXT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / COURTYARD - NIGHT**

The doors of the detention center open, revealing Eunice's fragile figure, clutching her purse to her.

She walks across the courtyard with an unsteady, silent step, until she spots Rubens's OPEL KADETT. She takes a step toward it, but notices a SOLDIER watching her from a guard booth.

Shaken, Eunice gives up and quickens her pace, hastening over to the iron gates that lead out onto the darkened street.

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## INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

56

Eunice gingerly opens the door and tries to cross the living room quietly. She trips over Babiu's doll and freezes. Maria José appears in the kitchen door, cigarette in hand.

MARIA JOSÉ

Mrs. Paiva?

Unused to smoking in front of her employer, Maria José casts around for someplace to stub out her cigarette.

MARIA JOSÉ (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, it's just that everyone's already asleep--

EUNICE

-Can I get one?

The maid comes over and holds out her pack of cigarettes. Eunice takes one and steps back.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

I'm in dire need of a shower.

Maria José watches Eunice lighting the cigarette, her hands shaking ever so slightly.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Is Eliana here?

MARIA JOSÉ

Yes. She said you were coming back with Rubens.

Eunice takes another drag, silent.

EUNICE

How is she?

MARIA JOSÉ

She's never at home anymore. Always out playing volleyball.

EUNICE

And the little ones?

MARIA JOSÉ

Shaken up.

EUNICE

What about Vera? Have you heard from her?



Maria José looks away, seeming uncomfortable.

MARIA JOSÉ

She called the other day... I told her you'd gone to São Paulo.

EUNICE

You did the right thing. I'm so sorry about all this. Were those men here for very long?

MARIA JOSÉ

No, they left right after they took you all. And how are you?

EUNICE

I can't even begin to thank you. Call a cab and go get some rest.

Eunice pulls a few bills out of her purse and hands them over. She starts going up the stairs, bone-tired.

MARIA JOSÉ

Nalu's in your bed. Since you've been gone, she only sleeps there.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / CHILDREN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Eunice peeks into the dimly lit room. Eliana is sleeping in her bed. In the bunk bed, deep in sleep, Babiú and Marcelo share the bed with the dog.

Pimpão gets up and comes over, wagging his tail.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Eunice sees Nalu curled up in the big bed. She walks quietly across the room, goes into the bathroom, and closes the door.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM / BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Eunice flips on the light and sees her reflection in the mirror above the sink. The dark circles under her eyes, her lank hair, her dull skin.

She undresses, revealing her fragile frame, and turns on the shower. Eunice scrubs her body until she's covered with foam. She steps under the water, which reveals her reddened skin.

She reaches for the sponge and is obsessively scrubbing under her nails when the bathroom door opens.

It's Nalu, who jumps when she sees her mother's thin, reddened body. She starts sobbing.

EUNICE  
Sweetie. C'mere.

Eunice wraps herself in a towel and dries the tears running down her daughter's face.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
I just need to take a shower.

NALU  
What's going on?

EUNICE  
Everything's going to be all right,  
honey.

Nalu wipes her nose, holding back her tears.

NALU  
There's leftovers from lunch. Want  
something to eat?

EUNICE  
Go to your bed, and we'll have  
breakfast together in the morning,  
ok?

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / CHILDREN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Nalu nudges Eliana. She whispers, trying not to wake their siblings in the bunk bed.

NALU  
Mom's back.

Eliana startles, suddenly awake.

ELIANA  
What about Dad?

Nalu shakes her head. Eliana sits up.

NALU  
She said nobody should go in. Can I  
sleep with you?

Eliana makes room for her sister, who lies down beside her.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING**

The morning light falls on Eunice's sleeping, thin form. She turns over in bed and opens her eyes. Eliana is sitting next to her, watching over her. Her daughter chokes back tears.

ELIANA

I wanted to wait for you. But they didn't let me. I'm sorry.

EUNICE

Don't cry, honey.

Eunice dries Eliana's tears.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Did they do anything to you?

ELIANA

They asked lots of questions, but I said I didn't know anything.

EUNICE

Did you see your father there?

Eliana looks down and shakes her head.

ELIANA

The papers say he escaped. But Lino said it's a lie.

EUNICE

Lino was here?

ELIANA

No, everyone's over at Boca's. I go there every day after school, we were trying to find you.

Eunice struggles to digest this. Eliana comes closer and lowers her voice.

ELIANA (CONT'D)

I told Zezé I was going to volleyball practice so nobody would get worried.

Eunice reaches for the phone on the nightstand.

ELIANA (CONT'D)

Mom, no. They said not to use the phone. C'mon, I'll go with you.

EUNICE  
No, Eliana. You have to go to school.

Eunice checks the clock on the nightstand.

ELIANA  
But I want to know what's happening, why Dad still hasn't--

EUNICE  
-Go get ready for school, honey.

ELIANA  
But I'm helping them.

EUNICE  
Your mom is taking care of this now.

Marcelo and Babiu, in their school uniforms, burst into the room and run over to her.

KIDS  
Mom! Mommy!

They wrap her in a tight hug. Eunice strokes their heads.

EUNICE  
My babies.

MARCELO  
Where's Dad?

Eunice looks at her children, unable to answer.

**INT. BOCA'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Eunice, stricken, is holding a newspaper. The front page shows a burned-out VW Beetle under the headline: "**TERRORISTS RESCUE PRISONER.**"

Around her are Boca, Raul, Felix, Lino, and Beatriz. They're on edge and speaking over one another. Through the windows, the light from the beach filters in.

FELIX  
This rescue story is fabricated.

LINO  
At least now it'll be harder for them to deny that he really was arrested.

EUNICE  
They denied his arrest?

LINO  
Said it had nothing to do with the  
Army.

BEATRIZ  
Same thing happened to the *Pasquim*  
guys, and they're fine.

FELIX  
Exactly. Vanished for two months,  
then released.

RAUL  
The international community is  
watching closely.

Dalal comes in with a tray of glasses and ice, and joins the  
conversation as she serves everyone.

DALAL  
What about a photo? Of the family  
without the father?

BOCA  
Good idea. Put it on the cover and  
Rubens will be back in no time.

FELIX  
We can't do that.

BEATRIZ  
Why not?

FELIX  
We're only allowed to print what  
the military brass lets through.  
I'm thinking New York Times, Le  
Monde. How's your French?

EUNICE  
I don't even know what to say.

BOCA  
Talk about being arrested. Eliana,  
too.

Eunice lights a cigarette. Her hand shakes, and Dalal  
notices.

DALAL  
Didn't she want to come?

EUNICE

I sent her to school. Is she well?

DALAL

Yes. She's fine. A little scared.

FELIX

Look, they wouldn't do anything to a former congressman. That'd make too much of a splash. We just have to keep the pressure on and show them we're watching.

BEATRIZ

We have to do more than that.

LINO

Without any concrete evidence that he was arrested, there's not much else we--

EUNICE

-His car.

Everyone turns to her, surprised.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Rubens' car is parked in the army lot. I saw it yesterday.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

The dog watches as Eunice hastily pack clothes into an overnight bag laid out on the couple's bed. Each shirt has the initials **R.P.** monogrammed on the pocket.

She reaches for the hatbox and pulls out Rubens' identity documents. Maria José comes in.

MARIA JOSÉ

Mr. Machado's out front. Should I put some coffee on?

EUNICE

No need, we're heading out.

Eunice shuts the suitcase.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

I'll pick the kids up at school. Just taker care of lunch, please.

MARIA JOSÉ

What would you like me to make?

