

THE LEGEND OF ZORRO

By

Roberto Orci and Alex Kurtzman

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FADE IN:

In the darkness, a single shaft of light. First we HEAR FOOTSTEPS, then we see a familiar silhouette approaching:

ZORRO! Drawing his sword, he SLASHES the screen, forming the letter "Z" through which FLAMES EXPLODE and --

1 INT. DARKENED CAVE - DAY

1

As the flames dissipate, we're left with a single plume of smoke. BOOM DOWN to a flickering candle. A YOUNG MAN appears, his face obscured in shadow. He sits at the table. Picks up a QUILL. Dips it in a bottle of INK. As the quill moves across the page, we hear his VOICE:

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

It is my desire to put on record these events, which did shape the course of my destiny...

A drop of INK falls from his quill onto the page, right next to the word... "DESTINY." A pinpoint of light appears inside the letter 'D' -- it quickly CONSUMES THE FRAME...

WHITEWASHING US TO:

2 INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - THE BELFRY - DAY

2

The blazing sun. CRANE DOWN to the iron mission bell as it CLANGS, swinging back and forth:

YOUNG MAN (V.O.)

... They begin in San Mateo, the province of my birth. On that day, the people would decide if California was to join the union as its thirty first state.

We MOVE down the bell rope, to find a MONK tugging it.

VOICE (O.S.)

... Brother Ignacio?

The monk turns to see FRAY FELIPE, curator of the mission.

FRAY FELIPE

What are you doing?

BROTHER IGNACIO

Five rings, Padre -- to summon Zorro in case there's trouble.

FRAY FELIPE

If I know Zorro... he's already here.

And as he exits, we TRACK through the open archway and TILT DOWN in a glorious reveal to find a CROWD OF HUNDREDS. A banner reads: "VOTE TODAY!" SHOT CONTINUES over long lines of people waiting to cast their votes...

And we STOP ON THREE SOMBREROS. Or, more specifically, three PEASANTS inside curtained voting booths. MOVE IN on their ballots. Two boxes, two choices: "IN FAVOR OF THE CONSTITUTION" / "IN OPPOSITION TO THE CONSTITUTION." The first peasant marks an "X" in favor of joining the union. TRACK to the next peasant -- he does too. Now we come to the third. And instead of marking an "X," this peasant marks a "Z." TILT UP TO ROGUISH EYES BEHIND A BLACK MASK...

... ZORRO. To those who know his secrets, he's ALEJANDRO DE LA VEGA. Disguised as a peasant, he opens the curtain, drops the ballot in a basket, and as he LEAVES FRAME we begin...

TRACKING along a row of MEN shouting from soapboxes, a kind of 'speaker's corner' -- activists both for and against the vote -- we STOP on a MAN handing out leaflets: GUILLERMO CORTEZ, a young Che Guevara with a revolutionary's passion:

CORTEZ

Vote 'yes' to statehood! This is
our day of independence! Our day
of revolution!

3 INT. HOTEL ROOM - ABOVE THE SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

3

CLOSE ON A MAN'S EYES, filled with hate, watching the crowd through a window. His hands sweep twin PISTOLS off a table. Burnished into one handle we read: "SALVATION." Into the other, "DAMNATION." Now he reaches for a RIFLE BANDOLIER. Slings the strap over his back. Turns to a CRACKED MIRROR -- and his face is revealed like a kaleidoscopic horror show:

JACOB McGIVENS, lean, fierce, a deadly piece of trouble in a black frock coat and flat-brimmed hat. The shape of a CRUCIFIX has been BRANDED into his cheek, clear through his right eye, and onto his forehead. McGivens slips on the hat and exits... a warrior going into battle.

4 EXT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - DAY

4

In the crowd, we find a 10 YEAR-OLD BOY...

A wildness about him -- like a colt ready to run. As he pushes through the voters, a HAND grabs his ear -- he WINCES and looks up at:

FRAY FELIPE

Niño, why aren't you at school?!

THE BOY

But Padre, what if Zorro comes?

FRAY FELIPE

I'll make sure he carves a 'Z' into your backside, now how does that sound?

THE BOY

(excited by the prospect)
Really?

FRAY FELIPE

HOME!

The boy runs off. Shaking his head, Felipe scoops up the a basket filled with votes, heads off. As he clears frame...

... we FIND the corner where the kid just disappeared. After a beat, his face REAPPEARS and he sneaks back into the crowd, passing a FRUIT CART. Stealing an APPLE, he creeps on as...

FRAY FELIPE arrives at a table where the GOVERNOR'S TABULATOR is counting ballots, calculating the results on a TALLY CERTIFICATE. Two uniformed RURALES stand beside him, rifles in hand. Felipe sets down the basket...

FRAY FELIPE

The final votes, Amigo.

TRACK ON TO A YOUNG WOMAN. Very pregnant, sweating in the sun. This is BLANCA CORTEZ, wife to Guillermo Cortez, the revolutionary we just met. Seeing her lower herself to sit, Cortez hops off his soapbox and runs over, concerned:

CORTEZ

Are you all right, Mi Amor?

BLANCA

The baby's kicking, that's all.

CORTEZ

Here, have some water...

It's easy to see the love between them.

Now our camera REACQUIRES the Tabulator -- he locks the tally certificate inside a BOX and says to Felipe:

TABULATOR

Once we get this to the governor,
it'll be official -- let's hope the
rest of California voted the same,
eh?

He hands the box to one of the Rurales, who loads it onto a wagon. Felipe cautions the Rurale:

FRAY FELIPE

Be careful, Hombre, you carry the
future of our state in your hands.

SUDDENLY, A MAN'S VOICE SINGS through the courtyard:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

'How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky...
How shall a child presume to sing,
His dreadful majesty?'

And now the crowd has parted to reveal...

MCGIVENS

I come to deliver The Lord's word
against this vote! Babylon was
condemned to ashes for extending
its empire to inferior races!

FRAY FELIPE

What right do you have to preach
gospel, McGivens!? You speak for
the railroad!

MCGIVENS

(touching his crucifix
scar)

Here's my right... just as He sent
his only son to endure mortal
suffering, my daddy branded me with
my own cross to bear.

Cortez SPITS at McGivens' boots:

CORTEZ

You force us to sell our land then
use us as slave labor! You can't
intimidate us anymore!

A swell of CHEERS!

McGivens draws back his coat to emphasize his PISTOLS. The Rurales quickly level their rifles. Everyone tenses --

MCGIVENS

My my, it's damnably hot out here... I believe the devil is upon us. Now what say you hand over that ballot box.

TABULATOR

A pointless crime, Sir, you'd only force the people to vote again.

With a fearless grin, McGivens SNAPS: the SOUND OF MULTIPLE MUSKETS COCKING fills the square. We WHIP to SIX RIFLEMEN on the rooftops, McGivens' posse, surrounding the courtyard. The Rurales freeze, finding themselves gravely outnumbered.

Tense beats. The frightened people. Among them, the young boy. Finally, with no choice, the Rurales drop their guns...

MCGIVENS

With the proper persuadin', people got a funny way of having their minds changed. Savvy?

TABULATOR

I command you, in the name of civil order -- tell your men to disarm.

In a flash, McGivens unslings his RIFLE from its bandolier and FIRES OFF TWELVE ROUNDS AT ONCE, pockmarking the wall around the tabulator's head and the suspender straps on his shoulders -- causing his pants to drop to the ground. No one's ever seen a gun fire like that...

MCGIVENS

Latest model in heavy artillery -- the Henry repeating rifle. If God didn't hurl lightning he'd surely carry one of these. Now, I'm gonna count to 'one'...

He COCKS the rifle again, aims at the terrified tabulator... and as McGivens opens his mouth to say 'One'... A BLACK FEDORA ROCKETS THROUGH THE AIR, STRIKING HIM ON THE BRIDGE OF THE NOSE. He tumbles off his horse and lands in the dust...

SNAP TO ZORRO, standing on a rooftop -- he WAVES to the crowd. The people ROAR -- among them, the boy, who's beyond gleeful with exhilaration!

Zorro leaps off the roof onto the balcony below, the posse SHOOTING AT HIM as he goes --

McGivens pulls himself up off the ground, enraged, firing double-fisted into the air to clear a path to the wagon. Leaping on, an APPLE CORE splats the side of his head -- he WHIRLS to see the boy, having flung the apple with a SLINGSHOT --

McGivens locks eyes with the boy as he contemplates bloody murder, but there's no time to spare -- McGivens CRACKS the reins AND BLASTS AWAY CARRYING THE LOCK BOX!

TABULATOR

He's getting away with the ballots!

The posse leaps from the rooftops onto waiting horses, galloping after the wagon as it thunders through the fleeing peasants, heading straight for A FRIGHTENED LITTLE GIRL!

Across the square, her hysterical mother's been cut off by the frantic crowd. Zorro LEAPS from the roof -- catching a HANGING BANNER, he SWINGS over the crowd, snatching up the girl MERE SECONDS before she's run over by the wagon...

Zorro deposits the girl right into her mother's arms, then whistles: TORNADO CHARGES INTO VIEW! Zorro LEAPS on, racing after the posse -- as he clears frame, we HOLD ON:

TWO DARK-SUITED MEN. Notably out of place in the peasant crowd. Who are they? Without a word, they climb onto their horses and follow, passing...

... Fray Felipe, in the crush of peasants -- he picks Zorro's Fedora off the ground and HANDS IT TO HIM as he races by. Watching him go, Felipe kisses a CRUCIFIX NECKLACE:

FRAY FELIPE

Godspeed, Alejandro --

5

EXT. STREETS OF SAN MATEO - MARKETPLACE - CONTINUOUS

5

McGivens races the wagon through a MARKETPLACE, tearing through hanging clothes, hens, vegetable carts -- havoc, panic and destruction in every direction. He turns to see if Zorro's following. He isn't. Grinning, McGivens wheels back around to face the road ahead but:

ZORRO APPEARS IN FRONT OF HIM, ROUNDING A CORNER ON TORNADO! Leaping off, he catches hold of an INDUSTRIAL HOOK AND ROPE and THROWS IT under the wagon -- it catches an AXLE -- the rope uncoils then GOES TAUT, FLIPPING THE WAGON OVER.

McGivens goes FLYING; so does the lock box, which lands in Zorro's hands. He grabs a nearby rope and swings onto A VIADUCT UNDER REPAIR. Zorro lands perfectly on MULTI-LAYERED SCAFFOLDING. Just as he finds his feet, McGivens' posse converges around him and...

A FIGHT ON THE SCAFFOLDING ENSUES, Zorro attacking and defending, dodging bullets, slashing the ropes binding the scaffolding together -- and it COLLAPSES, sending the posse down into the water below.

As Zorro whirls, McGivens' FIST knocks him back. The box skids away. The men exchange deadly blows on what remains of the scaffolding, tumbling together from landing to landing -- McGivens plunges a KNIFE but Zorro grabs his wrist:

MCGIVENS

Only the Devil hides his face from
God!

Teeth clenched, Zorro struggles as McGivens presses the blade CLOSER TO THE STRAP SECURING HIS MASK, threatening to expose Alejandro's identity... AND FINALLY HE CUTS IT!

But just as the mask FALLS OFF, Zorro SLAMS McGivens in the gut -- he CRASHES back onto one end of the plank.

Zorro reaches for his mask but IT FLUTTERS AWAY! As McGivens rises, Zorro leaps -- the other end of the plank SNAPS UP like a see-saw, SLAMMING RIGHT INTO MCGIVENS' FACE AND --

HIS TEETH SPRAY INTO THE AIR AS HE FLIES OFF THE SCAFFOLD!

The bloody teeth land at Zorro's feet. He tears a shred of black cloth from his sleeve, then draws his dagger and SLICES EYEHOLEs. Scooping the box under his arm, he SWINGS back to Tornado, landing perfectly in the saddle:

ZORRO

Over the hill to the governor's
mansion!

(the horse doesn't move)

I said, over the hill to the
governor's mansion!

Nothing. Zorro sighs, and repeats -- this time, in Spanish:

ZORRO

Sobre la colina a la mansión del
gobernador.

(and as Tornado PLUNGES
forward:)

We have to work on your English --

As they clear frame, we RACK FOCUS to reveal... THE DARK-SUITED MEN. Watching from the brush.

6 EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - SAN MATEO - DAY

6

A CROWD waits anxiously at the gates. A MURMUR grows: they see their hero approaching...

THE CROWD
ZORRO! MIRA, EL ZORRO!

Zorro rides through the gates. Waiting on the front steps is CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR BENNET RILEY, his AIDE beside him. Seeing Zorro, Riley's stunned, and cautious:

GOVERNOR RILEY
Where are my men?

ZORRO
They were held up, Governor. I offered my help.

Dismounting, he hands the lock box to the governor, who opens it and quickly sifts through the tally certificates. Each bears the same verdict. And so, Riley announces:

GOVERNOR RILEY
Citizens of San Mateo, we are no longer simply Californians... we are now Americans!

The crowd ERUPTS. Sombreros FLY. A great celebration is taking place. The governor offers a hand to Zorro:

GOVERNOR RILEY (CONT'D)
The people owe you their freedom.

ZORRO
I accept no debts from the people, Governor... I'm one of them.

And in a grand gesture, Zorro draws his sword and REARS UP ON TORNADO! Cape billowing -- an icon -- as the CHEERING SWELLS. Finally, Zorro gallops off. And in an instant, he has disappeared...

7 EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT - DUSK

7

An epic vista of the west: the De La Vega hacienda, surrounded by beautiful countryside. In the distance, we see San Francisco and the sea...

8

EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - DUSK

8

Zorro guides Tornado through a shallow pond, past the sparse silhouette of a HUGE TREE....

9

INT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - SECRET CAVE - NIGHT

9

In the privacy of his lair, Alejandro removes his mask and closes Tornado in a stall, feeding him a sugar cube. As he turns to go, Tornado WHINNIES for more...

ALEJANDRO

Eh, eh -- your saddle's getting a little tight, Amigo.

He gives Tornado a carrot and walks away. A beat, then the carrot SAILS past Alejandro's head.

In the doorway, a WOMAN appears in silhouette. And we can tell just by the contours of her face, she may in fact be the most beautiful one in the world...

ELENA DE LA VEGA steps into the LIGHT. They look at each other a long moment... and they KISS, and it's a passionate, hungry one that tells us how desperately in love they are. Finally, she pulls back...

ELENA

Tell me we won... tell me we're free.

ALEJANDRO

... We're free.

She wraps her arms around him, wanting to laugh as much as she needs to cry. After a beat...

ALEJANDRO

Where's Joaquin?

ELENA

He wasn't feeling well this morning, he's been asleep all day.

10

INT. HACIENDA - BEDROOM/ HALLWAY - NIGHT

10

Under the sheets is the sleeping form of a child. A window swings open -- a YOUNG BOY appears, climbing a tree and tumbling into the room.

We realize, he's the same 10 year-old kid from the square:
JOAQUIN DE LA VEGA, son to Alejandro and Elena...

As Joaquin finds his feet, he hears his PARENTS' FOOTSTEPS outside the door. Racing to the bed, he hurls back the sheets to reveal the 'sleeping form' is a stack of pillows. Jumping in, he pulls up the covers as the doorknob turns...

Elena and Alejandro enter quietly. Joaquin's the portrait of angelic innocence: eyes closed, a little bead of sweat on his brow. Alejandro gently brushes it away...

ALEJANDRO

His fever's breaking.

Elena moves to close the window. Stops, confused...

ELENA

I thought I closed this.

Alert, Joaquin begins to MOAN, drawing her attention away...

JOAQUIN

... Mama? Is that you?

ELENA

(leans in, kisses him)
Shh, go back to sleep, Mi Amor.

ALEJANDRO

We'll leave the light on, eh?

JOAQUIN

I'm too old for that.

Alejandro grins and turns down the kerosene lamp, the flame low. Kissing his son, he heads out with Elena. His parents gone, Joaquin turns the lamp back up -- he's still afraid of the dark after all. And with a sneaky little grin, he settles in to sleep.

11 EXT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE JOAQUIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

11

In the hallway, Elena smiles a sexy smile, whispers, close...

ELENA

We'll have to be quiet.

And now Alejandro's smiling too, because he knows what she's getting at. A sweet, hot moment...

ALEJANDRO

... Oh, bless the silence.