EUNICE

Whatever there is.

Eunice hastens out. Zezé picks up the dog and heads to the window. Outside, Eunice gets into Lino's car, overnight bag in hand. The car pulls out of frame.

**EXT. MILITARY DETENTION CENTER / COURTYARD. DAY**

A group of SOLDIERS jogs across the courtyard in formation.

SOLDIERS

(chanting)

*...shoot some tear gas  
in the middle of the mob  
ain'ta be no oxygen  
folks are gonna drop  
an incendiary grenade  
a fire-thrower flashes  
that troublemaking mob  
gonna trample on its ashes...*

The group passes by Eunice and Lino, standing by the OPEL KADETT as an OFFICER fills out a retrieval receipt. Eunice hands the suitcase to the Officer, who ignores it.

EUNICE

This is a change of clothes and medicine. My husband is diabetic, he needs this.

OFFICER

I told you, there's no Rubens here.

EUNICE

Can you tell us where he's been taken?

OFFICER

(to Lino)

If you want that, you've got to put in a request to the federal police.

Eunice is about to snap back, but Lino cuts in.

LINO

Okay, then. Can we have the receipt, please?

The Officer hands over the receipt and the car keys, and heads back into the barracks.

EUNICE  
Where do we make that request?

LINO  
No use, they'll just deny it. We'll have to go through the courts.

Lino hands the car keys to Eunice but hangs onto the receipt.

LINO (CONT'D)  
But now, with this, I can file the habeas corpus.

Eunice points at the folder in Lino's hand.

EUNICE  
Can I at least have a look at that?

LINO  
God, it's worse than Greek. Are you sure?

EUNICE  
I am. I'll leave the kids home, then I'll stop by the office to return it.

LINO  
No need. I have a copy. If there's any news, I'll let you know.

Lino hands her the folder. Eunice enters the car.

LINO (CONT'D)  
I didn't know Rubens was diabetic.

EUNICE  
He's not.

She tosses the bag into the backseat and takes off.

**EXT. GRADE SCHOOL / HALLWAY - DAY**

Eunice walks under the arcade surrounding the inner courtyard while STUDENTS lined up on the lawn sing the school song.



## STUDENTS

*...pointing the way ahead  
 Always present in our thoughts  
 At every fork in the road  
 Treading the path of the righteous  
 Toward a life of contentedness...*

Among the TEACHERS overseeing the rehearsal, Eunice spots MARTHA, who was in the military's album. She waves at the teacher, who forces a smile and walks over to her.

We can't hear their conversation at a distance, but we can see the smile vanish from Martha's face. She signals at the girls to keep singing while she leads Eunice away.

## STUDENTS (CONT'D)

*...with you, we learn the truth  
 And warmth of a noble heart  
 Teach us the joys and pleasure  
 Of fulfilling our mission...*

**INT. GRADE SCHOOL / CHAPEL - DAY**

The children's singing echoes into the background. Eunice follows Martha, who weaves between the pews picking up booklets. They speak in whispers.

## MARTHA

...I only found out who the letters were for when I met your husband.

## EUNICE

So you saw Rubens there?

## MARTHA

We were put in the same car.

## EUNICE

Where did they take you?

## MARTHA

I don't know. They covered our heads with a--

## EUNICE

-A hood. They did it to me, too.

Martha avoids Eunice and ventures down another pew in search of more scattered booklets.

## MARTHA

What's so hard about putting them back where they came from?

EUNICE

You've got to make a statement to the police.

Martha turns to her, surprised.

MARTHA

But they're the ones who arrested us.

EUNICE

And now they're saying they didn't.

MARTHA

I'm sorry. I can't get involved in this.

Eunice grabs her arm and raises her voice.

EUNICE

You're the only person who saw him in there. I need your help. If I can't prove he was arrested--

Two NUNS come into the chapel. Caught off guard, Martha smiles abruptly and hands Eunice a prayer booklet.

MARTHA

Please, Eunice, you've got to leave.

EUNICE

My husband's in danger, Martha.

MARTHA

We're all in danger.

Martha goes over toward the Nuns. Eunice drops the booklet on a pew and hurries out.

#### **I/E. RUBENS'S OPEL KADETT - DAY**

Eunice smokes as she drives, glancing nervously into the rear-view mirror. Next to her, Eliana bounces a restless leg.

In the backseat, Marcelo plays with their father's oversized hard hat. Nalu is talking loudly.

NALU

I've missed rehearsals. Cris said I can go with her.

EUNICE  
That's enough, Ana Lúcia.

BABIU  
Why's Daddy's car back, but not  
him?

EUNICE  
He's still on a trip.

NALU  
I can walk there!

EUNICE  
From now on, you come straight home  
from school. And nobody goes out on  
their own anymore.

Marcelo notices the overnight bag on the floor. His curiosity  
piqued, he opens it up and spots his father's clothes.

MARCELO  
But this is Dad's bag!

EUNICE  
Leave it there, Marcelo.

In the rear-view mirror, Eunice sees the CREAM-COLORED VW  
BEETLE. She changes lanes.

NALU  
But what about my ballet? What  
about Eliana's volleyball practice?

ELIANA  
I quit the team.

EUNICE  
Why?

ELIANA  
I don't feel like practicing.

Eliana snaps on the radio, avoiding her mother's gaze.

ANNOUNCER  
*...the search for the terrorists  
who carried out the kidnapping...*

Eunice turns the radio off. Eliana turns it back on.

ELIANA  
Lemme hear, Mom. They're talking  
about the ambassador.

ANNOUNCER

*...help from the public in locating  
the suspects...*

Eunice checks the rear-view mirror again and snaps the radio back off again.

EUNICE

Not for children's ears, honey.

Eliana slouches down in a sulk.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

Maria José, in her maid's uniform, is hosing down the front walk. The OPEL pulls into the garage. The passenger's door opens, and the children clamber out and run into the house.

Eunice notices the CREAM-COLORED VW BEETLE on the other side of the street, two MEN inside. She picks up a barking Pimpão, and tries to close the gate, which is rusty and sticking.

EUNICE

Where's the key?

MARIA JOSÉ

Does it even have one?

She yanks at the gate, but it won't budge. Maria José puts down the hose and tries to help.

EUNICE

Let me do it.

Maria José steps back, surprised at her reaction. Eunice puts Pimpão down and heaves the gate shut. Both women go in. The water from the hose keeps on trickling down the sidewalk.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY**

Maria José is ironing clothes next to the radio playing a romantic tune. Eunice comes over and turns the radio off.

EUNICE

What about that car with those men  
in it?

MARIA JOSÉ

It's been there for days, Mrs.  
Paiva.

EUNICE

But do they do anything?

MARIA JOSÉ

They just sit there. Staring over here all day.

Eunice notices Maria José's threadbare apron.

EUNICE

Your apron's frayed. I told you should buy a new one.

MARIA JOSÉ

The cash ran out, so I had to use the money Mr. Paiva gave me to buy groceries while you were away. There wasn't enough for a new one.

Eunice smiles weakly.

EUNICE

Of course. I'll go by the bank tomorrow and get us some more cash.

MARIA JOSÉ

And... Mrs. Paiva, could you see about my pay, too? I know you've got an awful lot on your plate, but Mr. Paiva only paid me through December.

EUNICE

I'm sorry Zezé, I'll sort it out.

MARIA JOSÉ

Thank you.

Eunice walks out. Maria José turns the radio back on.