MOVING over articles of clothing left scattered in the heat of passion, we find Elena and Alejandro curled under a blanket by the fireplace. She reaches over, pours from a bottle of tequila -- two shots.

ALEJANDRO

To statehood.

ELENA

... To us.

(they clink, then)

I wish I could have been there.

ALEJANDRO

... You were.

He's lost in her. They sling back their shots, she nuzzles into his chest. A warm moment...

ELENA

For ten years we've been dreaming of a day when the law would protect the people.

(beat)

We can finally take Joaquin on a trip to Spain. I can't imagine how it's changed since I left...

ALEJANDRO

(pause)

Elena... I've been thinking.

ELENA

(good natured)

Never a good sign.

ALEJANDRO

I'd love us to go, but it may be some time before the new laws are in place...

ELENA

... What are you saying?

ALEJANDRO

Only that the Federal Marshals may need help getting things under control...

She sits up, alert --

ELENA

Alejandro, we agreed when
California became a state you'd
give it up --

ALEJANDRO

And I will, no doubt about it,
soon, very soon --

ELENA

You've been saying that since
Joaquin was born --

ALEJANDRO

(gestures, with his hands)
Yes, but look: here's me... here's
quitting -- we're this far apart --

ELENA

Is that right? Well here's you...
and here's me strangling you!
Joaquin's on the verge of becoming
a man and you're missing it!

ALEJANDRO

I'm not missing anything!

ELENA

Oh, really? What's his teacher's
name?

ALEJANDRO

That's easy, Mr. --
(she shakes her head:
wrong)
Brother --
(again: wrong)
Father! Father Kin...
(muffled)
... jin... hooper...

She's glaring at him, her point made.

ALEJANDRO

Okay, so I have a bad memory,
what's that prove?

ELENA

What instrument has he been
learning?

ALEJANDRO

... The piano.
 (she shakes her head:
 wrong)
 Guitar!
 (again: wrong)
 The triangle?

ELENA

He doesn't play an instrument!

ALEJANDRO

(caught, angry)
 Are you saying I'm a bad father?!

ELENA

I'm saying you can only be great at one thing, Alejandro: wearing the mask, or raising our son... you can't do both.

ALEJANDRO

So you'd let Joaquin go on believing I'm nothing more than a wealthy Don who only cares about ordering servants around?!

ELENA

Is that what you think I do all day?! Order servants around?!

ALEJANDRO

Now you're putting words in my mouth --

ELENA

That's your foot you're tasting!
 You promised me this would end!

ALEJANDRO

And I promised your father Zorro would never abandon the people!

ELENA

My father died because he wore that mask!

In the distance, the CHURCH BELL RINGS to summon Zorro. A 'perfect timing' moment if there ever was one. Finally...

ALEJANDRO

It's who I am, Elena.

ELENA

If you walk out that door take a change of clothes, because you won't be sleeping here tonight.

ALEJANDRO

... What happened to the woman who fought by my side?

ELENA

I'm fighting now, for my family.

And she's right. The bell RINGS AGAIN. A terrible moment. He's desperately torn. Finally...

ALEJANDRO

I'll make it up to you, I promise.

And he leaves her there, her heart sinking, off which --

13 EXT. HILLS ABOVE THE DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - NIGHT 13

Zorro and Tornado WHIP through frame, galloping off toward the ringing bell. Zorro pulls up at the top of the hill, framed, turns back... loneliness on his face.

14 INT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - PARLOR - NIGHT 14

Elena stands at the open window, watching her husband's silhouette on the distant hill... after a beat, horse and rider GALLOP OFF. Sadly, Elena closes the window...

15 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREETS - TELEGRAPH HILL - DAY 15

A town on the brink of change: the gold rush is on, the days of the Old West are giving way to cobblestone streets and telegraph wire.

In the crowd, we find ELENA AND JOAQUIN as she walks him to school. He's looking moody, glum. She's still carrying last night's fight and its lack of resolution, but tries to hide it. As they pass a hotel, she offers...

ELENA

I spy, with my little eye, something beginning with... 'H'.

JOAQUIN

Why wasn't Papi at breakfast?

A child's intuition; he stares accusingly. She covers --

ELENA

I told you, he left early on
business.

JOAQUIN

He's always away on business.

ELENA

(beat, sadly)
... I know.
(forcing a smile)
But he always comes back.

By now, they've arrived at school and the bell is RINGING -- he turns, heading up the steps with the other kids. Elena's suddenly filled with longing...

ELENA

Joaquin...
(with love and worry)
Behave yourself, Mi Amor.

We see him struggle to find his words, then finally...

JOAQUIN

Hotel. Starts with the letter 'H.'

And he disappears into the school. Elena walks on, feeling an uncertain future...

Then she catches a reflection in a store window: TWO MEN ARE FOLLOWING HER. We RECOGNIZE THEM as the dark-suited strangers from the opening. Elena doesn't turn. Keeps walking, heart pounding. Veers into an alley. The men do too... but Elena's gone. They stop, confused.

Suddenly: she swings from an alcove behind them -- HER FIST FLIES INTO THE FIRST MAN'S FACE, he tumbles back as she SNAPS OFF A FLAGPOLE bearing the California state flag, uses it to defend herself against the second man...

The fast-paced fight continues as we BOOM UP AND OVER THEM, for a moment giving us a dramatic point of view on Elena and her fighting skills. Finally she sends him plummeting backward, SPINS to finish off the first man but finds herself staring INTO THE BARREL OF HIS PISTOL --

FIRST MAN

Normally one signals surrender by waving the flag. In your case, dropping it'll do.

She does. The man lowers his gun. We'll call him HARRIGAN. He's heavier than his slimmer partner, PIKE -- they're otherwise identical.

ELENA
... Who are you?

PIKE
The relevant question, Señora De La Vega, is who are YOU?

HARRIGAN
You have a unique family history --

PIKE
Take your step-father, for example, Don Raphael Montero -- a seditious aristocrat who nearly destroyed California.

HARRIGAN
Quite unlike your real father, Don Diego De La Vega -- a man of principle.

PIKE
And in a twist worthy of Shakespeare, they killed each other in a duel for your affection.

HARRIGAN
The question is: between your two fathers, whose spirit lives on in your heart?

She doesn't like this, not one bit.

ELENA
What do you want?

PIKE
... Your help.

And off his creepy grin --

16 INT. CALIFORNIA GENTLEMAN'S CLUB - STEAM ROOM - DAY

16

Turkish motif: light beams through a mosaic ceiling onto a steaming tub of DONS playing poker, Alejandro among them. They smoke cigars and toss their cards on a FLOATING TRAY:

DON VERDUGO

I tell you, De La Vega, women say they want one thing but what they really want is everything else.

ALEJANDRO

You don't know Elena...

DON DIAZ

You must show her who wears the pantalones in the family, get in touch with your manhood!

ALEJANDRO

A fine idea, if I want my manhood chopped off with a machete.

DON ROBAU

Think of this as a vacation from the shackles of matrimony...

ALEJANDRO

Isn't it possible our wives married us because they WANT to spend time with us?

The Dons all LAUGH --

DON VERDUGO

My wife hates me.

DON ROBAU

Mine too.

DON DIAZ

Mine's a life-sucking beast who lives only to humiliate me.

ALEJANDRO

So let me understand this... if I take your advice and do nothing, I can look forward to spending my days pruning in a tub of naked men?

The men stare at him, collectively smiling. Alejandro throws his cards on the tray and gets out of the tub --

ALEJANDRO

Thanks for the advice.

DON VERDUGO

Where are you going?

ALEJANDRO
To beg Elena's forgiveness.

Wrapping a towel around his waist, he turns and bumps into a MAN. Pinstripe suit, spectacles. His thick glasses are STEAMED UP. He wipes them off, squints --

MAN
Goodness me... might one of you be Don Alejandro De La Vega?

ALEJANDRO
... Yes?

MAN
I'm here on behalf of your wife.
(hands him an ENVELOPE)
Phineas Gendler, Attorney At Law.
If you should have any questions,
my address is on the letterhead.
Good day, Sir.

He goes. Alejandro opens the envelope. Pulls out a piece of paper. As he reads, his jaw drops in total disbelief. Confused, furious, he marches off, HURLING the paper away...

It lands in the water. The Dons lean in, then share a grave look. We PUSH IN on the letterhead: "ISSUANCE OF PROCEEDINGS FOR DIVORCE" And as the ink begins to BLUR...

CUT TO BLACK. In the darkness, these words appear:

THREE MONTHS LATER

17 INT. EDINBURGH MISSION INN - ALEJANDRO'S ROOM - DAY 17

A SUNBEAM streams through closed curtains, shining down on ALEJANDRO'S UNSHAVEN FACE. He's asleep, dead to the world. This little room has been his life for the last three months.

He stirs, squints against the light. A KNOCK at the door...

WOMAN'S VOICE
Señor De La Vega? ... Housekeeping.

No response. A lock rattles. The door opens and a chambermaid enters: LUPE. She flings open the CURTAINS.

LUPE
I'm sorry, Señor, but you told me to make sure you didn't sleep past two today.

ALEJANDRO
... What is today?

LUPE
Wednesday.

ALEJANDRO
(brightening)
Of course, I have to pick up
Joaquin -- Gracias, Lupe.

He hops out of bed. He's stark naked. Lupe glances away demurely; she has a crush on him. Alejandro grabs the first thing he can to cover his privates -- a candlestick. A long, tall candlestick. Which doesn't help.

ALEJANDRO
Eh... what happened to my clothes?

LUPE
I removed them last night, so you
wouldn't catch pneumonia.

ALEJANDRO
You removed them?

LUPE
After you returned from the
cantina, you... went for a swim.

ALEJANDRO
... In my clothes...?

LUPE
-- Si, Señor --

ALEJANDRO
But this hotel doesn't have a pool.

LUPE
We have a fountain.

ALEJANDRO
... I see. Thank you, Lupe.
Perhaps you could turn around?

VOICE (O.S.)
... We are ALL naked before God.

Fray Felipe has appeared at the door, eyes focused on Lupe:

FRAY FELIPE
I'll see you at confession, child.

She exits looking guilty. Alejandro starts dressing...

ALEJANDRO

Don't look at me like that, I know what you're gonna say --

FRAY FELIPE

I'm here to lift your spirits, not dampen them.

ALEJANDRO

Who says my spirits need lifting? I finally have my freedom! Look out that window, Felipe -- Federal Marshals are keeping the people safe, while Zorro hasn't had to lift a finger in three months.

FRAY FELIPE

Oh, is that it? For a moment I was worried you were beating yourself up for letting the most perfect woman in the world walk out of your life.

ALEJANDRO

(snapping around)

ELENA KICKED ME OUT! She threw away ten years of marriage without so much as an explanation -- and now she refuses to see me?! Well so be it! I was born a bachelor, I'm prepared to die that way!

FRAY FELIPE

Alright, enough -- when I leave here, Alejandro, you're gonna shave, you're gonna shower, you're gonna use soap, and you're gonna put on some clean clothes because a new vineyard's opening tonight and you're coming as my escort to the party.

ALEJANDRO

My whole life's a party -- thank you, no.

FRAY FELIPE

You are getting out among the living, Chico, or don't bother coming to confession because you'll never have my forgiveness.

ALEJANDRO
... You'd blackmail my soul?

FRAY FELIPE
Hell, yes. Eight o'clock. Be ready.

And with that, he goes. Off Alejandro --

18 INT. ALVARADO ACADEMY FOR CHILDREN - CLASSROOM - DAY 18

A HAND, a piece of CHALK are writing a single word on the blackboard: "S-T-A-T-E-H-O-O-D." The hand belongs to FATHER QUINTERO, a strict-looking teacher. He turns to his class:

FATHER QUINTERO
Who would like to tell me what this word means?
(as hands go up)
Miriam?

MIRIAM
It means we're part of a bigger country now.

FATHER QUINTERO
Very good. Raul?

RAUL
We get to learn The Declaration of Independence?

Father Quintero nods, then notices someone at the back of the class who isn't paying attention --

FATHER QUINTERO
Joaquin?
(nothing)
Joaquin De La Vega. Perhaps you could tell the class what statehood means to you?

Joaquin looks up.

JOAQUIN
The exploitation of the workers by the rich who oppress us with the flaming poker of injustice!

FATHER QUINTERO
... And how exactly does a flaming poker fit into your little theory?

JOAQUIN
It fits... in your butt?

The kids BURST INTO LAUGHTER. Quintero's enraged --

FATHER QUINTERO
Why you INSOLENT little--

Quintero storms over wielding a stick but Joaquin's FASTER -- grabbing a ruler from the board, he deflects the blows, LEAPING from desktop to desktop -- this is starting to look a lot like a sword fight...

Quintero tries to grab him but Joaquin JUMPS, catching onto a hanging LIGHT FIXTURE -- he SWINGS across the classroom, kicks open a WINDOW and climbs out onto...

19 EXT. ALVARADO ACADEMY FOR CHILDREN - CONTINUOUS 19

The ledge. WE'RE TWO STORIES UP. From the classroom, EVERY STUDENT IS PRESSED AGAINST THE GLASS HOLLERING FOR JOAQUIN -- and that's all he needs, HE JUMPS OFF THE LEDGE, grabs a CALIFORNIA FLAG whipping from a FLAGPOLE -- spirals down the pole, landing perfectly back on earth.

And he turns, coming face-to-face with his FATHER, who stares down with a Groucho eyebrow raised...

JOAQUIN
(oh, shit)
Papi?

ALEJANDRO
(low growl)
Joaquin...

20 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREETS - DAY 20

PEACE OFFICERS roam the streets, keeping people safe. Alejandro walks a few paces ahead of Joaquin, fuming, trying to control his anger, but he can't --

ALEJANDRO
What's with you, eh? Why do you keep getting into trouble?

JOAQUIN
It's a gift.

ALEJANDRO

Listen, smart mouth, you're lucky
Father Quintero didn't suspend you.

JOAQUIN

Yeah, lucky me.

ALEJANDRO

What's the matter with you? You
have everything a boy could want,
and still you act like the world
owes you something.

JOAQUIN

I never asked for everything, okay?
I'm not a Fortunatus Tyrannus like
you.

ALEJANDRO

-- a what?!

JOAQUIN

It's Latin, I learned it in school
-- it means I don't wanna grow up
to be a rich Don, okay?

ALEJANDRO

Hey, I'm your father, don't you
talk to me like that. And stop
using words I don't understand.

JOAQUIN

If you're my father how come you're
never around? That's why mom left
you, all you care about is
business!

That strikes Alejandro at his core. A pained moment.

ALEJANDRO

There's nothing on this earth I
wouldn't do for you or your mother,
Joaquin. Nothing.

CORTEZ (O.S.)

Don De La Vega!

Alejandro turns to find GUILLERMO CORTEZ, the revolutionary
we met in our opening, and his wife, BLANCA. From the back
of a wagon that serves as their stall, a SIGN advertises GOLD
MINING EQUIPMENT (shovels, pikes, lanterns):

ALEJANDRO
Guillermo, Blanca... how's
business?

CORTEZ
Never better. We'll be able to pay
you back sooner than we thought.

ALEJANDRO
I told you, Compadre, it was a
gift. To celebrate your marriage.

BLANCA
Dios mio, Joaquin, you're getting
so big --

Joaquin shrugs, half-smiles. Cortez notices a CUSTOMER, back
turned, using one of the KNIVES on the display table to CARVE
something we can't see...

CORTEZ
Uh, Señor, that knife is only two
dollars.

As the man turns, we see he's sharpening a pair of WOODEN
TEETH. He POPS them into his mouth -- it's JACOB MCGIVENS.

MCGIVENS
Tell you what: give ya five
hundred. For that I'll take this
here blade... and the deed to your
rancho.

BLANCA
(fierce, hating him)
We already gave you our answer!

CORTEZ
Tell whatever scum you're working
for now that we're protected by The
Constitution!

McGivens spins the knife, STABBING it into the table:

MCGIVENS
... God fearin' family man like
you? Might wanna re-order his
priorities.

ALEJANDRO
He said, he's not selling.

MCGIVENS

... We met before, fella?

ALEJANDRO

I'd remember a man with wooden teeth.

MCGIVENS

... You think you're bad medicine, huh? A Mex-breed like you?

Alejandro wants to destroy this man, but knows he has to set an example for Joaquin. McGivens sees the look...

MCGIVENS

Think your pappy's gonna crow, Little Man? Or's he gonna cluck?

ALEJANDRO

Leave him out of thi--

McGivens abruptly SLAPS Alejandro's face. HARD. Joaquin lurches forward to defend his father but Alejandro holds him at bay. Jaw clenched with suppressed rage, Alejandro's fighting every instinct in his bones not to fight back:

ALEJANDRO

Señor... as a gentlemen I'm obliged to teach my son to turn the other chee--

McGivens SLAPS Alejandro's other cheek --

MCGIVENS

Y'mean that cheek?

And that's it, Alejandro moves forward to fight --

CONSTABLE (O.S.)

Everything all right, Boys?

A CONSTABLE has appeared. Alejandro, eyes burning, backs away; McGivens tips his hat...

MCGIVENS

Respects to you, Officer... respects, respects.

The constable strolls on. McGivens climbs onto his horse, saying to Cortez:

MCGIVENS

Think about my offer now. Think hard.

And he pivots the horse, its butt KNOCKING over the table. Tools go crashing. As McGivens disappears, Joaquin glares up at his father in a shameful rage. And off that look...

21 EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - FRONT COURTYARD - DAY 21

A Hansom Cab comes to a stop by the front gate. In the coach, Alejandro watches Joaquin gather his things.

ALEJANDRO

I'll pick you up again tomorrow, okay?

JOAQUIN

(muttering)
-- bye --

ALEJANDRO

... Joaquin?
(the best smile he can muster)
Keep your chin up, eh?

But Joaquin goes without answering. Alejandro's heart sinks. Then, Sensing something, his look tracks up to the veranda:

ELENA has been watching him, her eyes filled with longing. Caught, she turns sharply and heads inside. Alejandro aches for her. Finally, he nods to his driver and the carriage plunges away... the music of a DANCE ORCHESTRA bridges us to:

22 EXT. THE VINEYARD/ HACIENDA - NIGHT 22

A sprawling hacienda ringed by an extraordinary vineyard. In the front gardens, a lavish party is underway. Two flags hang side-by-side: the American flag and the French tri-color. In the crowd of well-attired people we find Alejandro and Felipe walking along...

FRAY FELIPE

See? A little spit, a little polish -- you don't look like a stray Chihuahua anymore.

ALEJANDRO

Ten minutes, then I'm going.

FRAY FELIPE

Listen, this party's the only
reason I'm not at confession
forgiving horny widows for trying
to make it with the gardener -- you
will not ruin my night off,
comprende?

Felipe scoops a glass of wine from a tray, savoring the
scent. Alejandro begins picking through a table of canapes.

FRAY FELIPE

(sips)

Ahh... effervescent, yet tenacious.

ALEJANDRO

(rolling his eyes)

Who owns this vineyard anyway?

FRAY FELIPE

I'm told he's a count, recently in
from France. He's asked me to
bless the wine.

ALEJANDRO

A Frenchman, you say? I expect
he's still in his parlor putting on
makeup.

PARTY GUEST (O.S.)

... Or his perfume, perhaps.

Another GUEST is admiring the table. Alejandro grins:

ALEJANDRO

Rumor has it the French invented it
to avoid bathing.

PARTY GUEST

(as they LAUGH together)

And you are?

ALEJANDRO

De La Vega. Alejandro De La Vega.

PARTY GUEST

You're De La Vega? What an honor,
I've heard so much about you.

ALEJANDRO

Really? From whom?

PARTY GUEST

You know, I'd love to continue this conversation, but I'm wanted elsewhere. Please, excuse me --

The man moves off. Alejandro turns back to Felipe --

ALEJANDRO

I just met a most charming fellow.

FRAY FELIPE

And who might that be?

CLINK, CLINK CLINK: their HOST is tapping a glass from a small STAGE in the courtyard. Alejandro's face falls: it's he same man he was just talking to at the buffet table.
COUNT ARMAND COMPTE DE LA FERRE: dashing, cordial -- in a word, perfect. Behind him, his SERVANT stands guard: FERROQ.

ARMAND

Welcome Friends, Californians, Americans... you may be guests in my home tonight, but I am your guest in this great country. For five hundred years, Europe has been the cultural and economic center of the world, but with the admittance of California into the union, America stands to become the next great superpower. This vineyard represents my hope that our two continents will rise to meet the future together: vines from my homeland in France, taking root in your fertile soil -- a state blessed with limitless beauty... but none more stunning than my escort for the evening: Señora Elena De La Vega.

And Alejandro's blood drains from his body as... in slow motion, ELENA ascends the stage to meet Armand. He gently KISSES HER. A FIREWORKS DISPLAY behind them IGNITES, becoming a red, white, and blue SPARKLING AMERICAN FLAG.

Alejandro looks like a man who's just been given a death sentence. Felipe quickly interjects:

FRAY FELIPE

Well, I'm pooped. Time to go.

ALEJANDRO
 ... Go? Why would we go? I'm
 having so much FUN.

He GUZZLES his wine, stalking forward as Elena and Armand
 begin shaking hands with guests... her smile pans from one to
 the next, THEN STOPS ABRUPTLY AND WITH TOTAL SHOCK ON:

ELENA
 Alejandro!

ALEJANDRO
 (seething smile)
 Elena...

ARMAND
 (a touch of concern)
 ... Elena?

ELENA
 (caught)
 Armand...

ARMAND
 (nods)
 De La Vega.

ALEJANDRO
 (nods)
 Count.

ELENA
 (REALLY confused)
 You know each other?!

ARMAND
 We shared a giggle at the buffet
 table.

ALEJANDRO
 It seems that's not all we've
 shared.

ARMAND
 Allow me to diffuse an awkward
 situation -- Elena's portrayed you
 as a man of impeccable character.

ALEJANDRO
 I'm honored to be mentioned at all.
 Why, I nearly forgot we were still
 married only three months ago.

Felipe urgently tries to pull Alejandro off:

FRAY FELIPE

A blessing on your vineyard, Count,
thanks so much for having us--

ALEJANDRO

(yanks away)

Don't be rude, Felipe, I'm just
dying to know how the lovebirds
met.

Just then, GOVERNOR RILEY -- we remember him from the opening
-- approaches with a SOUTHERN COLONEL. During what follows,
Alejandro will be steadily guzzling wine from passing trays --

ARMAND

Ah, Governor Riley, you honor me
with your presence.

GOVERNOR RILEY

Thanks to you, Count, this vineyard
may become a growth industry for
California.

ARMAND

(nods, then)

May I introduce Colonel R.S.
Beauregard, of the First Alabama
Infantry.

ELENA

And what brings you to California,
Colonel?

COLONEL BEAUREGARD

Diplomacy, My Dear -- rumblings of
secession could lead to war between
the North and South. The governor
was just assuring me California's
committed to avoiding such a
catastrophe.

ALEJANDRO

Forgive me, Colonel, I may not be a
learned politician, but perhaps one
way to avoid war would be to, oh I
dunno... free the slaves?

The colonel GLARES at Alejandro. Elena quickly tries to
change the subject --

ELENA

Darling, you know how boring I find politics...

Alejandro blanches -- Elena, not interested in politics?

ARMAND

I believe Don Alejandro has a point, Cherie. However, I salute your effort to avoid war, Colonel.

GOVERNOR RILEY

(to Beauregard)

As do I. In fact, you're invited to be my guest at our flag-raising ceremony next week, so you can see firsthand the peaceable spirit of our citizens.

The colonel nods his thanks as MUSIC BEGINS and couples start forming for a LINE DANCE. Seizing the opportunity, Elena grabs Armand's hand:

ELENA

Shall we, Darling?

ARMAND

Excuse us, Gentlemen.

And they're off. Alejandro watches them go, slugging more wine, reeling...

FRAY FELIPE

Perhaps you shouldn't drink so much on an empty stomach.

ALEJANDRO

Perhaps you should wear lipstick if you want to act like my mother.

So saying, he grabs Felipe and drags him from frame --

FRAY FELIPE

Alejandro, wai--

ON THE DANCE FLOOR: all the partners face each other in parallel lines. Elena swings into Armand's arms, wearing her best smile. It isn't easy. He sees that --

ARMAND

Say the word and I'll escort you home.

ELENA

And leave your guests?

ARMAND

In a heartbeat. I care for you too much to subject you to an evening of forced smiles, Elena.

She smiles appreciatively. They spin, Elena shifting to her next partner in line -- IT'S ALEJANDRO. He pulls her close:

ALEJANDRO

Won't your boyfriend be jealous?

Armand's swept into the arms of a BOUFFANTED WOMAN who presses him toward her enormous cleavage. He strains to keep on eye on Elena during:

ELENA

I didn't want you to find out like this.

ALEJANDRO

Ah, so that's why you refused to see me these last few months, you were sparing my feelings --

ELENA

You're drunk --

ALEJANDRO

You're the one not acting like yourself. Since when do politics bore you?

Like musical chairs, they shift partners again: Elena returns to Armand --

ARMAND

If you wish, I'll have him escorted out.

ELENA

I can handle him.

Alejandro and Felipe dance side-by-side, facing their respective partners --

FRAY FELIPE

For the love of God, let's get out of this place --

ALEJANDRO
I can handle her.

The line shifts again, Elena returning to Alejandro --

ALEJANDRO
You must tell me how you met.

ELENA
Years ago, in Spain. We went to finishing school together.

ALEJANDRO
How nice you were reunited, so he could... finish.

ELENA
Don't force me to embarrass you.

ALEJANDRO
Sorry, too late.

Again they switch; this time, Alejandro and Armand end up side-by-side --

ALEJANDRO
Tell me, Count, where does your title rank among noblemen? Is it higher than, say, a duke?

ARMAND
It's rather common, actually -- much like a Don.

Shift again: Armand returns to Bouffant Lady; Alejandro to Elena --

ALEJANDRO
He's a delight. Rich, good looking, and royalty.

ELENA
Is there anything I can say that would make you leave?

ALEJANDRO
You could fall to your knees and beg me to take you back.

ELENA
I wouldn't want to ruin my dress.

ALEJANDRO

It's just as well, I'm enjoying
single life.

ELENA

Is that supposed to make me
jealous?

ALEJANDRO

Does it?

ELENA

(jealously)
Never.

ALEJANDRO

Good, so tell me -- who's been
looking after Joaquin while his
mother spends her nights out?

ELENA

I don't spend my nights out.
(composing herself)
And I haven't told Joaquin. Now I
think you should go.

She starts to break away, but he spins her back to him --

ALEJANDRO

I finally understand why you
left me, Elena --
-- you finally found a man
who's happy to stay at home
ordering servants around --
-- your step-father would've
been so proud to see you take
your rightful place: on the
arm of royalty. Well
congratulations, your
highness--

ELENA

-- let go --
-- Now I KNOW you're drunk --
-- Keep your voice down --

AND ELENA SLAPS HIM HARD. The entire party has gone SILENT.
Everyone's staring. Finally, Elena says, voice full of hurt:

ELENA

If you don't know me better than
that... then you never knew me at
all.

Now he looks ashamed. And regretful from his heart. Armand,
mercifully, signals to the orchestra and MUSIC begins playing
again. Alejandro bows to him in deference:

ALEJANDRO

Thank you for your hospitality,
Count.

His eyes fall to Elena, all he wants is to take back what he said. But he goes. A beat, then Elena turns to Armand...

ELENA

I should explain --

ARMAND

(delicately)

Please don't. If I lost you, I
wouldn't be able to control myself
either.

Elena smiles her appreciation but fights to maintain
composure -- burdened, perhaps, by more than she can let on.

23

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

23

ALEJANDRO'S FACE, drunk, eyes closed. At first we think he's
lying on cobblestones, but as we TILT AROUND we reveal he's
SITTING UPRIGHT on Tornado, they're BOTH leaning against an
alley wall, and what's more -- they're BOTH DRUNK. Alejandro
drops a BOTTLE OF TEQUILA, it clinks to the ground, Tornado
licking booze as it flows onto the cobblestone --

ALEJANDRO

... Hey, haven't you had enough?
(drunken wobble)
Tell me something, horse to man...
have you ever felt the cold stab of
love's betrayal?

Tornado BURPS. Alejandro RECOILS in disgust, loses his
balance and TUMBLES from the saddle. Tornado TAKES OFF,
disappearing around a corner...

ALEJANDRO

Hey! AREN'T YOU FORGETTING
SOMETHING?! ESTUPIDO!

VOICE (O.S.)

There you are...

The voice startles Alejandro. Fray Felipe has appeared above
him. Sighing, he helps Alejandro to his feet...

ALEJANDRO

Next time you want to lift my
spirits, just shoot me in my sleep!

And now they're walking along -- well, Alejandro's stumbling:

FRAY FELIPE

I didn't know she'd be there,
Alejandro.

ALEJANDRO

How could she choose a man like
that?! 'Count' Armand, with his
fancy wine and that froufrou
accent!

FRAY FELIPE

I'll admit, Elena didn't seem to be
quite herself tonight... but she's
your ex-wife now -- EX, from the
Latin root 'Exeunt,' meaning exit,
meaning goodbye. And if Armand is
a decent man, be happy for her.

ALEJANDRO

If he's a decent man -- if, from
the Latin root 'Iffy,' meaning
questionable!

FRAY FELIPE

You're in no shape to discuss this,
Alejandro --

ALEJANDRO

I'll make her want me back so badly
she'll be weeping with desire!
Nobody leaves my tequila worm
dangling in the wind!

FRAY FELIPE

If you wish to go on embarrassing
yourself, I want no part of it.

And he goes. Alejandro stumbles after him --

ALEJANDRO

I'll have you know I'm perfectly
capable of embarrassing myself...
myself! Hear my vow, Padre:
Alejandro De La Vega always lands
on his fee--

And he TRIPS, lurching from frame. Off which --

24

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - CHINATOWN - MIDNIGHT

24

A CLOCK strikes midnight above the deserted square. Far below, a rickshaw rides past Chinatown storefronts. It stops at a CURIO SHOP. A CLOAKED PASSENGER steps off -- Elena. She knocks: a SHOP MERCHANT appears, eyes boring into her...

MERCHANT

We're closed.

ELENA

I was hoping to buy a gift for my ailing grandmother.

His expression changes, and he opens the door for her to enter...

25

INT. CURIO SHOP - NIGHT

25

The merchant lifts a curtain to reveal a BACK ROOM, wherein we find the TWO MEN Elena fought in the alley: HARRIGAN and PIKE are seated at a table playing Mahjong.

HARRIGAN

I'd offer you my chair, but I assume you'd find it patronizing.

PIKE

How was the party?

HARRIGAN

Tell us about The Count --

PIKE

Who was he talking to?

HARRIGAN

What did he say?

ELENA

He spent most of the night talking to the Senator, and a Southern Colonel... I think his name was Beauregard.

PIKE

(a severe glance to
Harrigan)
Troubling...

HARRIGAN

You have a new assignment: we believe Armand keeps a telegraph receiver somewhere in his hacienda.

PIKE

You do know what a telegraph receiver is?

ELENA

How could I? I'm just a woman.

HARRIGAN

(cocky smile)

I... love... your spirit.

PIKE

The Count's been receiving messages from overseas -- we need to know what they say.

HARRIGAN

You'll steal the carbon ribbon, deliver it to us.

ELENA

(a beat)

And if I refuse?

PIKE

Then we'll have to remind you... you have no choice.

With unnerving calm, Harrigan reaches into his pocket and pulls out... THE MASK OF ZORRO! The one Alejandro lost in the viaduct opening. The cruel threat lands on Elena --

ELENA

I'll send you both to hell for this.

HARRIGAN

... But of course.

PIKE

Until then we'll be waiting for that ribbon. Good evening, Señora.

They go back to their game, ignoring her. Elena, livid, heart heavy, finally turns on her heel. And goes.

26

EXT. ALLEY - NEXT DAY

26

Alejandro is snoring. A TONGUE begins licking his cheek. Stirring, he smiles and mumbles...

ALEJANDRO

Oh, Elena... you feel so soft...

His eyes open:

ALEJANDRO'S POV, FISH-EYE LENS - A PIG is staring down at us, its tongue flicking the lens. Alejandro BOLTS upright --

ALEJANDRO

Bad pig! Shoo!