**INT. BANK - DAY**

In a glass-walled room, Eunice is sitting in front of RITOR, her stout bank manager, who drops an Alka-Seltzer tablet into a tall glass of water.

RITOR

Rubens can call to authorize the withdrawal.

EUNICE

He's overseeing a construction site in the mountains, and there's no phone up there. Is there really no way you can help me, Ritor?

RITOR

I understand, but without his signature there's nothing I can do.

Ritor takes a drink, eyes closed. Eunice spots a framed picture of the manager with his family on his desk.

EUNICE

Tell me, how's Miriam doing? We've got to get together when Rubens is back.

Ritor shakes his head, giving in.

RITOR

We should.

EUNICE

Well, I brought some dollars and pounds I had at home. Can you exchange them for me?

RITOR

Of course, Eunice. I'll get someone to help you.

EUNICE

Thank you, Ritor.

Ritor goes out. On the wall behind the desk, a uniformed portrait of General Médici, the military-installed president, stares straight at Eunice.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Nalu opens the parent's closet carefully. She picks out one of her father's shirts. She goes over to the nightstand and finds a pack of cigarettes in the drawer.

She puts the shirt on and leans on the windowsill. The girl lights a cigarette when the bedroom door opens. It's Marcelo. The children look at one another in silence.

MARCELO

Hey. Where'd Mom go?

NALU

I dunno.

He stares at her cigarette.

MARCELO

Can I have a drag?

NALU

No way.

**INT. ENGINEERING FIRM / RUBENS' OFFICE - NIGHT**

On the wall are photos of Rubens at construction sites: an elevated highway, putting down asphalt in a tunnel, during the building of Brasília.

Eunice, sealed envelope in hand, looks at a framed picture of the Paivas propped up on a clipboard of unfinished projects. Boca searches for something in the drawers of Rubens' desk.

BOCA

Gilda called again today. She managed to get Vera on the waiting list for a flight next week.

EUNICE

I think it'd be better if she stayed a while longer. Do you know how much the ticket is?

BOCA

I'll work it out with Rubens. He'd better come back soon, to deal with this mess.

Boca opens the last drawer and cackles.

BOCA (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch.

He pulls out a bottle of imported whiskey.

BOCA (CONT'D)

Do you mind? I'll buy him another.

Eunice shakes her head and lights a cigarette. Boca pours two glasses with ice.

BOCA (CONT'D)

You sure you don't want to stop by our place? Everyone's coming--

EUNICE

-Why did they arrest Rubens?

He's taken aback by the question and tries to dodge it.

BOCA

I don't know. The military are shooting blind, going after anyone.

EUNICE

Don't give me that, Boca. I was there, in that place. I saw it. I deserve to know what my husband was up to. Don't you think?

BOCA

I do.

He puts the bottle down on the desk and speaks quietly.

BOCA (CONT'D)

There's no way to just stand by, Eunice. Especially us. We have the means to help. So me, Rubens, Gaspa, Raul, we all do what we can. One talks to the foreign press, another one provides shelter to people on the run, deliver letters to families with no news.

Eunice looks at the envelope in her hands.

BOCA (CONT'D)

But we're not involved in the armed struggle. Much less Rubens.

She nods, taking this in, and snaps back at him.

EUNICE

So you decided not to say a word to me, to Dalal, to Dalva to protect us.

BOCA

Of course.

EUNICE

Of course.

She takes a drag and shakes her head.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

And you think Rubens will be released?



BOCA

I do. He'll be back soon. C'mon,  
come have dinner with us. Dalal  
will love to see you.

She stubs out her cigarette.

EUNICE

I'm not really in the mood. Too  
many kids to raise. Thank you.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / GIRLS' ROOM - DAY**

In Eunice's hands is the open letter. At the top of the page,  
we see Veroca's neat handwriting: "**London, April '71.**"

Eunice is sitting on one of the beds. On the floor, Marcelo  
and Eliana are looking at photos we can't see.

EUNICE

(reading aloud)

...These photos are on the subway.  
One out front, one inside the  
train. We were going to a party at  
the Arraes' house...

NALU

Pass it on, Marcelo.

EUNICE

(reading aloud)

You won't believe who was there.

On the other bed, Nalu, who's brushing Babiu's hair,  
interrupts.

ELIANA

Caetano?

NALU

Gil?

EUNICE

(reading aloud)

Gilberto Gil! He was wearing polka-  
dot velvet pants. A Bob Marley song  
started playing, and he asked me to  
dance.

NALU

No way.

ELIANA

Such a liar.

Eunice hesitates before carrying it on.

EUNICE

(reading aloud)

I miss the beach, the soufflé, and  
you all. I miss everything, Vera.

Nalu stops brushing Babiu's hair as the baby of the family  
turns to look at their mother.

BABIU

Is that it?

Eunice folds the letter and puts it back in the envelope.

EUNICE

That's it.

ELIANA

Let me see.

As Eunice reaches to take the photo from her children, they  
hear the sound of screeching brakes followed by an agonized  
howl. She looks out the window and then closes the blinds.

EUNICE

Stay here.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

Eunice throws the gate open. On the hot asphalt, Pimpão the  
dog is lying in a heap. From the CREAM-COLORED VW BEETLE, the  
Men stare at her.

MARCELO (O.S.)

*Pimpão!*

Eunice turns back to the house. Nalu holds her brother back  
as he moves to run, desolate, over to the dog. Babiu clutches  
Eliana in fright.

Eunice stalks over to the VW BEETLE.

EUNICE

What are you looking at? What do  
you want?

The DRIVER puts the key in the ignition and turns it, but the  
engine doesn't catch. Eunice raps on the window.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
Where is my husband?!

She keeps on slapping the glass until the car peels out.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
Get out of here!

Worried, Maria José looks at her employer standing in the street. Eunice smooths down her hair and speaks calmly.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
Zezé, please get me a blanket.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / BACKYARD - DAY**

Under a drab sky, Babiú and Nalu dig a small grave with their hands. Eliana watches, stock-still. Maria José tries to calm Marcelo. Everyone seems devastated.

Eunice places the blanket with the dead dog into the hole and sticks her hands into the pile of dirt, covering the bundle as fast as possible.

She notices as Eliana goes back into the house.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Eunice finds Eliana holding Veroca's letter.

ELIANA  
(reading aloud)  
... The Brazilian exiles were asking about Dad, Mom, and Eliana. I didn't know what to say. I got this awful feeling.

EUNICE  
Give me that letter.

ELIANA  
(reading aloud)  
Why don't you tell me anything? I found out about your arrests from the papers. What's going on?

The girl turns to her mother, looking furious.

ELIANA (CONT'D)  
Why didn't you read the rest?

EUNICE

That's not for children's eyes.

Eunice grabs the envelope, but Eliana won't let it go.

ELIANA

You skipped the part about Dad and me--

EUNICE

-Enough, Eliana. Give it to me.

Eliana yanks the letter back, and it rips in half.

ELIANA

You're lying to us!

Rattled, Eunice slaps her daughter across the face.

EUNICE

Go to your room.

Eliana stares at her, in shock, and runs off to her room. We hear the door slam.

Eunice slumps down onto the stool in front of the dressing table. She puts the ripped letter back in the envelope and notices the dirt on her hands.

In the bathroom, Eunice scrubs her hands under hot water.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - LATE NIGHT**

Rain. Eunice rereads the writ of habeas corpus. There are notes in the margins, and she's jotting down observations. As she lights a cigarette, there's a noise at the door.

Startled, she slowly straightens up in the chair.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT**

Headlights rake across the dark room. Through the wet window, Eunice spots a car idling outside.

A FIGURE comes out of the car and up to the house. Eunice quietly makes sure the front door is locked. An envelope is slipped under the door, addressed simply to **EUNICE**.

She opens the door, and her eyes meet Martha's through the car window before the vehicle vanishes down the dark, empty street.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - LATE NIGHT**

The torn envelope lies on top of the scale model of the house. Eunice is on her feet, smoking anxiously as her eyes scan the letter.

We hear Martha whisper, in the same tone as when Eunice met her at the school chapel.

MARTHA (O.S.)

*...I still can't describe the excruciating hours I spent in prison, but I can guarantee you that I was there with your husband. Although I couldn't see him, I heard him say: Rubens Beyrodt Paiva. Before I was transferred, I heard his voice one last time, asking for water. I pray that the family will be reunited soon. Give my best to my old students Vera, Eliana, and Ana.*

Eunice grabs the phone and dials hastily.

EUNICE

(on the phone)

I'm sorry to call this late, Lino, but we've got a witness.

She smiles. In her hands, the hope of reuniting with Rubens.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

The doors open and the children file in, wearing their school uniforms and backpacks. Eunice follows, carrying her purse and the folder with the writ of habeas corpus.

EUNICE

There's still time for a swim. Anyone?

NALU

It's kind of late.

MARCELO

I'm hungry.

Maria José comes out of the kitchen with Babiu.

EUNICE

Zezé, no need to cook. We're going for ice cream.

MARCELO  
I want French fries.

BABIU  
I want a strawberry sundae.

EUNICE  
Today, you can order whatever you  
want.

**EXT. LEBLON BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON**

Elegant in her black swimsuit, Eunice swims through the sea with strong, determined strokes. She pierces the surf and makes her way through the darkening waters of late afternoon.

Then she's floating, looking up at the orange-tinted sky. She closes her eyes and takes a deep breath. Time seems to stop for a moment. Until peace is shattered.

ELIANA (O.S.)  
*Mom!*

Eunice opens her eyes.

ELIANA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*Mom!*

Eunice looks back at the beach. Eliana is standing next to Felix, on the sand. The faint smile vanishes from her face.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - NIGHT**

Sitting in Rubens' armchair, Felix avoids Eunice's gaze. Her hair wet, in a towel and leaning up against the desk, she hugs herself as if she were cold.

FELIX  
'Died in combat,' Médici said.  
That's all.

Eunice doesn't move for a long time. She turns her face away and searches for the pack of cigarettes on top of the desk.

EUNICE  
Can you publish that?

FELIX  
Not yet. Not even abroad. They  
won't admit it officially.

EUNICE

We have to talk to Lino. He'll know what to do.

FELIX

There's nothing we can do now.

EUNICE

What do you mean? We have to force them to admit it publicly. A subpoena, a court order.

FELIX

We believe we have to keep asking for his release, as if we didn't know what happened to him.

EUNICE

So my phone will keep on being tapped? To have someone parked outside my house all day long?

FELIX

You're not alone in this.

She nods ever so slightly, then goes back to searching for cigarettes. She finds it and speaks in a low voice.

EUNICE

What about the body?

FELIX

All I know is what I told you.

EUNICE

But what do you think happened? Tell me.

Felix looks at Eunice. Her eyes are welling up.

FELIX

I've heard it all. Buried in the forest, dropped into the sea from a helicopter, mass graves. It's all rumors. There's no way to know, 'cause nobody will talk. They're afraid of disappearing, too.

She brings a cigarette to her lips, but doesn't light it.

EUNICE

Do you mind if I don't walk you out?

FELIX

I'm sorry. I wish I were the bearer  
of better news.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Eliana is hovering by the study door. On the couch, Nalu  
paints her nails. Marcelo is watching TV with a bag of snacks  
on his lap. Babiu, doll in hand, pesters her brother.

BABIU

C'mon, let's play.

ANCHORMAN

*...the inauguration of the Trans-  
Amazonian, the first federal  
highway to cross Brazil from east  
to west, built in record time, is  
slated for early next year...*

Felix emerges, and Eliana walks him out.

ELIANA

What were you talking about?

FELIX

I just came by to bring your mom  
something.

ELIANA

Did you find out where my dad is?

Eliana looks at Felix suspiciously.

FELIX

Not yet. Take care, okay?

He strokes her head affectionately and rushes out. Planted  
squarely by the couch, Babiu tugs on her brother's shirt.

BABIU

The news is so boring.

MARCELO

Then go play with your stupid doll.

NALU

Cut it out, you two.

BABIU

But you promised.



MARCELO

Scat!

Marcelo yanks the doll out of his sister's hands and throws it on the floor. Its plastic body breaks into pieces.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - NIGHT**

Babiu, holding the pieces of her doll, barges in. Eunice is in the same position, her back to the door.

BABIU

Mommy, Marcelo broke my doll.

Babiu realizes she's been crying and takes a step back, alarmed. Eunice turns her face away and dries her tears.

EUNICE

C'mere, give it to me.

Babiu gives her the doll and watches as her mother ably snaps the pieces together.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

There you go.

BABIU

Were you crying?

Eunice hands the doll back and gives her daughter a kiss.

EUNICE

Tell the others to get dressed.  
Let's go out for ice cream.

**INT. DINER - NIGHT**

At the same large table in the back, the kids dip into sundaes. Eliana shoots a worried look at her mother, who is smoking, lost in thought.

Eunice's gaze wanders across the families out for a Sunday treat. From her perspective, they move slowly and the hubbub of voices fades away, as if time had jolted out of joint.

Gradually, sounds of helicopter blades cut into the scene.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT**

The thudding of the helicopter crescendoes into a deafening roar.

Eunice awakes with a start. The emptiness beside her seems to take her breath away. She turns on the lamp and sees her disheveled and confused reflection in the dressing-table.

She walks over to the window and smokes looking blankly out at the vastness of the sea, invisible in the dark of night.

**EXT. PLOT OF LAND IN JARDIM BOTÂNICO - MORNING**

A stake is ripped out of the dirt. Then another.

Eunice grabs a third stake, marking the bounds of the house that will never be completed, and rips it up furiously. A fourth stake, stuck deep into the earth, resists.

Eunice keeps on until she yanks it out, and dusts off her hands without dirtying her dress.

**INT. ENGINEERING FIRM / RUBENS' OFFICE - DAY**

There are new EMPLOYEES in the firm now, huddled around a drawing board. They take discreet looks at Eunice and Boca as they stand around Rubens's old desk.

The only thing of his left is the family portrait. Eunice waits as Boca fills out a check.

BOCA

Look, are you sure? If you wait till the deed is in order, we can get a much better price.

EUNICE

I've got too much to do. I prefer it this way.

BOCA

I can loan you money, that's no trouble. That piece of land is a gem, and you can still build the house someday.

EUNICE

Thanks for managing to sell it without the proper papers.

Boca signs the check and hands it to her.

BOCA

I'm so sorry, Eunice. I wish I could've done more--

EUNICE

-It wasn't your fault.

BOCA

If you need anything, anything at all, for you or for the kids, just let me know.

Eunice takes the check, picks up the family photo and leaves. Boca, sitting in what was once his friend's chair, buries his head in his hands.

**INT. BANK - DAY**

Eunice's hand takes the check out of her purse, puts it on the counter and slides it under the glass towards the TELLER.

TELLER

For deposit?

EUNICE

Cash, please.

On the other side of the glass, behind the Teller, Eunice spots Ritor talking to someone out of frame. Their eyes meet and the manager awkwardly goes off without greeting her.