He looks down realizing he passed out in the gutter, wearing the same clothes from last night. At that very moment, two PEOPLE ride past on horseback. Alejandro catches a glimpse of the riders:

ELENA AND ARMAND. They stop in the marketplace ahead. Determined, dusting himself off, Alejandro follows...

27

EXT. THE MARKETPLACE - CONTINUOUS

27

Armand extends a hand to help Elena dismount --

ELENA

Thank you, Darling.

ARMAND

A perfect day for a stroll in the market.

As she takes his hand, she notices a RING on his finger. The design is odd: A SNAKE COILED AROUND THE GLOBE.

ELENA

What an unusual ring, I hadn't noticed it before...

ARMAND

(a touch evasive)
My family's coat of arms.

Something in his voice she can't quite place. Strolling on, they pass a HOMELESS PEASANT WOMAN under an archway, her hat in front of her. Concerned, Elena drops several coins in...

HOMELESS PEASANT WOMAN
God bless you, Señora.

Elena offers a smile, and as they walk on --

ARMAND
It seems your kindness hasn't
wavered since our days in Spain.

ELENA
Neither has your talent for
flattery, but I'm not a schoolgirl
anymore.

ARMAND
Are you saying I'll have to try
harder to impress you?

ELENA
You can start with dinner tonight.
Say, eight o'clock at your chateau?

ARMAND
Why not your hacienda? I'm anxious
to meet your son.

ELENA
(beat: how to play this?)
... Please try and understand,
Darling. He isn't ready yet for
another man in my life.

As if on cue, ALEJANDRO'S HEAD POPS UP FROM A CART OF MELONS
BEHIND ARMAND. Elena gasps in surprise --

ARMAND
What is it?

He turns. Alejandro's head disappears. To distract Armand,
Elena grabs the first thing she can from a nearby stand: a
flowery eyesore that barely passes for a HAT --

ELENA
Uh, this... hat. Is breathtaking.

ARMAND
Shall I... purchase it for you?

ELENA
On second thought, who needs
another hat? But I could use...

Desperately looking around, she sees a TOBACCONIST CART
across the marketplace and a CUSTOMER there lighting a PIPE --

ELENA
... a pipe!

ARMAND
A pipe?

ELENA
A pipe! Yes, like my father used
to smoke. Tell me I haven't
repulsed you with my un-ladylike
habit.

ARMAND
On the contrary, you fascinate me.

ELENA
Look, there's a vendor --

ARMAND
I thought I might pick up an item
or two anyway. Wait here, won't
you?

He kisses her hand, then goes. Alejandro reappears:

ELENA
What are you doing here?!

ALEJANDRO
Since when did you start smoking a
pipe?!

ELENA
I DON'T SMOKE A PIPE! I said that
to get rid of him so I can get rid
of you!

ALEJANDRO
Forgive me, it's just such a treat
to see you out among the peasants,
I couldn't resist the chance to
stop and say hello!

ELENA
Please tell me that smell isn't
coming from you...

ALEJANDRO

Well, it is! That's what you've reduced me to -- I woke up this morning with a pig, are you happy?

ELENA

Nonono, I don't want hear about your flings --

ALEJANDRO

That's not what I mean, it was a farm animal!

ELENA

-- oh Dear God --

ALEJANDRO

It's not what you think, Elena, we're just friends!

ARMAND (O.S.)

... Elena?

She SPINS. Alejandro disappears. Armand re-approaches:

ELENA

Yes, Darling?

ARMAND

What color?

ELENA

What color what?

ARMAND

What color pipe?

ELENA

(uh...)

... Pink?

ARMAND

A pink pipe. Perfect.

He goes. She whirls. Alejandro reappears --

ALEJANDRO

He's so considerate...

ELENA

Joaquin's about to get out of school -- it's your turn to pick him up! Now go!

ALEJANDRO

First tell me what you're doing
with this guy, Elena. This isn't
like you --

ELENA

How the hell would you know?! We
were apart so often, maybe I
changed!

ALEJANDRO

You didn't --

ELENA

What makes you so sure?

ALEJANDRO

After ten years of marriage, you
think I can't tell when you're
hiding something?

Elena's frustrated: he won't quit. So, winding herself up...

ELENA

Alright. The truth? I fell out of
love with you a long time ago.

(she's dying inside)

We were never meant to be together,
Alejandro. I'm with Armand now.
Do you hear me? Stay out of my
life.

This is the most brutal rejection Alejandro could imagine.

ELENA

(finally, a whisper)
... Goodbye.

Alejandro, heartbroken, watches her disappear into the crowd.

WE FOLLOW ELENA as she ducks into an archway for privacy,
tears now welling in her eyes. The weight of her lie is like
a vice squeezing her heart. After a beat, a WOMAN'S VOICE:

WOMAN'S VOICE

Are you alright, My Child?

Elena turns: it's the peasant woman she gave money to...

ELENA

I'll be fine, thank you.

The woman touches Elena's cheek, and with the kindest smile:

PEASANT WOMAN

Don't be sad. God is watching over you.

The woman goes. Off Elena, buoyed by a flash of hope...

28 EXT. MARKETPLACE - CONTINUOUS

28

Alejandro heads out, at his lowest point. He BUMPS shoulders with someone coming in:

ALEJANDRO

Permisso --

MAN

(head low, grumbling)

Watch it.

As the man leaves, Alejandro realizes: IT'S JACOB MCGIVENS! Alejandro's eyes narrow. Suspicious, he follows...

AT THE TOBACCONIST CART WITH ARMAND: the vendor finishes wrapping a PINK PIPE. Armand looks up, only to meet the eyes of McGivens a few feet away. McGivens gestures and moves off. Collecting the pipe, Armand follows him into...

29 EXT. MARKETPLACE - ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

29

Armand rounds a corner to find McGivens leaning against a wall, using a blade to SHARPEN HIS TEETH.

ARMAND

I received your note. I presume you have what I want?

MCGIVENS

Well now that depends on you...

ARMAND

Make your meaning plain, Mr. McGivens. While you may feel at home here among the sewer rats, I do not.

McGivens pops in his teeth, approaches, a touch of menace...

MCGIVENS

The Lord upholds the righteous, but His coffers are dry. I believe additional funds are imperative.

ARMAND

I have yet to see the final deed I require to complete our agreement.

MCGIVENS

Cortez won't sell.

ARMAND

I need that land to connect the track to the main line, Mr. McGivens -- you assured me your tenure with the railroad gave you experience in such matters.

MCGIVENS

Case you ain't noticed, populating Heaven's become a Federal crime. Risk goes up? So's the price.

ARMAND

Bring the deed to my chateau tonight, and you'll be compensated for your added risk. Now go.

MCGIVENS

(tips his hat, a grin)
Oh, and uh... 'fore you swing into that fancy saddle of yours, might wanna clean off your boots.

As he goes, Armand looks down to realize he's stepped in HORSE SHIT. Cursing, he snaps out a hankie and moves off -- doesn't see A SHADOWED FIGURE under an archway... ALEJANDRO. He steps into the light, eyes burning --

30 INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - DAY

30

The doors BURST open as Alejandro enters urgently -- Felipe, at the altar, spins around:

ALEJANDRO

It's time for confession.

Felipe smiles. Leads Alejandro to the confessionals. The last one's ROPED OFF. A sign reads "UNDER RESTORATION." Felipe pulls the curtain back. Alejandro hesitates --

ALEJANDRO

Joaquin's waiting for me at school.

FRAY FELIPE
I'll bring him home --
(Alejandro's guilt-ridden)
GO --

- 31 INT. CONFESSIONAL - CONTINUOUS 31
- Alejandro enters quickly, closes the curtain behind him, crosses himself, then TRIGGERS A LEVER: the back of the confessional SWINGS OPEN revealing a SECRET CHAMBER. Hanging on the wall is THE ZORRO OUTFIT! The door closes behind Alejandro, leaving no trace of its existence.
- 32 INT. SECRET CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS 32
- From a niche in the cobblestone wall, Alejandro opens a WOODEN BOX revealing A STASH OF THREE BLACK MASKS.
- MUSIC BUILDS over a succession of fast, iconic images: Alejandro turns into view WEARING THE MASK -- the gloves go on -- the cape WHIPS onto shoulders -- the SWORD is sheathed.
- 33 INT. SECRET STABLE - BENEATH THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 33
- TORNADO RACES TOWARD THE LENS, ZORRO SPURRING HIM FROM THE SADDLE. Up ahead, the entrance to a DESERTED ALLEYWAY. It's halfway boarded up by planks. A sign warns trespassers: **DANGER: CONDEMNED!!** ZORRO AND TORNADO LEAP OVER THE TOP PLANK, surging down the alley --
- 34 EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - DAY 34
- Pounding hooves, the black flowing mane and cape: Zorro rides hell-for-leather across the desert, eyes blazing --
- 35 EXT. THE CORTEZ RANCHO - DAY 35
- On the back porch of a small clapboard dwelling, Blanca Cortez washes clothes. She glances across the property to a BARN, sees her husband hard at work inside.
- IN THE BARN: like a blacksmith's forge, where Cortez builds his miners' tools to sell at the market. He hammers away, red hot metal glowing against a hearth. Pausing to wipe his brow, he catches his wife's smile through the barn doors.

Blanca finishes wringing out clothes, moves through the house to pin them to the clothesline out front, but when she opens the door... JAKE MCGIVENS IS RIGHT THERE WITH HIS HORRIBLE GRIN! As he cups her mouth, we go back to:

Cortez, in the forge -- when a voice stops him cold:

MCGIVENS (O.S.)

CORTEZ!!

Cortez races from the barn to find McGivens clutching Blanca, a BOWIE KNIFE to her throat, his posse surrounding them --

MCGIVENS

'And the Lord shall expel them before you, and ye shall possess their land...'

CORTEZ

Please... don't hurt her...

MCGIVENS

Gimme the deed!

McGivens snaps for the deed, eyes gleaming cruelly. Cortez RUNS into the house -- hurls open a chest at the foot, rummages desperately -- where's the deed?! -- finally he finds it, races back outside...

MCGIVENS

Bring it here.

CORTEZ

Let her go...

McGivens HURLS Blanca to the dirt. As Cortez picks her up, McGivens and his posse take aim at the helpless couple --

MCGIVENS

(re: his pistols)
'Salvation'... and 'Damnation'...
got one thing in common. You gotta die to find either one.

ZORRO (V.O.)

How true...

McGivens suddenly feels a SWORD POINT at the back of his neck. He stiffens...

ZORRO

Drop your guns. All of you.

In angry surprise, McGivens nods to his men and they reluctantly throw their guns to the dirt.

ZORRO
(to Cortez and Blanca)
Get in the house.

They race off. Zorro pushes McGivens forward by the sword tip, SNIFFING the air, he winces:

ZORRO
Cleanliness is next to Godliness --

And he knocks McGivens into a WATER TROUGH. Zorro LEAPS over an adobe wall, McGivens SPLASHING and HOWLING at his men to follow -- three of them snatch up their guns and hop over the wall, landing in an ENCLOSURE filled with PIGS AND CHICKENS. The animals scatter, mud flying, Zorro zig-zagging to create a harder target as the men FIRE but they're quickly OUT OF BULLETS -- Zorro draws his sword and ATTACKS as:

McGivens leads three men to the porch of the Cortez house, nods to one to kick the door down. Just before the guy does, a SHOTGUN BLAST rips through it, HURTLING him off the porch. McGivens and his remaining men duck for cover behind the trough, FIRING BACK RUTHLESSLY at the house which...

36

INT. CORTEZ RANCHO - CONTINUOUS

36

... gets chewed up by bullets -- Cortez reloads the shotgun as he propels Blanca toward a HATCH in the floor:

CORTEZ
GET IN!

BLANCA
Don't let them hurt you --

CORTEZ
I won't, I promise --
(kisses her)
-- go --

She lowers herself into the CRAWLSPACE beneath the house -- their eyes hold -- THEN HE LOCKS THE HATCH. Cortez cracks open the barrel of his shotgun and loads two more shells --

37

EXT. ANIMAL ENCLOSURE/ CORN FIELDS - CONTINUOUS

37

The sword battle continues from the animal sty into the CORN FIELDS.

Zorro moves through the rows in a FLASH -- disappearing and reappearing -- using the corn for cover to trick two of the men into STABBING EACH OTHER. One to go. Zorro and the man fight, swords CLASHING...

38 INT. CORTEZ HOUSE - THE CRAWLSPACE - CONTINUOUS 38

Blanca lays belly down in the dirt, eyes wide with fright. She sees a clear path to the barn and crawls out --

39 EXT. CORTEZ RANCHO - CONTINUOUS 39

McGivens, pinned behind the trough, sees her emerge and signals to his men, who chase after her --

WITH ZORRO IN THE CORNFIELD, as he clashes sabres with the last swordsman, he sees Blanca running to the barn, the men in pursuit -- so he KNOCKS the swordsman back and races after Blanca. The swordsman GIVES CHASE --

40 INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS 40

Blanca races into the barn. As she locks the door shut, KABOOM: it explodes as a bullet rips through the lock...

The men RACE IN to find: no Blanca. They separate, one moving to the hearth. Suddenly, from under some hay, Blanca rears up: grabs a POKER from the hearth and RAMS THE RED HOT TIP INTO THE MAN'S CHEST. He SCREAMS, CATCHING FIRE! The hay ignites, within seconds the barn is engulfed in flames!

The other man CHARGES with a sword. Blanca climbs to the HAYLOFT, but he grabs her leg and they both come CRASHING BACK DOWN. The man raises his sword for the kill, when ZORRO'S WHIP coils around his arm and jerks the sword from his grasp -- it goes HURTLING past Zorro into the chest of the CORNFIELD SWORDSMAN, who's followed Zorro into the barn.

And now Zorro takes on the HUGE opponent. They fight using shovels, sledgehammers: all the mining tools in the forge --

41 INT. CORTEZ HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 41

Shotgun spent, Cortez draws back from view, his hands shaking so badly he DROPS THE BOX OF SHELLS. They roll across the floor. He collects them, reloads, then SWINGS OUT to fire again but... the bullets have stopped coming. Odd.

42 INT. BARN/FORGE - CONTINUOUS 42

Zorro and the swordsman battle through the flames -- Zorro sees a PITCHFORK and SCYTHE on the roofbeam, held in place by a ROPE. As the swordsman slashes, Zorro DIVES and the rope is SEVERED -- the sharp tools RAIN DOWN on the swordsman...

BLANCA'S FACE tells us the horror she sees.

43 INT. CORTEZ HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 43

Cortez races to the CRAWLSPACE HATCH and STOPS: the LOCK'S BROKEN and the hatch is open, as if kicked from within...

CORTEZ
... Blanca?!

He's oblivious as a FIGURE AIMING A PISTOL rises up behind him: McGivens!

44 INT. BARN/FORGE - CONTINUOUS 44

Zorro races to Blanca, smoke and flames roiling around them. Looks like there's no escape, until... TORNADO BURSTS THROUGH THE FLAMES, rearing in front of them -- Zorro hurls Blanca onto the saddle, climbs on after her, and --

45 EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS 45

We're in SLOW MOTION as Zorro, holding Blanca in the saddle astride Tornado, CRASHES THROUGH THE FLAMING BARN! As they slow, they see Cortez stumbling from the back porch. Blanca leaps off, smiling -- Cortez takes a few steps forward...

Then CRUMPLES like a rag doll. Blanca SCREAMS and races to him, a POOL OF BLOOD soaks his back... she gently turns him over, his breathing is strained...

CORTEZ
Mi Amor...

She tries desperately to staunch the blood with her hands. No use. Zorro appears behind them, stricken --

CORTEZ
Thank you, Zorro... for keeping
her... safe...

A grateful smile freezes Cortez in the moment of his death. Blanca buries her head in his chest, sobbing uncontrollably. Zorro sees McGivens galloping away down the dirt road, his sorrow turning to rage as the flames RISE HIGHER before him.

46

INT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - DAY

46

Elena opens the front door, surprised to find Fray Felipe standing beside a very sullen Joaquin...

JOAQUIN

Dad didn't show.

He pushes past her, up the stairs, we hear his door SLAM. Elena meets Felipe's eyes, he tries to explain --

FRAY FELIPE

Alejandro had--

ELENA

(interrupts, pissed)
-- business. Of course. Thank you for bringing him home, Padre.