The teller's hands slip a wad of bills under the glass. Eunice picks it up and puts it in her purse.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Sitting in front of the mirror on her dressing table, Eunice sets aside a number of bills from the wad. She counts again, checks the sum, and puts them in an envelope.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT**

Eunice knocks on a door at the back of the laundry room, Maria José's bedroom. In her other hand is the sealed envelope. The door opens and Eunice goes in. The door closes.

After a few moments, Eunice comes out, empty-handed.

Her eyes are drawn to the clothes on the line. She touches them: they're dry. Without a second thought, she starts pulling them down and putting them in a basket.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / MARIA JOSÉ'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Maria José's calloused hands pick up a framed photo of her and her son from the small bureau. She nestles the picture among her clothes, alongside a statuette of the Virgin Mary, in a suitcase open on the single bed.

Maria José goes over the window and lights a cigarette, her hand shaking slightly. Leaning on the windowsill, she smokes looking at the laundry room. The line of clothes is empty.

**INT. RIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT / ARRIVALS - DAY**

Veroca, darker hair and paler skin, walks across the arrivals lobby, toting a backpack covered with bands' buttons. She's wearing her winter boots, already battered.

She spots a group of SOLDIERS checking baggage and IDs. Veroca looks down and picks up the pace.

She makes her way past other PASSENGERS around the baggage carousel, headed for a revolving door under an exit sign.

**INT. RIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT / MAIN TERMINAL - DAY**

Veroca comes through the door and spots Eunice, Babiu and Marcelo waiting for her in the cramped, bustling terminal. Her face tenses as she tries to hold in her emotions.

Her mother waves, smiling ear to ear at the sight of her. Her siblings run over, followed by Eunice, who wraps Veroca in a hug and, eyes closed, takes in the smell of her daughter.

EUNICE

We missed you so much.

MARCELO

Did you know Pimpão got hit by a car?

EUNICE

Marcelo!

BABIU

He's talking about the dog.

Marcelo guffaws, as does Babiu. Veroca strokes her sister's hair.

VEROCA

You got bigger, Babiu.

Babiu points at the buttons on Veroca's backpack.

BABIU  
Can I have one?

VEROCA  
As many as you want. And where are  
Nalu and Eliana?

Eunice looks around, checks her watch and starts heading for the door. Veroca finds her reaction strange.

EUNICE  
They stayed home to wait for the  
reporters from *Manchete*.

VEROCA  
Why are those skills coming over?

EUNICE  
They need a picture today to get it  
into the next edition.

The children trail after their mother as she walks quickly out, weaving between the families waiting for other arrivals.

#### **I/E. RUBENS'S OPEL KADETT - DAY**

Veroca's hand tunes the radio until she finds a Brazilian music station. She sits back and watches the city roll past through her sunglasses.

While she's relieved to be back home, there's a strange note, as if everything has changed while she was gone.

Eunice lights a cigarette, catching Veroca's attention. She turns the radio down and leans over to her mother.

VEROCA  
Mom, I have to tell you something.

EUNICE  
What's that?

VEROCA  
Your jacket... I left it with  
Helena. She begged me so long I  
just couldn't say no.

Veroca shrinks, expecting a telling-off.

EUNICE

That's all right, it'd been stored away for so long. Helena will make better use of it in London.

Veroca is surprised by this response. She notices that her mother is gripping the wheel tightly, her eyes flitting to the rear-view mirror.

VEROCA

Are you all right?

Eunice turns to her daughter with a smile on her face.

EUNICE

Sure I am, honey. How about you?

Veroca looks back at the backseat: Babiú and Marcelo are examining the buttons on her backpack. Veroca leans over to her mother and speaks quietly, choosing her words carefully.

VEROCA

Have you heard any news?

Eunice cuts her daughter off brusquely.

EUNICE

Vera, please, the kids.

VEROCA

In London, it's in all the papers--

EUNICE

-Honey.

Eunice turns up the radio, cutting the conversation short. Veroca sits back and looks out the window. Outside, the broad lanes of Avenida Brasil slip past under the harsh noon light.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

Behind a camera on a tripod, a PHOTOGRAPHER squints through the viewfinder and gesticulates with his hands held high.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Closer, get closer in.

The lens frames the family, posed on the front steps.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Just scooch in a little more. Got to fit all of you.

They all squeeze in a little closer.

EUNICE  
Is everyone in the picture?

PHOTOGRAPHER  
Yep. All ready? Three... two...

He's about to press the shutter when Eunice speaks.

EUNICE  
Smile.

Marcelo starts laughing. Babiu tries to hold it in, but soon explodes in giggles, too. The JOURNALIST working with the Photographer addresses the family.

JOURNALIST  
You don't have to smile.

EUNICE  
Why not?

PHOTOGRAPHER  
The editor asked for it.

EUNICE  
For what?

PHOTOGRAPHER  
He asked for a photo that's more...  
more... you know, less happy.

EUNICE  
He wants a sad photo?

The comment makes the children guffaw even harder. Now Nalu and Eliana are laughing, too. Eunice notices, and smiles.

PHOTOGRAPHER  
It doesn't have to be sad, but just  
no smiling.

EUNICE  
We're going to smile.

Eunice breaks into a broad smile. Veroca, still out of place, can't make sense of her mother and siblings' reaction.

JOURNALIST  
How about serious? Can we get  
serious for a second?

EUNICE

Smile.

Defeated, and a little irritated, the Photographer takes the photo. In the picture, everyone is smiling except Veroca.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Veroca comes down the stairs, fresh from the shower. She hears Eunice's voice in the study. Through the half-open door, she spots her mother smoking and speaking in a deliberate tone as the Journalist takes notes.

EUNICE

I really don't understand, how in a country with an allegedly functioning justice system, someone can break into your house, take a father away, throw him in jail, and then simply say "he's gone." And there's not a thing you can do? Every single stage of the legal process was flouted, and after three months, the nature of the crime my husband allegedly committed remains a mystery, as do his whereabouts.

JOURNALIST

The inquiry was recently archived, right?

EUNICE

My lawyer has filed a request to reopen it. This is unacceptable behavior by the State, which is protected by a system of false news designed to cover up the unlawful acts committed by its own agents...

Veroca watches Eunice: a woman she no longer recognizes.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / KITCHEN / DINNING ROOM - DAY**

Nalu in an apron heats up lunch, Marcelo sets the table and Babiú puts out napkins. Eliana is the only one seated, waiting for lunch. Veroca is surprised by the whole scene.

VEROCA

Is Zezé off today?



NALU  
She doesn't work here anymore.

VEROCA  
Why?

NALU  
We can't afford to pay her.

Veroca tries not to let her surprise show.

VEROCA  
Let me help you, then.

NALU  
That's okay. Tomorrow you can start  
on the rotation.

Nalu points at the fridge. On the door, hung up with a magnet, is a list of chores with the children's name next to them. Veroca notices that Eliana's name under **WASH DISHES**.

VEROCA  
Let me get the dishes for you  
today, Eliana.

ELIANA  
If you insist.

VEROCA  
You okay?

Eliana looks up at her sister and nods soberly. Veroca lowers her voice, careful not to let their siblings overhear.

VEROCA (CONT'D)  
What's going on? I heard that they  
took you along with Mom, but nobody  
could tell me how--

ELIANA  
--we can't talk about that at home.

Eunice's arrival interrupts the moment between the girls.

EUNICE  
I wish I could've made a welcome-  
home soufflé, honey, but there was  
no time.