FRAY FELIPE

Elena... you know I've never taken sides between you and Alejandro. I love you both as my dearest friends.

ELENA

(softening)
I know, Padre.

FRAY FELIPE

My confessional is always open. I am bound by God to keep your secrets... should there ever be cause to unburden yourself.

And that tears her heart, because she'd like nothing more. And for a minute, we think she just might... until, softly:

ELENA

Thank you, Felipe.

With a sad smile, Elena closes the door. Leaving Felipe alone, knowing in his heart something's very wrong...

47 EXT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - DAY 47
The mission, to establish...

48 INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - DAY 48
A caped figure drops to his knees before flickering votive candles. ALEJANDRO gazes down, tortured with regret and rage. As he begins to pray, a HAND appears on his shoulder:

FRAY FELIPE
What is it, My Son?

ALEJANDRO
... I'm asking God's forgiveness.
For what I'm about to do.

Felipe now sees Alejandro's hands. They're covered with Cortez's blood. Felipe understands what it means.

ALEJANDRO
I've failed everyone I ever loved --
my wife, my son... and the people
I've sworn to protect.

FRAY FELIPE
You may have been blinded by
jealousy, Alejandro, but it didn't
keep you from seeing the truth...
I believe Elena's in danger.

ALEJANDRO
I won't lose her twice, Felipe... I
swear it on my soul.

As Felipe motions the sign of the cross and begins to recite his forgiveness, we drift to the votive candles and...

MATCH CUT TO:

49 INT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - ELENA'S ROOM - DUSK 49
A burning candle, Felipe's words of forgiveness ECHOING OVER as Elena sits writing, her face wracked with conflicting emotions. We read: **"DINNER AT ARMAND'S TONIGHT. WILL SEARCH FOR TELETYPE RIBBON."** She rolls that into a SMALL SCROLL, then moves out to...

50

EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - VERANDA - DUSK - CONTINUOUS 50

A PIGEON sits in a BIRDCAGE. Elena removes the bird and slips the scroll through a TINY SILVER BAND on its foot. It's a carrier pigeon. Elena regards the bird with sadness...

ELENA

Pajarito mio... we're both living
in a cage.

And she RELEASES the pigeon, fighting the fear of what may come to pass...

51

INT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - KITCHEN - DUSK - CONTINUOUS 51

CLOSE on Joaquin's SLING SHOT, its band pulled back --

JOAQUIN

Prepare to taste the vengeance of
Zorro, you filthy dog --

And he SNAPS the sling shot, a BB knocking over a WATER PITCHER. Just before it hits the floor, a HAND catches it: ELENA, looking uneasy...

ELENA

... What're you doing?

JOAQUIN

(hiding the slingshot
behind his back)

... Nothing. Homework.

They look at each other. Both keeping their secrets. She places the pitcher back on the table, says gently...

ELENA

I... have to go out, but only for a
little while.

JOAQUIN

(defensive)

You're always going out.

ELENA

Sweetheart, I wouldn't, if I didn't
have to.

JOAQUIN

Why do you have to?

ELENA

Because, I... promised a friend.

JOAQUIN

What friend?

He stares suspiciously. She forces a weak smile, and as she begins to spin her lie, we realize who she's talking about:

ELENA

A woman... I met her the other day.
She has... a daughter. Whom she
loves more than anything in the
world.

(eyes glistening)

But this woman's been forced to
keep a secret, and it's breaking
her heart... because a mother
should never have to lie to her
child.

JOAQUIN

(quietly)

... What's her secret?

And she wants so desperately to tell him, but...

ELENA

She told me she would only speak of
it... when the time was right.

(leans in, kisses him)

Gabriella will make you dinner...
and be careful with your slingshot.

She goes. Joaquin stares, sensing his mother's anguish but
unable to identify it -- which only confuses him more.

52

EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - NIGHT

52

Elena's carriage rides through the front gate, passing TWO
DOBERMAN PINSCHERS chained to a tree. They watch her pass
with malevolent eyes. The carriage stops by the door, where
Elena sees Armand and Colonel Beauregard shaking hands. She
puts on a smile as Armand helps her from the carriage --

ARMAND

You arrived just in time, Darling.
The Colonel was about to leave.

ELENA

Not on my account, I hope.

COLONEL BEAUREGARD

Nothing would please me more than the pleasure of your company, My Dear, but I have other pressing matters to tend to.

Armand and Beauregard share a millisecond look -- it should make Elena, and us, suspicious. Beauregard tips his hat --

ARMAND

Goodnight.

ELENA

(as Beauregard leaves)
How kind of you to extend such hospitality to the Colonel.

ARMAND

We share a common interest in the future of America.
(kisses her hand)
You look so beautiful.

And he leads her inside...

53

INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

53

Elena and Armand pass under a Gothic archway. Up ahead, Ferroq exits from an ORNATE DOOR -- Elena sees him slip a TELEGRAM into his shirt. He LOCKS the door, approaches:

FERROQ

Master, a word?

ARMAND

(to Elena)
Please excuse me a moment --

Armand and Ferroq walk off to confer. Elena pretends to check her appearance in a mirror, but discreetly watches them. Armand nods approval about something, then returns --

ARMAND

My apologies, business never ends.

ELENA

The carving on the archway is beautiful... what's through that door?

ARMAND

A private chapel. Piety is a long-standing tradition in my family... I'd show it to you, but dinner's waiting.

They move on, Elena glancing back at the door. Knowing the telegraph must be on the other side...

54

INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

54

Empty plates are cleared. Elena wipes her mouth with a napkin, saying to Armand across the table:

ELENA

That was absolutely delicious.

ARMAND

Yes. And now --

Two servants approach. One hands him a cigar. The other, a severe-looking woman named MARIE, offers Elena an oak box --

ELENA

I'm sorry, Marie, I don't smoke...

Armand pauses, confused, as Marie opens the box revealing the PINK PIPE he bought at the market. Elena quickly covers:

ELENA

... unless it's my pipe. You remembered, how thoughtful.
(slips it in her pocket)
Though I should let my stomach settle first.

ARMAND

Just as well, I've been waiting all night to tell you something.

(beat)

Elena, when I first saw you at the academy, the other boys said you were the most beautiful woman on the Iberian continent. They called you 'La Flor De Andalusia'... and I thought, of everything in the world I might ever know or have, it would never be someone as stunning as you... yet here you are.

(beat)

Darling... there's something I must ask you.

Oh Dear God, he's going to propose. Elena flashes the sweetest smile she's got, which is pretty good --

ELENA

Before you do, answer me one question --

ARMAND

-- of course, whatever your heart desires --

ELENA

-- Where's the bathroom?

He pauses: the bathroom?

ELENA

All your flattery's making me blush, I'd like to powder my cheeks.

ARMAND

... Of course. It's down the hall.

She gives him a smile and goes. Off Armand, a little thrown.

55

INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

55

A door opens slightly and Elena peeks out. Coast clear, she makes her way to THE CHAPEL DOOR. Removes a HAIRPIN. Her beautiful hair falls. Using the pin, Elena begins to PICK THE LOCK. Almost there -- then: A FLOORBOARD CREAKS. Elena SPINS as FERROQ rounds the corner -- she plays relieved:

ELENA

Oh, I'm so glad I ran into you, I'm terribly lost. Would you show me back to the dining room, please?

FERROQ

(beat, suspicious)
This way.

ELENA

Thank you so much. I can see how indispensable you are to Armand.

FERROQ

I am his devoted servant. And would give my life to protect him from any man -- or woman... who seeks to betray him.

And just when we think he has her number, she switches tactics. Stops, leans in, so she barely has to murmur:

ELENA

Perhaps it hasn't occurred to you I may soon be the lady of this house. So start exercising some respect when you talk to me... or I'll have your balls filleted with a side of truffles.

A smile, and she goes. Ferroq watches after her, darkly, then hears someone pulling up outside. He looks out the window to see McGivens arriving on his horse....

56 EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - FRONT COURTYARD - NIGHT 56

McGivens hops off his horse. Ferroq opens the front door and ushers him in. As they go, we find...

ZORRO, in the distance on Tornado, hidden in shadow. He dismounts and creeps onto the grounds. Hunched, he watches through the PARLOR WINDOW where he sees Ferroq tell McGivens to wait. Zorro gets an idea and creeps on --

And suddenly from darkness comes the sound of RUNNING PAWS -- GHOST-LIKE MONSTERS LEAP INTO THE LIGHT: the two Dobermans, their jaws barking death -- they abruptly SNAP BACKWARD, held in place by their chains. Zorro exhales relief, creeping on as the dogs lunge for him --

ZORRO

I'm sure you were cute as puppies --

57 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 57

Elena and Armand, where they left off -- all the while she's trying to figure out another way into the chapel...

ARMAND

Feeling better?

ELENA

Much, thank you.

ARMAND

... You let your hair down.

Elena tenses: will it make him suspicious?

ARMAND

It looks beautiful cascading over
your shoulders.

(then)

Elena, we've known each other for--

Suddenly, Ferroq ENTERS:

FERROQ

-- Sir, you have a visitor.

ARMAND

(exasperated, to Elena)

I apologize. Now it's your turn to
excuse me.

ELENA

Of course.

Ferroq leads Armand out. The instant Elena's alone she's on
her feet -- moving to the rear doorway -- she pushes through:

58 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - OUTSIDE THE CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS 58

Elena races back to the chapel door. Pulls the hairpin.
Fingers moving nimbly -- CLICK: the door opens. She enters.

We HOLD on the empty corridor... a beat later, we SEE ZORRO
appear out the window, climbing a rose trellis to the roof --

59 EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS 59

Zorro leaps off the trellis onto the rooftop. Sees the
CHIMNEY. Moves to it, fast -- climbs in -- what's he doing?

60 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - PRIVATE CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS 60

Darkness. Elena emerges into the light, and we PUSH CLOSE to
her face as she takes in the chapel, awestruck: it isn't a
chapel at all. It's FILLED with priceless works of art,
antiques. A wall is lined with EXOTIC WEAPONS from every
corner of the world. Elena's eyes track to a TAPESTRY. It
bears the same marking we saw on Armand's ring: A SERPENT
COILED AROUND THE GLOBE. Beneath it, the Latin words: "ORBIS
UNUM."

And the music SWELLS as we PUSH IN on Elena, wondering what
the hell Armand's involved in...

61

INT. ARMAND'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS

61

Zorro pops out of the chimney. Goes straight for Armand's desk, searching for some kind of clue. Opens drawers, nothing -- checks the bookshelves, behind paintings, but keeps coming up empty-handed. Then he notices...

A MIRROR on the wall, hanging slightly askew -- hinging outward like a door. Alejandro moves closer, touches the mirror at its corner: it SWINGS OPEN, revealing...

A MAP OF AMERICA. Zorro's eyes play across it: Armand's traced the trajectory of America's rail lines -- most importantly, he's outlined the path of a train track from California's central line, right to his vineyard.

ZORRO

(realizing)

He's building a track to the vineyard...

Suddenly, the sound of the DOOR OPENING -- Armand enters with McGivens -- but Zorro is gone.

ARMAND

I presume you have the deed, since you've deemed it necessary to interrupt my dinner.

MCGIVENS

(pulling out the deed)

Right here, but we had a fly in the ointment -- or should I say, a fox... Zorro.

INTERCUT as we REVEAL Zorro, perched inside the chimney, listening...

ARMAND

(dismissively)

I've heard the name among the locals. He's a peasant who masquerades as a self-appointed folk hero... men like that usually find their way to the guillotine.

MCGIVENS

I ain't takin' no chances. Me and him, we got unfinished business.

ARMAND

Your vendetta can wait -- the track
must be completed on time.

(lights a match)

In two days... the future begins.

And Armand tosses the match into the fireplace. Zorro
glances down as the kindling beneath him begins to BURN --

62 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - PRIVATE CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS 62

Elena searches desperately for the telegraph receiver, but
can't seem to find it --

63 INT. ARMAND'S STUDY - CONTINUOUS 63

MCGIVENS

... What about our renegotiation?

ARMAND

There's one more thing I need you
to do.

IN THE CHIMNEY: Zorro has shimmied up to the open air, smoke
THICKENING around him -- still, he can hear:

ARMAND (O.S.)

I've been informed one of my
shipping vessels is arriving
tomorrow. To avoid the scrutiny of
a customs inspection, it'll anchor
off Cauldron Cove. The cargo must
be brought here safely... I want no
mistakes, is that clear?

Zorro's eyes NARROW hearing that. McGivens growls...

MCGIVENS

Get this straight, you backwards-
ass frog: just cause I'm in your
employ don't mean I abide ya. Soon
as our business is done, you best
be on the first steamer back to
France. Savvy?

IN A LIGHTNING MOVE, ARMAND SLAMS MCGIVENS' FACE DOWN HARD ON
THE TABLE.

ARMAND

If you ever threaten me again, Mr. McGivens -- Jake -- I'll carve my family's coat of arms into your still-beating heart and feed it to my dogs.

He releases McGivens who recoils, stunned by the force of Armand's grip. Armand turns to Ferroq, utterly relaxed:

ARMAND

Retrieve Mr. McGivens' payment from the chapel, would you, Ferroq?

64 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - PRIVATE CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS 64

Moving quickly, Elena spots a drape in the corner covering something. She lifts the canvas, revealing the TELEGRAPH RECEIVER! She tries to pry it open, but it's stuck --

65 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 65

Ferroq is climbing the stairs to the chapel --

66 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - PRIVATE CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS 66

The receiver finally GIVES. Elena removes the CARBON RIBBON. We read: "SHIPMENT ARRIVING AT NOON. CAULDRON COVE." She reaches into her bodice, pulls out a duplicate CARBON RIBBON, replaces it. Quickly puts the telegraph under the drape --

67 INT. HACIENDA - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS 67

Elena exits, moving quickly. Reflected in a MIRROR ahead, she SEES FERROQ approaching far down the adjacent hallway. Startled, she DROPS THE TELEGRAPH RIBBON which UNSPOOLS across the carpet. Frantically, she begins spooling it back up -- comeoncomeon -- her eyes flick to the mirror where FERROQ is nearly rounding the corner, there's no way in hell she's gonna make it -- but when he appears...

ELENA'S GONE!

Curtains BILLOW at the OPEN WINDOW by the rose trellis. Ferroq moves to close it. Stops. Sensing something. Stands there, looking out -- and we PULL OUT THE WINDOW, to find:

68

EXT. LEDGE OUTSIDE STUDY WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

68

ELENA, perched on the rose trellis, literally a foot from him. The carbon ribbon still in tangles in her hands. Finally, Ferrog closes the window. Elena exhales, finishes spooling the ribbon back up, and climbs onto the ledge where she inches along, searching for a way back inside...

69

EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

69

Zorro's soot-covered face emerges from the chimney. He lowers himself off the rooftop, onto the LEDGE...

WIDEN TO REVEAL: Alejandro and Elena are on opposite sides of the Hacienda, moving toward each other on a COLLISION COURSE.

Up ahead is a BALCONY -- simultaneously, ELENA AND ALEJANDRO JUMP. Landing on the balcony at the same time and startling the hell out of each other --

ELENA

ALEJANDRO! FOR GOD'S SAKE,
WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!

-- You have no idea who I
think he is --

-- no you don't, because you
don't think! Now get out of
here before somebody sees
you!

-- See, you can't stop being
Zorro... even when it means
forgetting to pick up your
son!

-- That's your excuse?!
Jealousy?!

(stunned beat)
... what?!

... how do you know this?

ALEJANDRO

ELENA! LISTEN, ARMAND'S NOT
WHO YOU THINK HE IS--

(considering)
... Well I think I know who
you think he is --

-- You're hiding something
from me, Elena, I know it!

-- I would've been there on
time if it weren't for your
boyfriend--

-- No, murder! Guillermo
Cortez is dead!
-- Armand needed his land to
build a railroad--
-- ohno I won't tell you
what I know 'til you tell me
what you know cause if you
wanna know what I know I need
to know why the hell you're
shacking up with an EVIL
COUNT!

ARMAND (O.S.)

Elena?

They turn, hearing Armand's VOICE around the corner. WHIP OVER as he appears in the hallway, sees Elena on the balcony:

ARMAND

... There you are.

WHIP BACK to find her, ALONE, back turned to him. As he approaches, she turns to reveal SHE'S SMOKING THE PINK PIPE:

ELENA

Forgive me, Darling, I felt the sudden urge to step out for a puff.