Nalu carries the dish over to the table. The children take their seats. Veroca just stands there.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Not hungry?

VEROCA

I think it'll take a few days for me to get over the time difference.

NALU

Where's Veroca going to sleep now that I'm in her bedroom?

VEROCA

I don't care.

NALU

Can't Eliana sleep with Marcelo and Babiú and I stay with Veroca?

BABIU

I don't want to sleep with Eliana, Mommy, can I stay with you?

ELIANA

I'm not going anywhere. Nalu has to go back to the kids' room.

MARCELO

Daddy said I'm going to have a room to myself because I'm a boy.

Eunice interrupts everyone, speaking loudly and firmly.

EUNICE

You can cut out the arguing right now, because nobody's going to have a room of their own anymore.

They all look at their mother, surprised.

ELIANA

What?

EUNICE

We're going back to São Paulo.

NALU

Are you serious?

EUNICE

I am. Grandma and Grandpa are there, and you can stay with them now and then. Because I'm going back to college.

VEROCA

You're what?

ELIANA

I'm not going.

EUNICE  
Eliana, please--

BABIU  
-What about the new house?

EUNICE  
It'll have to wait a little,  
sweetie.

ELIANA  
What about Dad?

The children look at Eunice, who puts down her utensils and tries to keep her cool.

EUNICE  
I know it's hard to understand, but  
you'll just have to be patient.  
This process is--

ELIANA  
-And what if he comes back and  
we're not here anymore?

Eunice speaks even more firmly.

EUNICE  
This house is already rented out.  
It's going to become a restaurant.  
I want each of you to pack your  
things, and on Friday, a moving  
truck will pull up out front.

Eliana runs upstairs. Eunice doesn't budge. She takes a deep breath and speaks quietly, seemingly unmoved.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
Pass the rice, Marcelo.

Marcelo obeys. Everyone starts eating as if nothing had happened. Veroca sits down and serves herself in silence.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / STUDY - LATE NIGHT**

The shelves are nearly empty, and there are piles of books all over the ground.

Eunice gathers newspaper articles, clippings of interviews, and the writ of habeas corpus. She puts it all away into a moving box and writes **RUBENS** on it.

She comes across the box of photographs. Inside is the Super 8 film sent by Veroca, along with a jumble of family photos from years past. She writes on the box: **PHOTOS - ORGANIZE.**

In a drawer, Eunice comes across Babiu's baby tooth. She hears footsteps crossing the living room. Eunice closes the box, goes over to the door and cracks it open, curious.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME / KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT**

The garage door is open. In the half-light, Eunice spots Veroca and Pimpão leaning up against the hood of his car.

She watches her daughter's movements. Veroca is looking down, worried. Pimpão strokes her hair, and she turns away.

**EXT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

A moving truck is parked outside the house, and MOVERS are carrying out boxes and pieces of furniture. Marcelo says goodbye to his friends, and hands one his kite.

MARCELO

Keep this for me?

Eunice comes out of the house with a box and gives it to Veroca, who's helping to load up the car, along with Nalu.

EUNICE

Have you seen Eliana?

The girls shake their heads. Eunice finds Babiu holding her doll, crestfallen. She holds out two closed fists.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Pick one.

Babiu points at the left one. Her mother skillfully whirls her hands around and winds up opening her right fist. In it is the tooth.

BABIU

How did you find it? Only Daddy knew.

EUNICE

Your mom knows a lot of things, too.

Babiu smiles and gives her a kiss.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Get in the car, it's time to go.

Babiu obeys. Eunice enters the house for the last time.

**INT. PAIVA FAMILY HOME - DAY**

Two MOVERS carry the armchairs from the study across the living room. The place seems much larger now it's empty.

EUNICE

Eliana?

Eunice goes into the kitchen and comes back. She pokes her head into the study.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Sweetie?

She goes up the stairs. The children's rooms are empty as well. From the bedroom window, Eunice spots something on the beach.

**EXT. LEBLON BEACH - DAY**

Eliana stares out at the horizon, her feet sinking into the wet sand. Eunice comes up to her daughter and the two of them face the sea, in silence.

**I/E. RUBENS'S OPEL KADETT - DAY**

The doors of the Opel are closed. Eliana is sitting next to Eunice. Squeezed into the backseat are Marcelo, Nalu, Babiu.

They're all quiet. Their reflective expressions reveal that this is a rite of passage for the whole family.

Eunice starts the car and sets off. Veroca turns back and notices the Super 8 camera in the trunk. She picks it up, looks through the viewfinder, and pulls the trigger.

In the grainy image, we see the family's house pulling away.

**INT. GYM - DAY - SÃO PAULO, 1996**

There are only a handful of SWIMMERS in the clear waters of the heated pool.

In one lane, a young woman swims quickly to the end and does a flip turn without coming up. She reaches the other end and pulls off her goggles to check the wall clock. It's Babiu.

**EXT. OVERPASS - LATE AFTERNOON**

Her hair wet, Babiu walks across the overpass, wearing headphones and toting a gym bag.

Behind her is a landscape unlike anything we've seen yet: tall buildings as far as the eye can see.

Babiu comes up to a corner building and goes in.

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

The living room overlooks the overpass. In it are objects, paintings, and furniture from the Paivas' old home.

Babiu drops her gym bag on the long dining room table and takes off her headphones. The clacking of the electric typewriter guides her down the hallway.

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / STUDY - LATE AFTERNOON**

Eunice, face marked by the years, smokes as she types away, flanked by bookcases filled with archival storage boxes and methodically organized folders.

On the shelves are PHOTOS OF HER GROWN CHILDREN, and of her at her LAW SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY.

Babiu emerges in the doorway.

BABIU

You got in early.

Eunice turns, pulls off her glasses, and smiles.

EUNICE

Hi, honey. I rescheduled my flight.

BABIU

I'm going to eat out with Daniel. Want to come?

EUNICE

I can't, Babiu. I'll just heat something up.

At the top of the page, Babiu reads: **LAND REPOSSESSION**. Among the legal documents, marked-up books and colorful Post-Its, she notices a PHOTO OF HER MOTHER BY A SINGLE-ENGINE PLANE.

BABIU

I can't handle you in those little airplanes.

EUNICE

By land, it's impossible. It takes three days and the area is swarming with land grabbers.

BABIU

I thought you kicked them out last time.

EUNICE

Yeah, me too.

Babiu pins the photo up on a cork board.

BABIU

When do you leave tomorrow?

EUNICE

Manuela will pick me up at six-forty.  
(checks wristwatch)  
I haven't even started preparing my talk.

BABIU

We can have breakfast together.

Babiu leaves, and Eunice quickly gets back to her work. In VOICE OVER, we hear Eunice in the next scene:

EUNICE (O.S.)

*...The legal tools we have to try to prevent the illegal occupation of these areas...*

**INT. LAW SCHOOL / AUDITORIUM - DAY**

In the half-light, Eunice speaks next to a tripod projector screen showing aerial photographs of Indigenous villages.  
**CLICK.** Eunice flips to the next slide as STUDENTS take notes.

EUNICE

...and the entire region affected by the Transamazonian highway are: First, file for the annulment of fraudulent contracts by land grabbers, which Manuela and I did for the Pataxós.

**CLICK.** The projector shows a single-engine plane in a village, echoing the snapshot we saw in the previous scene.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Second, enforce the 1988  
Constitution, since it requires the  
government to guarantee Indigenous  
peoples' rights to their land.

MANUELA, 50, who's operating the projector, raises her voice.

MANUELA

Whoever's interested in reading  
Eunice's full report, you can pick  
up a copy after class.

The door opens, casting a ray of light into the dark. An  
ASSISTANT steps in and whispers something into Manuela's ear,  
pointing toward Eunice.

EUNICE

It's a lengthy process, but it was  
important to establish the legal  
precedent which--

Manuela gets up, cutting her off.

MANUELA

-Eunice, I'm sorry. Urgent phone call  
for you.

**INT. LAW SCHOOL / OFFICE - DAY**

A receiver off the hook is awaiting her on a desk thick with  
folders. Eunice hastens over to it and brings the phone to  
her ear, tense. We're left out, wondering what she's hearing.

Suddenly, Eunice's knees give way. She puts a hand on the  
desk to steady herself and then covers her face, in shock.

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY**

A motorized wheelchair trundles across the pavement. In it is  
MARCELO, kitted out in a white dress shirt and tie. Beside  
him, Babiu and Eunice quicken their step.

EUNICE

Couldn't you comb your hair, Marcelo?

Eunice tries to fix her son's hair, but he dodges.

MARCELO

I already put on a tie, Mom.

Babiu laughs. The three of them enter the imposing building.



**INT. COURTHOUSE / LOBBY - DAY**

The wheelchair picks up speed on the marble floor. Eunice and her children come up to the security checkpoint, amidst LAWYERS and their CLIENTS.

MARCELO  
Need some room here.

EUNICE  
Excuse us, please.

Eunice shows her bar association card to MARLON, 30, a uniformed guard who smiles at her.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
Good morning, Marlon. These are my children Marcelo and Beatriz. Is your little one better?

MARLON  
Yeah, he's already back to school.

EUNICE  
Give Ivone my best.

MARLON  
Sure, Mrs. Paiva. And congratulations.

Marlon holds the turnstile gate open and they go through.

**INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY**

They come into an office. Eunice walks up to a reception desk.

EUNICE  
So is it really here, Carla?

From behind a PC emerges the clerk CARLA, 25.

CARLA  
Yes, Mrs. Paiva.

Carla sets her coffee cup aside and motions to another CLERK, who goes off to fetch the document. Carla leans over toward Marcelo, bashful.

CARLA (CONT'D)  
Sorry to bother, Marcelo, but when your mom said you'd be coming in...

Carla picks up a battered copy of the book *Happy Old Year* and hands it to Marcelo.

CARLA (CONT'D)  
Do you mind signing it?

MARCELO  
Of course not. It's Carla, right?

Carla nods, and hands Marcelo a pen. He signs with some difficulty, given his weakened hand.

MARCELO (CONT'D)  
Did you like it?

CARLA  
I cried a lot.

MARCELO  
Really? It was supposed to be funny.

CARLA  
The story of your accident... Wow. It got me right here.

MARCELO  
Was there too much swearing?

CARLA  
No.

MARCELO  
(to Eunice)  
See? You're the only one who gets on my case about my language.

The Clerk hands **RUBENS' DEATH CERTIFICATE** to Eunice, who stares at the official document, a smile on her lips.

EUNICE  
Thank you.

BABIU  
Can I see it?

She hands the document to her daughter, moved by it.

CARLA  
The press is here, Mrs. Paiva. Can I let them up?

**INT. COURTHOUSE / LOBBY - DAY**

**CAMERAS FLASH.** Eunice proudly holds up the death certificate for the JOURNALISTS to see. Marcelo is by her side. Babiú, at a distance, watches her mother field questions.

EUNICE

It's odd, you know, to feel relief with a death certificate.

REPORTER (O.S.)

*How did you deal with the void left by your husband?*

EUNICE

Forced disappearances were one of the regime's cruelest acts. You kill one person, but condemn all the rest to eternal psychological torture.

REPORTER 2 (O.S.)

*After the return of democracy, doesn't the government have more urgent issues than fixing the past?*

EUNICE

No. I think it's absolutely necessary to compensate the families and do the most important thing, clarify and judge all crimes committed during the dictatorship. Otherwise, they will continue to be committed with impunity.

More **CAMERAS FLASH.**

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Marcelo, without his tie, lights a cigarette as he stares at the death certificate lying on the dinner table. Behind him, Eunice looks for something in a cupboard.

MARCELO

Mom, not the cheap stuff, eh?

EUNICE

After the third round, who can tell?

Eunice brings over a bottle of imported whiskey and pours out three glasses.

MARCELO

Now that this is finally over, how about retirement?

EUNICE

Retirement, Marcelo?

Babiu comes up with the same box of photos we've seen in the past and puts it down on the table.

BABIU

Take a break. Come visit me and Daniel in Bern, take a little rest.

EUNICE

To rest I have to be at the beach.

MARCELO

Then go for it.

They toast. Marcelo makes an approving face.

MARCELO (CONT'D)

Yep, it's the good one.

Babiu picks up the certificate, brimming with pride.

BABIU

Mom, you did it.

Eunice smiles discreetly before taking the document from her daughter's hands and setting it aside.

EUNICE

This piece of paper might well get the ball rolling, but it doesn't say what happened. And it doesn't say who's responsible. We've still got a long way to go.

Babiu opens up the box of photos.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

We're not opening that now.

BABIU

I just did.

EUNICE

I still have to organize this mess.

BABIU

The paper asked for a photo of Dad.

EUNICE  
 You do that, and I'll call Vera.  
 The kids must be back from school.

Eunice goes over to the phone. She dials, waits as it rings, then smiles.

EUNICE (CONT'D)  
 (on the phone)  
 Hi, honey. Yeah, it went fine. We  
 just got home.

BABIU  
 Send my love.

MARCELO  
 Give my best to George.

Eunice goes into the bedroom. Marcelo takes a photo from the box.

MARCELO (CONT'D)  
 Look at Pimpão and Zezé.

Babiu finds the photo of Veroca's going-away party.

BABIU  
 Remember what this was?

MARCELO  
 Was it Nalu's birthday?

BABIU  
 No, Dalva and Gaspa aren't in it.

Marcelo picks up a photo of him and Babiu with their father.

MARCELO  
 Look at us.

They look at the photo in silence. Then Babiu says quietly:

BABIU  
 When did you bury him?

MARCELO  
 What do you mean?

BABIU  
 The day you realized he wasn't coming  
 back?

Marcelo looks away, thoughtful.

MARCELO

I think it was when I saw Mom donating his clothes. About a year and a half later. What about you?

BABIU

I think it was when we left Rio. Seeing the house all empty.

MARCELO

That soon?

EUNICE (O.S.)

*Vera sends her love.*

Eunice comes back, digital camera in hand. Babiu shows her the photo of Veroca's send-off.

BABIU

When was this?

EUNICE

I think it was Vera's birthday.

Eunice tucks it away in the box of photos and shuts it.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

Shall we take a photo for your sisters?

She rests the camera on the box of photos.

MARCELO

Can she use the timer?

BABIU

We're about to find out.

Eunice pushes a button, and a light starts blinking. It flashes faster as she takes her place between her children.

EUNICE

Smile.

The three of them smile. **FLASH!**

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / BABIU'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Babiu is finishing packing her suitcase. Among her clothes, she tucks away the photo that her mother took on the night they got the death certificate.

She shuts the suitcase and puts it on the floor, next to another bag. The room is emptied out - only a few books and objects remain.

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / EUNICE'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Eunice counts foreign money. She gets confused halfway through and begins again. She loses her count once more and before she can start over, Babiu comes in.