She inhales, her eyes BULGE and she starts HACKING --

ARMAND

Elena, are you alright --?

ELENA

(choked gasp)
Fine --

ARMAND

Dear God, you're turning green --

ELENA

(choked gasp)
Your presence makes me flush --

Recovering, she takes another drag, careful not to inhale this time. Armand smiles...

ARMAND

... Good. Because I have a little something for you.

He removes a RECTANGULAR BOX from his coat and opens it, revealing a stunning PEARL NECKLACE:

ARMAND

A customary Spanish offering...
when a man asks a woman... for her
hand in marriage.

(beat)

Let me do this properly, on one
knee --

ELENA

NONO DON'T LOOK UP!!!

THOUGH SHE'S MID-INHALE, she keeps him on his feet with a DEEP KISS. Her eyes track up -- and that's when we reveal what she's distracting him from: ALEJANDRO HANGING ABOVE THEM IN THE RAFTERS. He's going insane watching this --

Elena tosses the pipe over her shoulder, where it LANDS beneath the balcony... INCHES FROM A WAITING TORNADO. When she pulls away from Armand, THEY BOTH EXHALE the puff of smoke she just took in --

ARMAND

... Is that a yes?

ELENA

It's a definite maybe.

ARMAND

I know it's sudden given what you've just been through... but I want to give you everything your ex-husband couldn't.

Alejandro, only a few feet above, is peeling out of his skin.

ARMAND

I don't expect you to answer now. Whatever you decide... the necklace is yours.

He moves behind her and loops the necklace around her neck, relishing the moment. She struggles to remain composed, then Elena pretends to 'notice' her watch:

ELENA

Goodness, I lose track of time with you... I should put Joaquin to bed.

Finally, she leads him back inside, her arm SHOOTING OUT behind her signalling Alejandro to GO!

He drops down onto the balcony, enraged. Sees Tornado below and LEAPS into the saddle. Only then does he realize TORNADO HAS THE PIPE IN HIS MOUTH, its red embers burning.

ALEJANDRO

(snatching it away)

How many times have I told you?
Smoking will make you hoarse.

He chucks away the pipe and SPURS Tornado off --

70 EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - NIGHT 70
 Dark clouds cross a low moon, portending something ominous...

71 EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - VERANDA - NIGHT 71
 TIGHT ON the CARRIER PIGEON as Elena takes it from its cage. She attaches the rolled up CARBON RIBBON to the silver carrier band on its foot:

ELENA

-- go --

She watches as the bird soars off, silhouetted against the moon. In a MATCH DISSOLVE, it becomes...

72 EXT. BEAR POINT HISTORIC SITE - DESERT - DAY 72
 ... The blistering SUN. CRANE DOWN to a CALIFORNIA FLAG, high above an empty desert. TRAIN TRACKS off to the side seem to stretch on forever; and far in the distance, an ONCOMING TRAIN.

As we keep dropping, we find Father Quintero and his class of kids, dismounting from WAGONS -- like school buses. Quintero gathers them around the base of the flag, during:

FATHER QUINTERO

Welcome to Bear Point, Children.
 It was on this desolate spot that our state flag was raised for the first time. Two days from now, our governor will be hosting a celebration here to honor California's statehood --

Among the class, Joaquin isn't paying attention -- mesmerized as he is by the ONCOMING TRAIN:

FATHER QUINTERO

Joaquin De La Vega, are you paying attention?!

JOAQUIN

(caught, pretending to take notes)
 Statehood celebration. Bear Point.
 Got it.

As Quintero turns away, Joaquin rolls his eyes to one of his chums, RICARDO. By now, the train's passing in front of the class -- the kids stare, marvelling at this new Goliath of the steam age -- and when it clears frame, we REVEAL:

JAKE MCGIVENS AND HIS POSSE WAITING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS. A scary, surprising moment. Joaquin's eyes narrow: trouble. McGivens CRACKS the reins, approaching...

MCGIVENS

Well... lookey here, Boys.

FATHER QUINTERO

(sensing danger)

Please, Señor. We want no trouble.

McGivens removes his hat, wipes a sweaty brow --

MCGIVENS

Call me McGivens, Jefe. Now maybe you ain't heard, but your dingy little state -- and everything in it -- belongs to us.

He gestures to his men, who snatch the children's WATER SUPPLY off the school wagons.

FATHER QUINTERO

... You have what you want. Now be on your way.

MCGIVENS

(taking a swig of the water)

Scorcher of a day. Take it from your Uncle Jake, kiddies -- drink plenty of agua.

The posse ROARS with laughter as they ride onward. Young Ricardo turns to Joaquin, relieved --

RICARDO

Jeez, Joaquin, d'ya think--

BUT JOAQUIN'S GONE. Ricardo GASPS, because now he sees, beneath the wagon... Joaquin's attached himself to the axles. He hangs there, pressing a finger to his lips: shh --

FATHER QUINTERO

This way, Class...

As Quintero leads them off, Ricardo hesitates, torn, his concerned eyes watching as the wagon rides off...

73

EXT. DESERTSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

73

The harsh sun beats relentlessly on the desert floor. The wagon rolls onward...

74

EXT. CAULDRON COVE - CLIFFS - NOON

74

The wagon arrives at the top of a CLIFF, where two men are waiting beside a WOODEN CRANE. McGivens dismounts, walking to the cliff edge. He looks down to see:

McGIVENS' POV - A SMALL BEACH BELOW, A SECRET COVE, where two more men unload CRATES from a rowboat that's been dragged onto the sand. Off shore, we see a SHIPPING VESSEL anchored.

As McGivens and his men peer over the bluff, we DRIFT BACK to the wagon where JOAQUIN drops onto the ground. He runs up a small bank and hides behind a crop of rocks above the crane.

MCGIVENS

(to his men)

Let's go...

75

EXT. CAULDRON COVE - THE BEACH - LATER

75

McGivens supervises, Henry Repeater in hand, as his men unload MORE CRATES from the rowboat. He leans his rifle against a rock and wipes his brow, swigs some water. Another rowboat, this one empty, is headed back to the shipping vessel off-shore.

The crates are stacked on a PLATFORM suspended by a cable, which begins to LIFT UPWARD... WE FOLLOW IT UP THE SIDE OF THE BLUFF, finally reaching the top to find...

The two men, straining to operate the hand-cranked wooden crane, the cable looped over a pulley at the top. Joaquin carefully emerges from behind the rocks to get a closer look. As he does, some LOOSE ROCKS tumble down to...

The men winding the crane's hand-crank. They stop, noticing the rocks. Joaquin DUCKS, slowly raises his head -- to his surprise, there's now only ONE MAN operating the hand crank.

Sensing something, Joaquin WHIRLS to reveal THE OTHER MAN BEHIND HIM! The man loops a KNIFE around Joaquin's neck and drags him down the bank, throwing him on the ground in front of his partner --

SNEERING MAN #1
What're you doin' here, Kid?

JOAQUIN
(glaring defiance)
Lookin' at two of the ugliest guys
I've ever seen...

Sneering Man #1 YANKS Joaquin off the ground, reels back a fist to punch him when Joaquin suddenly shoots out his hands, THROWING DIRT in their eyes. As the men stumble back, Joaquin HEAD BUTTS one and WHACKS HIS ELBOW into the other's neck -- Sneering Man #1 grabs Joaquin, draws his SABRE, steel GLINTING in the sun, RAISES IT FOR THE KILL...

... WHEN SUDDENLY ZORRO SWINGS IN FROM THE CRANE CABLE, KICKING THE MEN IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD. They're HURLED over Joaquin, OFF THE TOP OF THE CLIFF WHERE...

... their bodies CRASH onto the beach next to McGivens, who looks up, startled. The DANGLING PLATFORM begins to FALL, then SNAPS into place and swings back and forth -- held there by the crane's emergency braking system.

ZORRO appears at the top of the cliff, SMILING down at McGivens, and takes a bow. McGivens BARKS to two of his men:

MCGIVENS
GUARD THE CRATES!

-- and starts to climb the rocky cliff with the rest of his posse. Joaquin, catching his breath, looks up GLEEFULLY:

JOAQUIN
OhmyGod you're Z--

Zorro cuts him off with a WHISTLE: Tornado gallops in from the brush --

ZORRO
(to Tornado)
Take him over the hill and wait for me there!

Amazingly, Tornado KNEELS DOWN so Zorro can lift Joaquin into the saddle, then GALLOPS OFF. Zorro LEAPS onto the cable, SLIDES DOWN IT ERROL FLYNN STYLE, landing gracefully on the beach behind the guards -- taps them on the shoulder, and as they turn -- WHACK -- he knocks them both out cold.

Moving fast to a crate, he sees a BRAND emblazoned on the lid: A SERPENT, COILED AROUND THE GLOBE. The same design Elena saw on Armand's ring.

Zorro's eyes move over the symbol, what is this? And what's inside? He pries open the crate, his hand reaches in... and finally, he pulls out...

A BOTTLE OF WINE? What the hell?

No time to think, he slips the bottle in his belt, then notices something: McGivens has left his Henry Repeater against the rock. And Zorro gets an idea...

AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF, McGivens and his men arrive, breathless. No Zorro. He looks down, sees his two guards spread-eagled on the beach below -- and again, ZORRO WAVING UP AT THEM! McGivens HURLS his hat to the ground and --

TIMECUT: McGivens and the men have climbed back down to the beach. When they move toward the crates, McGivens TRIPS on a CONCEALED ROPE, pulling the trigger on the Henry Repeater which Zorro's set into position between two rocks -- the blast SEVERS THE EMERGENCY CABLE holding the platform in place and it comes CRASHING DOWN ON THE REST OF THE SHIPMENT!

McGivens and his men HURL themselves out of the way, but two aren't so lucky and get CRUSHED. As McGivens pulls himself up from the sand, he hears a WHINNY and looks up to see:

ZORRO, BACK ON THE CLIFF. He raises his hat, then disappears. Off McGivens, eyes glaring death...

76

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE BLUFFS - DAY

76

Joaquin sits beneath a tree, wincing at a SMALL CUT on his arm. Tornado stands vigil beside him.

ZORRO'S VOICE

Let me see that arm...

Joaquin WHIRLS to see Zorro, who flips open a pouch on Tornado's saddle, places the bottle of wine inside and removes bandaging gauze....

JOAQUIN

(thrilled, stammering)

I can't believe it's you! You're really Zorro! I mean... whoa! And Tornado! Man, he's huge!

ZORRO

(dressing the wound)

Hold still, Joaquin --

JOAQUIN

You know my name? Zorro knows my name! How do you know my name?

ZORRO

I, uh... well, I know your father.

JOAQUIN

You... know my dad?

ZORRO

(beat, improvising)

I asked him to keep my secret. And now I'm asking you to do the same -- no one can ever know you saw me.

(beat)

Especially not your mother.

JOAQUIN

... Why?

ALEJANDRO

Hey, I'm the one asking the questions. Now why aren't you at school? What are you doing here?

JOAQUIN

The guy with the scar on his face, I knew he was up to something. You really showed that sonofa--

ZORRO

Watch your mouth, eh? This isn't a game, your father'd have a heart attack if he saw what happened here.

JOAQUIN

No he wouldn't... he didn't even remember to pick me up at school yesterday.

That freezes Alejandro. Even behind the mask, we see the guilt in his eyes.

ZORRO

He didn't forget, Joaquin... what you have to understand is--

He pauses. His son is staring up at him, waiting so desperately for an answer... and finally, with resignation:

ZORRO

... you don't have to understand anything. He should've been there.

(beat)

And I know he feels terrible. For all the moments in your life he's missed.

Joaquin senses deep emotion welling up in Zorro. Weird.

JOAQUIN

He told you all that?

ALEJANDRO

(beat, then...)

I'm getting to know him better everyday.

He smiles, and finishes bandaging his son's wound.

77

EXT. ALVARADO ACADEMY FOR CHILDREN - DAY

77

Father Quintero is COUNTING HEADS as the children file off the wagons and back into school. PULL BACK to a nearby alleyway, where Zorro and Joaquin are watching...

ZORRO

Hurry, before your teacher knows you're gone.

Joaquin starts off. Stops. Turns ---

JOAQUIN

... Zorro?

(this isn't easy for him)

Next time you talk to my dad, maybe you could tell him that... I...

Alejandro waits with baited breath. Joaquin wants to finish the sentence with: '... love him,' but can't say the words.

JOAQUIN

... Nothin'.

A flicker of disappointment in Zorro's eyes, but he manages a smile. A last look from Joaquin, and as he turns to go --

ZORRO

Keep your chin up, eh?

That stops Joaquin cold: those are the same words his father said to him in the carriage.

He turns back, but ZORRO'S GONE. After a beat, Joaquin runs on, discreetly taking the last place in line as Father Quintero finishes his head count.

78

INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - DAY

78

CLOSE on the bottle of wine Zorro just stole. Felipe runs a finger over the label with excitement:

FRAY FELIPE

It's a Lafite 1791, very rare --

Alejandro enters frame, pacing, a burning in his belly:

ALEJANDRO

It doesn't make sense. I thought the shipment would explain everything...

Felipe pours the wine into a silver ritual cup, raises it to CHRIST ON THE CROSS hanging above the altar --

FRAY FELIPE

Bless you for turning water into wine --

ALEJANDRO

He's building a track to connect his vineyard to the railroad -- why?!

FRAY FELIPE

(takes a sip, then)
Ahh: effervescent, yet tenacious.

Alejandro stops, turns. Eyes wide --

ALEJANDRO

Wait a minute... those are the same ridiculous words you said at the party.

(he grabs the cup, sips:)
It's the same wine!

FRAY FELIPE

The one the count passed off as his own vintage!

(staring at each other)
If he's not making wine in the vineyard... what's he doing?

ALEJANDRO
 (mind whirling)
 There was a marking -- a symbol --
 branded on the crates from the
 ship... a serpent coiled around the
 globe.

CLOSE. FELIPE. That ringing a distant bell in his mind --

FRAY FELIPE
 A serpent... coiled around the
 globe...?
 (then, moving off quickly)
 Come with me --

79 INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - CHURCH ARCHIVES - MINUTES LATER 79

An ANCIENT BOOK is dropped onto a table, kicking up DUST.
 Alejandro lowers his candle to read the title: "ENEMIES OF
 THE CHURCH." Felipe flips it open, turning pages -- then,
 finds the SNAKE AND GLOBE symbol he's looking for:

FRAY FELIPE
 I haven't read this since my
 seminary training...
 (taps the page)
 ... is this it?

ALEJANDRO
 (it is:)
 ... 'Orbis Unum'?

FRAY FELIPE
 Latin. It means 'One World.'
 It represents the Order Of The
 Teutonic Knights... an ancient
 brotherhood of noblemen who ruled
 over Europe in secrecy after the
 crusades.

ALEJANDRO
 Wait... Armand... is a knight?

FRAY FELIPE
 According to legend, they began as
 protectors of the church and all
 its riches... but greed twisted
 them into barbarous men. The Pope
 was forced to order their
 extermination... and all of Europe
 became a battleground choked with
 horror.

Felipe sifts through pages, we move in and out of CLOSE-UPS as they study the ILLUSTRATIONS...

FRAY FELIPE

It's said a handful of knights escaped with enough wealth to start over... this time, in secret. Some believe they are the masters behind all the kingdoms of Europe... even today.

(beat, reading)

Here it speaks of a prophecy, written when they went into hiding... listen: 'There shall be, in the west, a land of great power that will rise to threaten the serpent... only by turning the power on itself, will the serpent survive.'

They look up at each other...

FRAY FELIPE

A land in the west...

ALEJANDRO

(grave whisper)

America... they want to destroy it.

And off that, we PRELAP A SEARING ARIA --

80 INT. SAN FRANCISCO OPERA HOUSE - AFTERNOON

80

Matinee: a DIVA belts out the aria in a bravura voice. ELENA AND ARMAND are watching from a private box. He takes her hand. She accepts, looking drawn, a million miles away. A beat, then Ferroq enters, urgent. Whispers in Armand's ear. His face goes taut. Forcing a smile, he whispers to Elena:

ARMAND

Forgive me, Darling, I won't be a moment.

He exits. Elena turns, alert, wondering what's happening --

81 INT. OPERA HOUSE - THE BAR - CONTINUOUS

81

Armand and Ferroq enter the elaborate bar to find McGivens waiting, with a shit-eating grin. He strikes a MATCH, igniting a shot of WHISKEY:

MCGIVENS

I do enjoy an occasional dance with
the devil.

And without blowing out the flaming shot, he throws it back.

ARMAND

This better be damned important.

MCGIVENS

You're the one who's damned, Sly
Boots. Zorro destroyed your
shipment.

McGivens pours another shot, strikes another match. Armand's
hand lashes out, fingers extinguishing the match --

ARMAND

I increase your payment and this is
the news you bring me?!

MCGIVENS

Open your eyes: Zorro got there
ahead of us, means one of your
people's talking.

That registers, but Armand keeps his reaction contained.

ARMAND

The Hacienda can't front as a
vineyard if it isn't producing
wine...

MCGIVENS

Maybe you oughtta reconsider
puttin' together a fox hunt.

ARMAND

Do it -- and when you find this
Zorro, take his head. Nothing can
stop the train from departing at
dawn... now get out.

Their eyes hold, then McGivens exits. Armand says to Ferroq:

ARMAND

If someone's talking, find the man
responsible.

FERROQ

Master... what if it's a woman?

We go TIGHT ON ARMAND, anger mounting in his look...

ARMAND

I'll forgive the inference, because
your service to my family has
earned you the right to speak
freely.

With that, Armand exits. HOLD on Ferroq's evil eyes -- more
determined now than ever to prove his suspicions correct.

82 INT. SAN FRANCISCO OPERA HOUSE - ARMAND'S BOX - CONTINUOUS 82

Elena watches the opera. A FIGURE enters silently through
the curtain behind her. Lowers, a WHISPER:

ALEJANDRO

Don't turn around. Don't say
anything. Just listen.

Elena's heart quickens. Though she's in shadow, there are
people in the boxes around her. She can't make a scene.
Alejandro leans closer, in her ear...

ALEJANDRO

I've been trying to convince you
Armand's not the man he appears to
be... but you already know that.
You've always been able to see
people for who they are... even me.
(beat)
Whatever he's making in that
vineyard, it isn't wine... and I'm
going to find out what it is.

ELENA

(urgently)
I'm begging you, Alejandro, don't--

ALEJANDRO

What are you involved in? Tell me--

ELENA

You have to trust me--

ALEJANDRO

(struggling)
Then answer me one question... the
other day, you said we were never
meant to be together... in your
heart, do you really believe that?

A swell of APPLAUSE breaks the moment as the curtain drops,
signalling intermission --

ELENA
Armand's coming back! GO!

Torn, his question unanswered, Alejandro pushes quickly through the curtain and:

THE IMAGE CHANGES SUDDENLY: we're watching Alejandro as he leaves Elena in her box, as seen through OPERA GLASSES. Across the opera house, HARRIGAN lowers the opera glasses. He swivels to PIKE. Quickly, they rise and EXIT --

83 INT. SAN FRANCISCO OPERA HOUSE - MEZZANINE - CONTINUOUS 83

Alejandro pushes through the crowd with a full head of steam, rounds a corner, BUMPING into Armand and Ferroq --

ARMAND
Don De La Vega --

ALEJANDRO
-- Count Armand --

ARMAND
(anger building)
Your repeated appearances are bordering on harassment.

ALEJANDRO
Forgive me, I came to say goodbye to Elena. Try as I have to win her back, she loves you... I wish you both happiness.

He GOES, leaving Armand a little puzzled... still, dubious.

84 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO OPERA HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 84

Alejandro bounds down the steps. A man is headed up toward him, indistinctly part of the crowd -- it's Harrigan.

We go to an EXTREME CLOSE UP of a RING on his finger, he flicks open the GEM revealing a TINY NEEDLE. "Accidentally" bumping into Alejandro, he injects the needle into his wrist, a pierce so small Alejandro doesn't notice:

HARRIGAN
-- Excuse me --

And he's gone. Alejandro hails a Hansom Carriage:

ALEJANDRO
Mission Santa Lucia, hurry --

85 I/E. HANSOM CAB - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 85

Alejandro settles into the back seat as the coach rides off. Quickly, he begins to GROW WOZZY... fights it, but his eyes flutter... finally he PASSES OUT COLD.

And we BOOM UP, out the window, to reveal PIKE at the reins.

86 EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - DUSK 86

Armand's carriage arrives at the hacienda, Ferroq reining the horses. Armand steps out, offering a hand to Elena...

ELENA

I had a wonderful time. Thank you.

ARMAND

I saw Alejandro leaving the opera house, Elena. If I were a less trusting man, I might think you still have feelings for him.

ELENA'S FACE: drastic times call for drastic measures. So:

ELENA

I told him something I haven't told you yet.

(a smile, though it kills her)

I want to be your wife, Armand.

And despite his mistrust, the dilemma he's been struggling with seems to evaporate. Taking Elena in his arms, he KISSES HER passionately. FERROQ watches through icy eyes.

ARMAND

You have my heart, without expectations. It is and always will be yours, Elena.

ELENA

After I put Joaquin to bed, perhaps we could have supper at your Hacienda. If I'm going to be the lady of the house, I want to start making myself at home.

(Armand hesitates)

... What is it?

ARMAND

Some colleagues of mine will be arriving from Europe this evening. Our meeting may run late.

ELENA

A late supper, then... I could stay the night.

He tries to contain his lust, just as she contains the fact that she won't be following through with the sex. He kisses her one last time, and as she heads into the house:

ARMAND

Elena... we'll have the world, you and I.

She smiles, but that creeps her the hell out. As Armand climbs back in the carriage, Elena hurries inside... and we BOOM UP TO REVEAL...

JOAQUIN leaning over the veranda, stunned beyond words -- not only is his mother seeing another man, she's gonna marry him. Off his heartbreak...

87

INT. JAIL CELL - DUSK

87

The screen is BLURRY. We're on the floor. Something's coming IN AND OUT OF FOCUS in front of us... THE MASK OF ZORRO. Dangling in Harrigan's hand through CELL BARS. Pike's beside him. They stand on the other side of the cell:

PIKE

The drug will wear off soon, Mr. De La Vega.

HARRIGAN

Or would you prefer... Zorro?

PIKE

The day California was voted into the union? We followed you to the viaduct.

HARRIGAN

(the mask:)

I believe this belongs to you?

Alejandro's mind is spinning --

ALEJANDRO

... who are you?!

And shockingly, Pike pulls out... A BADGE!

PIKE

I'm Agent Pike, this is Agent Harrigan. We're The Pinkertons: operatives of the United States government.

ALEJANDRO

You're the good guys?

HARRIGAN

You could say we're a kind of... Secret service.

PIKE

We're living in perilous times, Mr. De La Vega. America's gates have swung wide open...

HARRIGAN

Trouble is, it's getting harder to tell a genuine American from the man who's just pretending to be.

PIKE

Which is why, on occasion, we require certain individuals to aid in our country's defense... people like your ex-wife.

ALEJANDRO

(stunned)

Elena... works for you? As a spy?

HARRIGAN

We needed someone who could gain his trust.

PIKE

And who more suited to the task than the woman he could never forget?

HARRIGAN

You see, before The Count's arrival here, we intercepted a telegram he dispatched to his associates throughout Europe.

PIKE

In that telegram, he claimed he was on the verge of producing a new weapon.

HARRIGAN

A weapon that would bring about... mass destruction.

PIKE

With a single target in mind...

HARRIGAN

The United States of America.

PIKE

The United States of America.

ALEJANDRO

(trying to add that up)
What kind of weapon would do that?

PIKE

Your ex-wife may be on the verge of answering that very question.

HARRIGAN

And every time you interfere, you jeopardize her cover. Understand?

ALEJANDRO

(anger rising)
The divorce was your idea, wasn't it? So Elena would be free to lure in the count... you forced her into this...

PIKE

We prefer to think of it as a mutual understanding: in exchange for her help, we promised to keep the true name of Zorro secret from his enemies.

HARRIGAN

A name you share with your wife... and son.

A long beat, Alejandro's eyes glaring rage. His look quickly turns to defeat, his head drops... and after a beat:

ALEJANDRO

... I know something that might help you.

He gestures to them: come closer. In tandem, they do -- and that's when Alejandro grabs them by the collars and SLAMS THEIR HEADS AGAINST THE BARS, LOCKING THEM THERE --

ALEJANDRO
YOU DESTROYED MY FAMILY, YOU
SONSOFBITCHES!!

He SLAMS them against the bars again then HURLS them back. They tumble to the floor, Harrigan spitting blood, Pike straightening his tie -- slowly, they rise, seething:

HARRIGAN
Our country must be protected, De
La Vega... without apology.

ALEJANDRO
By blackmailing your own people?!
You call that a democracy?!

PIKE
When national security's at stake,
we can't afford to be Democratic.

HARRIGAN
Zorro's a relic of the past.
(picking up the mask:)
This belongs in a museum. Now sit
there. Bleed. And think about it.

The men turn, heading out the door. Off Alejandro, face full of rage, a look that could kill...

88 EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - ELENA'S ROOM - DUSK 88

Elena removes the pigeon from its cage, attaches a message to its foot... and releases the bird with a flash of hope:

ELENA
After tonight, we'll both be
free...

89 INT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - JOAQUIN'S ROOM - DUSK 89

Elena peers in to see Joaquin, sitting at his desk, doing homework. She smiles, trying her best to sound light --

ELENA
I'll be back soo--

JOAQUIN

Bye.

He doesn't turn to look at her. She presumes, he's brooding over her leaving again. Soon it'll all be over and she can tell him the truth.

ELENA

... Adios, mi amor.

She closes the door. Joaquin LEAPS to his feet. Pushes open the window and climbs out onto the tree. Gone.

90 INT. STABLES - DUSK

90

Joaquin, in CLOSE UP, his teeth clenched in exertion:

JOAQUIN

Come on come on come on, we have to find Papi--

WIDEN: he's sitting on top of -- and trying to move -- an unmovable BURRO.

JOAQUIN

Stupid ass, MOVE!

(nothing)

Okay, you're not a stupid ass...
how 'bout I give you a name. From
now on, you are the great... The
Great Burrito! Okayokay, not
burrito. Uh... Earthquake!
Diablo! Lightning!

The burro BRAYS its approval --

JOAQUIN

Lightning? Okay! Go, lightning!

And Lightning begins to clip-clop onward -- slower than hell.
A lone boy and his burro against the moon.

91 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO CITY STREETS - DUSK

91

Elena's PIGEON wings into frame, zeroing in on a BUILDING. We read the sign: PECKINPAH HOTEL. ROOMS TO LET. The pigeon lands by a window. A HAND reaches out for the bird: AGENT PIKE. He removes the message from the silver band on the pigeon's foot, reads: "SEARCHING VINEYARD TONIGHT. WILL MAKE CONTACT." He turns inside to...

92 INT. PECKINPAH HOTEL - THE PINKERTONS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS 92

Harrigan paces, edgy...

PIKE

She's going to the vineyard. We can post men near the gate, in case we have to pull her out.

HARRIGAN

If she's compromised, she'll be of no further use to us. Consider it an acceptable loss.

Harrigan's eyes are unflinching. Pike turns and closes the window... and we TILT DOWN to the alley, where...

FERROQ is staring up from his saddle, having followed the pigeon. He dismounts, triggering a WRIST CONTRAPTION hidden in his sleeve -- CHING! -- a CRESCENT BLADE fans out, fanglike. And Ferroq heads INTO the hotel.

93 EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - MAGIC HOUR 93

Establishing: rows of vines against a glorious sunset...

94 EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - FRONT COURTYARD - MAGIC HOUR 94

Elena exits a carriage and crosses to the front door, fighting her nerves. She knocks. MARIE answers...

ELENA

Bon soir, Marie. Armand's expecting me.

MARIE

You're early, Madame, the Count is still indisposed.

ELENA

Perhaps I could wait in the parlor?

As Marie opens the door to let Elena in --

95 INT. EDINBURGH MISSION INN - LOBBY - NIGHT 95

At the front desk, the CONCIERGE is doing paperwork. A small hand appears to RING THE BELL -- then the face of a nine year old boy peering up at him: Joaquin.

CONCIERGE

Yes?

JOAQUIN

Uh, I'm looking for my dad,
Alejandro De La Vega.

A woman dusting a table nearby hears that and turns: it's
LUPE, the chambermaid with a crush on Alejandro.

CONCIERGE

He hasn't come in this evening, I'm
glad to say. Now Young Man, we're
very busy -- if you're not a
registered guest... get out.

LUPE

Excuse me, you're Joaquin, yes?

JOAQUIN

How d'you know my name?

LUPE

You're all your father ever talks
about.

That lands with Joaquin. Then, desperately --

JOAQUIN

Do you know where he is?

LUPE

(beat, this is awkward)
There's a cantina down the street,
you might find him there.

96

INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - PARLOR - NIGHT

96

Marie places a cup of tea in front of Elena...

ELENA

... Thank you so much.

Marie nods and heads out. Elena hops up, moves to the window
-- just before she opens it, she hears MARIE RETURN --
whirling, Elena pretends to search the book shelves:

MARIE

Perhaps Madame would like an amuse
bouche to tide her over until
dinner?

ELENA
 (a touch stern)
 That'll be all, Marie. In fact,
 I'd like a little quiet before
 Armand returns.

MARIE
 As you wish, Madame.

Marie goes, closing the door behind her. Elena moves quickly
 back to the window, pulls it up, and climbs out --

97 INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

97

Alejandro paces like a caged tiger. He grabs the window bars
 and SHAKES THEM. No use. His head drops. A NOISE brings it
 up again. A BACK DOOR in the alley outside swings open. In
 shadow, an angry SALOON OWNER tosses someone out:

SALOON OWNER
 Now git, ya little mongrel! Come
 back when you got hair on your
 chest!

The ousted patron steps into the light -- IT'S JOAQUIN!

JOAQUIN
 Suck an egg, Flatfoot!

ALEJANDRO CAN'T BELIEVE HIS EYES.

ALEJANDRO
 Joaquin?! Joaquin!!

Joaquin freezes hearing his father's voice. Locks in on the
 JAIL CELL WINDOW and moves closer, completely stunned:

JOAQUIN
 ... Dad?!

ALEJANDRO
 What are you doing in a bar?!

JOAQUIN
 What are you doing in jail?!

ALEJANDRO
 ... I asked you first.

JOAQUIN
 I was looking for you, it's about
 mom --

ALEJANDRO

-- Is she okay?!

JOAQUIN

No! I mean, yes, but no -- a man came to the house... he asked her to marry him -- she said okay -- I know you still love her -- you said you'd do anything for her --

ALEJANDRO

-- Joaquin --

JOAQUIN

You can't be in jail, how can you be in jail?! You gotta stop her --

ALEJANDRO

JOAQUIN LISTEN TO ME --

He grasps Joaquin's hands through the bars, the boy's mind spinning out of control, near tears. And Alejandro gives him the greatest, most loving smile his son could ever hope to see:

ALEJANDRO

The very first time I held you in my arms... I could see in your eyes, you had fire in your soul.

(beat)

You were right -- I wasn't around enough for you or your mother. I won't make that mistake again, I promise... but you have to help me get out of here.

Joaquin beams back at his father. They hold there, hands clasped between the bars...

98

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

98

The HEAD JAILER is playing cards with a GUARD. A SECOND GUARD finishes spooning SLOP into bowls to take to the prisoners. As he picks up a tray and heads off, we find...

JOAQUIN, crouched around a corner. He aims his SLINGSHOT and FIRES, hitting the guard in the butt with a bb: the guard LURCHES forward, JETTISONING SLOP all over the jailer who throws down his cards and starts SHOUTING as...

Over ad-lib arguing, Joaquin FIRES another bb at the second guard's butt -- he whirls, seeing Joaquin GIVE HIM THE FINGER AND DISAPPEAR.

The guard runs after him as the other men continue fighting, but when he turns the corner he's HURTLED INTO THE AIR, tripping over Joaquin who's CROUCHED IN A BALL. The guard hits the floor HARD, skidding into the wall where he's KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS. Joaquin STEALS HIS KEYS and sneaks past the arguing men, into...