BABIU  
Need help, Mom?

Eunice hides her confusion, shuffles the bills together and hands them over.

EUNICE  
Check it, I think it's all in order.

BABIU  
As soon as I get the grant, I'll pay you back.

Eunice jots figures down in her notebook.

EUNICE  
It's all set out here, don't worry.  
Let's go before rush hour.

BABIU  
You really don't need to, Mom.  
Daniel's coming to pick me up.

Eunice looks at her daughter, trying to hold in her emotion.

EUNICE  
Oh, okay. Call me when you get in?

BABIU  
I will. I'll miss you.

EUNICE  
Me too, honey.

**EXT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / FRONT - LATE AFTERNOON**

We see at a distance as Eunice hugs Babiu and DANIEL (35), who has a ponytail, next to a taxi. The couple goes in, and the car takes off.

Eunice stands there for a while. Then she looks around, turns on her heel and strides back into the building.

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / ELEVATOR - LATE AFTERNOON**

Eunice notices her reflection in the mirror, alone. She steps closer and checks the graying roots in her hair.

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / STUDY - NIGHT**

Eunice looks at the death certificate for a moment before picking up a bulging binder labeled **RUBENS**.

She flips through pages full of newspaper and magazine clippings, remnants of years of struggle. We see fragments:

- *Jornal do Brasil*, 1979: **"Who killed Rubens Paiva?"**

- *Afinal Magazine*, 1985, a photo of Martha, with the headline: **"Teacher states in court that she saw Rubens Paiva being beaten."**

- Amilcar Lobo in *Veja Magazine*, 1986: **"Former military officer breaks silence and reveals that Rubens Paiva was murdered at state police headquarters."**

Eunice comes to the last page, where she tucks away the death certificate. She closes the binder matter-of-factly, puts it back on the shelf, and picks up the box of photos.

She opens it, and the first one she sees is the family photo on the beach. She looks at the image, concentrating. Then she turns the photo over and picks up a pen.

The ballpoint hovers in the air for a moment, then she writes with a firm hand: **VEROCA'S FAREWELL PARTY, 1970.**

As she puts the photo back in the box, she notices a roll of Super 8 film among the jumble of snapshots.

**INT. EUNICE'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Eunice places the old projector on the dining table, turned toward the blank wall. She ably slots in the film - her hands still know what to do.

She turns on the projector. Eunice's eyes shine damply. Far from all the rest, she finally lets herself melt as she watches happy images of a time that will never return.



**SUPER 8**

The Paivas are on the beach on a sunny morning in 1970. Rubens plays with the children in the sand and kisses Eunice, who grins.

**EXT. VEROCA'S HOUSE / BACKYARD PATIO - DAY - SÃO PAULO, 2014**

The image of JOAQUIM, 2, fills a cell phone screen. He's being filmed by Marcelo, who smiles as he sees his son dance clumsily on the lap of his mother, SÍLVIA, 35.

MARCELO

Blow a kiss to Daddy.

They're finishing up lunch with GUESTS and FAMILY MEMBERS. It almost feels like the house in Leblon, with people scattered all around the backyard and music playing.

At one end of the long table is Eunice, her hair white, in a wheelchair. Her eyes are fixed on her grandson. It's as if nothing else exists for her.

MARCELO (CONT'D)

I was looking for that one of them in Bariloche.

ELIANA

I have the one from *Manchete*, the one at the beach...

VEROCA

I have the ones from college.

MARCELO

And from Brasilia, are there any left?

ELIANA

I don't think so. None survived. But there's the one with the pigeons.

VEROCA

It's great for the cover.

MARCELO

That's up to the publisher.

ELIANA

I'll check what I have, scan and send it to you.

BABIU (O.S.)  
*Put them on a pen drive for me,  
 please.*

Babiu comes from the kitchen with a carton of ice cream,  
 along with Nalu, bearing a dish with a withered soufflé.

VEROCA  
 We have soufflé!

NALU  
 A total failure, it deflated. No  
 jokes, okay?

Marcelo comes over to get a look at the dish.

MARCELO  
 A sorry sight, eh, Mrs. Paiva?

NALU  
 If Mrs. Paiva had written down the  
 recipe...

BABIU  
 Now it's Mom's fault. Lucky us, I  
 brought some ice cream.

The siblings chuckle.

VEROCA  
 Anything else, Mom?

Eunice doesn't respond. Veroca wipes her mouth and addresses  
 RAQUEL, a uniformed nurse.

VEROCA (CONT'D)  
 Would you take her over to watch a  
 little TV, Raquel?

RAQUEL  
 Sure thing.

Raquel pushes Eunice's chair back inside the house.

ELIANA  
 Mom seems less irritated, doesn't she?

NALU  
 I think Joaquim does her good.

VEROCA  
 I don't know. Sometimes it seems like  
 she's completely adrift.

**EXT. VEROCA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Her chair parked in the living room, Eunice's gaze is vacant. She hears something, quiet and muffled: a voice. She looks for the source and eventually locates a TV in front of her.

REPORTER

*...twenty one years of military regime in Brazil and the countless crimes committed against those who opposed it. The Commission heard over twelve hundred witnesses, including State officials and victims of the dictatorship. The document reveals systematic torture and murder that victimized over twenty thousand people and left hundreds more missing...*

She focuses on the screen, which is showing the news. The sound gradually becomes clearer. Eunice's expression changes.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

*...The report identifies two hundred and thirty locations where these crimes were committed, such as army barracks, as well as areas used for disposing bodies, such as Marambaia, in Rio de Janeiro...*

Eunice seems transfixed by what she's seeing.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

*...Some of these victims became icons of resistance against the military regime, like the journalist Vladimir Herzog, the student Stuart Angel...*

The screen shows a photo of Herzog, followed by Stuart Angel.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

*...and Congressman Rubens Paiva.*

Rubens' picture fills the screen. Eunice's face lights up. She points at the TV and tries to speak, her voice faint.

EUNICE

Look... look...

Distracted, Raquel doesn't notice. For a few seconds, Eunice is connected to Rubens and the world. The photo disappears, and the segment cuts back to the reporter.

REPORTER

*...Paiva's body, like those of at least two hundred others, has never been found.*

Eunice rests her arm on her lap and sinks back into her void. Out on the porch, Marcelo has his eyes fixed on her.

**EXT. VEROCA'S HOUSE / BACKYARD PATIO - DAY**

Marcelo watches his mother through the window, moved by what he's just seen. He's the lone, silent witness to the moment.

VEROCA (O.S.)

*Raquel, can you bring Mom out, please?*

**INT. VEROCA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Raquel maneuvers Eunice's wheelchair.

RAQUEL

We'll be right back, Miss Eunice.

Eunice, still lost in thought, is taken outside.

**EXT. VEROCA'S HOUSE / BACKYARD PATIO - DAY**

Despite all the family, Eunice looks around as if she were being dropped into a world of unfamiliar sounds and images.

Her chair is parked. She turns to Eliana, who's sitting next to her, looking the other way and gesticulating. She turns to the other side and sees Marcelo, who points out ahead.

Confused, she turns back that way and sees Raquel pointing a phone at them. The caretaker is moving her arms, making gestures she can't decipher.

Only then does she realize that they're posing for a picture. She immediately straightens up in her chair and breaks into a shy grin. Touched, Marcelo calls out to everyone.

MARCELO

Let's do this folks. Smile!

A **FLASH** goes off, and we see the full photo, with all the children and relatives gathered around Eunice, who's smiling.

**FADE TO BLACK.**