... THE CELL BLOCK. Moving past steel doors, he stops at the last one and turns the key. Alejandro emerges --

ALEJANDRO

You're a genius, Joaquin -- but I never want to catch you breaking anyone out of jail again, alright?!

JOAQUIN

There are guards up front --

ALEJANDRO

We'll sneak out the back --

IN THE CORRIDOR, the unconscious guard WAKES, gets his bearings, RACES OFF --

IN THE CELL BLOCK, as Joaquin and Alejandro head out the back, the THREE GUARDS APPEAR cutting them off, swords drawn. Thinking fast, Alejandro hooks an arm around Joaquin's neck, pretending to hold him hostage:

ALEJANDRO

Ah-ah! Stay back or I'll wring the kid's neck!

JOAQUIN

Help me! I'm too young to die!
I've got my whole life ahead of me!

JAILER

(beat, then, to his men)
... Kill em.

And they CHARGE, but Alejandro knuckle-stabs the first guard's windpipe -- SPINS swiping the second guard's feet out from under him, then PUNCHES OUT the third, catching his sword mid-air. Alejandro turns back to Joaquin...

Who's staring back in total awe. His father's just become the coolest man in the whole, wide world --

JOAQUIN
Where'd you learn to do that?

ALEJANDRO
Prison changes a man, Son. Let's
go.

And they're off --

99 EXT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - THE GROUNDS - NIGHT 99

Elena pushes through grape vines. Down the road, she sees a line of CARRIAGES drawing toward the vineyard. Mysterious SERVANTS exit wielding lanterns for their masters:

MEN IN CLOAKS, their eerie faces blanched in the moonlight. They're met at the entrance by GUARDS. As they enter, Elena emerges from shadow, cautious... and below her breath:

ELENA
Where are you, Alejandro?

100 INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - NIGHT 100

The door FLIES OPEN, Alejandro and Joaquin rush in --

ALEJANDRO
PADRE! FELIPE!

Felipe emerges urgently from his study:

FRAY FELIPE
Alejandro, what is it -- ?!

ALEJANDRO
I need you to watch Joaquin for
me --

Alejandro kneels down, and with a wonderful grin:

ALEJANDRO
Thank you, Mijo... you're my hero.

They hug tight. Felipe watches, smiling, then...

FRAY FELIPE
Come, Niño.

JOAQUIN
Papi --
(Alejandro turns)
(MORE)

JOAQUIN (cont'd)

I met Zorro. He told me you're friends.

Alejandro winks, puts a finger to his lips: SHH. As Felipe leads Joaquin off, Alejandro TEARS BACK the confessional curtain --

101 EXT. DESERTED ALLEYWAY - NIGHT 101

Zorro and Tornado LEAP over the planks that warn trespassers:
DANGER: CONDEMNED!!

102 INT. WINERY - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 102

Elena sneaks in the loading dock, watching as the cloaked men are lead by a guard past SIX MASSIVE (but empty) WINE VATS lined with MAINTENANCE LADDERS. The ladders connect over the top of the vats, forming a criss-crossing network.

The men are brought to a wall of STACKED BARRELS -- the guard touches one at its center and THE BARRELS SWING OPEN: a secret door. The men pass through, the guard remaining behind as the 'door' closes.

Elena scans for the other guards: there are two stationed by the main entrance, one more guarding the coaches outside. She ducks into shadow...

The guard by the barrels hears a 'psst.' Brow furrowed, he moves around the nearest vat... from the darkness, Elena SMASHES HIM IN THE FACE with a wooden paddle. He tumbles back, CRASHING against a stack of metal buckets.

The NOISE alerts the other guards -- they fan out -- two of them find their unconscious comrade and look around, bewildered --

ANGLE UP TO REVEAL ELENA on top of the vats, holding the downed guard's PISTOL and SWORD. As she turns, she's CONFRONTED by the third guard on the ladder behind her, his gun raised --

GUARD

-- drop it --

A moment of defeat, Elena begins to lower the gun... then PULLS THE TRIGGER shattering the ladder the guard's standing on -- he PLUNGES into the empty vat as the guards below LOOK UP and SEE Elena racing along the ladders...

Climbing to BLOCK HER OFF at both ends, they attack: a furious swordfight on the ladders, Elena matching them blow-for-blow -- they drive her toward the EDGE and she jumps, SLIDING down a pipe to the floor. In so doing, she LOSES HER SWORD. And the guards are THERE, moving in for the kill...

Until a WHISTLE snaps them around: Zorro. He winks, they CHARGE -- but he turns and runs. Leading them out the entrance, he JUMPS on TORNADO whose hooves SPRING OUT -- the guards are HURTLED BACK where they land, unconscious, at Elena's feet.

Alejandro moves to embrace her, but she reaches out to stop him --

ELENA

You asked if I believe we were meant to be together.

(beat)

The truth is, Alejandro... we couldn't be more wrong for each other.

With that, she grabs him furiously and THEY KISS, famished for each other, all other considerations suddenly GONE:

ALEJANDRO

I love you --

ELENA

-- I love you too... these last three months have been hell without you --

ALEJANDRO

-- every time I saw you, all I wanted was to hold you --

They KISS DEEPER, then he pulls back with sudden urgency:

ALEJANDRO

I know about the Pinkertons --

ELENA

-- How?!

ALEJANDRO

It doesn't matter, I should've listened --

ELENA

You did, to your heart --

ALEJANDRO

-- but I was wrong, you were forced into this because of me --

ELENA

No, I was wrong -- all I ever wanted was to protect our family --

ALEJANDRO

Me too --

ELENA

-- we can't do it by running --

ALEJANDRO

-- I promised we'd grow old together on the veranda, that's all that matters --

ELENA

-- and we will... but we have to fight for it. That's who we are. It's who our son is.

He looks at her, surprised. There's passion in her face --

ELENA

Now let's go kick Armand's ass.

103 EXT. WINERY - COURTYARD - NIGHT 103

CLOSE - ARMAND:

ARMAND

'Orbis Unum,' My Brothers.

And we WIDEN to reveal the CLOAKED MEN, sitting in stone chairs around a table. They repeat in tandem: "ORBIS UNUM." Standing behind Armand is COLONEL BEAUREGARD. In the center of the floor is the SERPENT AND GLOBE CREST OF THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS. We PAN to a door leading to the courtyard, CLOSE IN on a BARRED WINDOW, behind which... ELENA AND ALEJANDRO rise up, their eyes peering out...

ARMAND

For generations, the Teutonic Knights have lead Europe in its supremacy over the globe. Now we face a rising power prophesied by our ancestors five hundred years ago... America.

(MORE)

ARMAND (cont'd)
 Unless we act swiftly, all of
 Europe will soon be an
 afterthought.

Alejandro and Elena REACT. ARMAND begins circling the table:

ARMAND

This country has one glaring
 weakness: its people are divided by
 north and south. Talk of a civil
 war is far more dire than anyone
 truly knows. It is... inevitable,
 Gentlemen. The only question is,
 who will claim victory?

(beat)

We will answer that by employing
 the newest weapon of the modern
 age, a compound thirteen times more
 powerful than gunpowder:

He opens a SMALL BOX. On an inset of velvet is a VIAL filled
 with CLEAR LIQUID. Armand holds it like an egg...

ARMAND

... Nitroglycerin. For months,
 this vineyard has been a cover for
 its manufacturing.

The knights lean in, amazed. Armand gestures --

ARMAND

With the help of our Confederate
 ally, Colonel Beauregard, we'll
 begin regular shipments to the
 Southern army -- assuring their
 victory. America won't stand a
 chance in hell -- and I do mean
 hell -- of remaining united.

(beat)

The end result, Gentlemen, is this:
 the Central Banks of Austria and
 Hungary will take possession of the
 country's foreclosures. Baron
 Leopold, you'll regain control of
 the steel market you lost to
 Pennsylvania... while Arch Duke
 Wilhelm will reacquire New
 England's shipping lanes.

APPLAUSE, except for one of the knights -- LORD DILLINGHAM: a
 British face, meticulously sculpted beard.

LORD DILLINGHAM

And what do you gain from this,
Count?

ARMAND

Why, the most valuable commodity of
all... ten percent off the top.

LAUGHTER, but Dillingham appears grave. He rises...

LORD DILLINGHAM

Brothers, you know my spirit is
with you, but we risk antagonizing
a sleeping giant if we fail... I'll
see myself out.

Dillingham heads off. Armand looks defeated... then HURLS
THE VIAL AT DILLINGHAM, BLOWING HIM TO SMITHEREENS.
Alejandro and Elena DUCK as smoke roils through the bars
overhead. The knights stare, wide-eyed, as the smoke
clears...

ARMAND

Any further objections? ... Good,
now if you'd be kind enough to
follow me.

He triggers a lever, and the CREST on the floor ROTATES,
revealing a SPIRALLING STAIRCASE leading underground. As the
knights disappear down the stairs, Alejandro and Elena watch
-- hushed whispering:

ALEJANDRO

You know, your boyfriend's a little
psychotic.

ELENA

Stop calling him my boyfriend.

ALEJANDRO

Then why are you still wearing his
necklace?

ELENA

I'm undercover!
(then, simply)
Besides, these are black pearls.

ALEJANDRO

I was there, remember? A little
flashy jewelry and you threw
yourself at him like a baboon in
heat --

ELENA

You're unbelievable! I was trying to keep him from seeing you!

ALEJANDRO

Don't turn this around, I was there to help --

ELENA

With help like that, I'll end up having three kids with him!

They're so engrossed in their banter, only now do they realize the crest is rotating back into place. They exchange an 'oh, shit' glance then race out from behind the door and slip through the hole... just as it closes.

104 INT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - NIGHT

104

Felipe and Joaquin kneel by the votive candles. Lights one.

FRAY FELIPE

Kneel beside me, Joaquin. Let us pray for the safety of your mother and father.

A sudden gust of wind EXTINGUISHES the candles. JAKE MCGIVENS steps into the light with that awful toothy grin. His men fan out. Felipe keeps Joaquin close --

FRAY FELIPE

Unless you've come to confess, you have no business here.

MCGIVENS

Funny you should mention confession, Padre... since you're obliged to keep the secrets of your flock, maybe you can help me put a name to a face -- more particularly, to a mask.

(beat)

Who... is... Zorro?

Their eye contact holds... and holds...

FRAY FELIPE

You know Zorro... he could be anyone at all.

McGivens approaches, fingering the CRUCIFIX NECKLACE around Felipe's neck -- then reaches inside his own coat, we presume, for a weapon. To our surprise, he pulls out his OWN CRUCIFIX NECKLACE:

MCGIVENS

See now, Padre? We're both men of God... you can tell me...

POSSE MEMBER

Hey, Boss --

McGivens turns. One of his men has found the BOTTLE OF WINE on the altar that Zorro stole. McGivens turns to Felipe:

MCGIVENS

The Lord hates a liar.

FRAY FELIPE

... Alright. I'll tell you.

AND IN A SURPRISE MOVE, HE UPENDS A CANDELABRA AND SMASHES IT AGAINST MCGIVENS' HEAD -- Felipe SHOUTS to Joaquin:

FRAY FELIPE

RUN!!

Joaquin BOLTS for the door as Felipe SWINGS the candelabra at two of the men, knocking them back -- he's one hell of a fighter -- he spins -- **AND BANG:**

Felipe freezes, eyes wide, staring at the barrel of MCGIVENS' SMOKING GUN. His look tracks down, to a HOLE in his frock:

FRAY FELIPE

Oh... God...

He falls to his knees. Joaquin SKIDS to a stop and SCREAMS:

JOAQUIN

FELIPEYOUKILLEDFELIPE!

MCGIVENS

Shut him up and put him in the wagon!

A HAND is cupped over Joaquin's mouth as he's dragged off. McGivens stares at the dead padre on the floor, then up at THE CROSS hanging above the altar. Quickly, he exits.

Torchlight precedes Armand as he leads the knights to the bottom of the spiralling staircase...

ARMAND

Behold, my brothers: I give you...
the future.

As we PULL BACK for the REVEAL A 19TH CENTURY MUNITIONS FACTORY! Through SWIRLING STEAM, armed guards monitor WORKERS, in saucer hats, as they siphon NITRO into a steam-powered assembly line of BOTTLES. The bottles are sealed and packed into CRATES. The crates are then loaded onto a ROLLING FLATBED, which is pushed down the length of...

A SIX CAR MUNITIONS TRAIN!

As Armand leads the knights deeper into the factory, Elena and Alejandro APPEAR at the entrance, taking cover behind crates filled with EMPTY BOTTLES. A WORKER heads toward them. As he reaches for a crate, we go...

CLOSE ON HIS FACE as he suddenly WINCES in pain, falling to his knees -- a look familiar to a man who's just been kicked in the balls, which, in fact, he has. As he DROPS from frame, his SAUCER HAT STAYS IN PLACE, balanced on the edges of two crates. A beat... then ZORRO'S FACE rises into frame, the hat now on his head.

ANOTHER ANGLE - MOVING with Armand and the knights as he leads them through the factory...

ARMAND

These tracks have been connected to California's main line, allowing for a continuous supply of nitro to the southern battlefront. Although I'll be returning to Europe shortly, Ferroq will remain to oversee the operation.

He stops a PASSING WORKER carrying a crate -- pulls out an EMPTY BOTTLE, to explain...

ARMAND

The nitro's been concealed within these bottles to circumvent any prying northern patrols.

ARCHDUKE WILHEM
 God help them if they want a
 taste...

Laughter from the men, Armand puts the bottle back in the
 crate. As the worker moves off, we glimpse his FACE under
 the hat: IT'S ZORRO. FERROQ approaches Armand, concerned --

FERROQ
 An urgent matter requires your
 attention at the Hacienda, Master.

ARMAND
 ... Gentlemen, the colonel will
 lead you through the rest of the
 facility. If you'll excuse me?

He follows Ferroq out through the archway, PASSING ELENA as
 she crouches low behind the crates. Zorro returns urgently --

ALEJANDRO
 He's going back to the Hacienda --

ELENA
 (urgent panic)
 I have to get back before he does --

ALEJANDRO
 Go, I'll keep the train from
 leaving --

ELENA
 ... Te amo.

ALEJANDRO
 Siempre.

They kiss fiercely, then separate. Alejandro's heart aches
 watching her go... then he turns back to the train, a new
 determination in his eyes.

106 EXT. VINEYARD - NIGHT

106

Elena emerges, sees ARMAND'S CARRIAGE heading toward the
 Hacienda. She BOLTS through the vineyard after it --

107 INT. THE MANUFACTORY - NIGHT 107

Colonel Beauregard leads the knights along. They watch as the crates are lifted from the rolling flatbed and carried into the cargo car, where they're placed on SUSPENDED PLATFORMS rigged to PNEUMATIC PIPES:

COLONEL BEAUREGARD

As you can see, The Count's retrofitted the carriage to insure the nitro won't detonate prematurely...

As they move on, we HOLD on the flatbed as a worker pushes it off, revealing... ZORRO LYING THERE ON THE TRACK (he was hiding beneath the flatbed). Unnoticed, he hops into:

108 INT. NITRO CAR/ EXT. TRACKS BENEATH CAR - CONTINUOUS 108

Very carefully, he pries open a crate and removes a BOTTLE FILLED WITH NITRO. Grabbing a roll of FUSE CORD, he opens a MAINTENANCE DOOR on the floor of the car and slips down...

... ONTO THE TRACK BENEATH THE CARGO CAR. Crawling along, he makes his way toward the locomotive with the bottle and cord. A BLAST OF STEAM EXPLODES INCHES FROM HIS FACE -- he nearly DROPS the bottle -- close call -- moving on, he DUCKS into shadow as a BURLY WOOD STOKER loads wood into the furnace.

And Zorro builds a timebomb, slinging one end of the fuse cord over a pipe, then tying it around the tip of the bottle. Carefully letting go, THE BOTTLE HANGS THERE. The idea is this: once the cord dissolves away, the bottle will FALL and EXPLODE. Moving fast down the train tunnel, Zorro unspools the fuse to ignite the cord from a safe distance.

109 EXT. VINEYARD - THE GRAPE VINES - CONTINUOUS 109

Elena RUNS through the vines. In a moment of frenzy, she TRIPS. Picking herself up, she's struck by A LOW GROWL -- the two GUARD DOGS are staring at her, off their chains. Elena RUNS FASTER THAN HELL toward the Hacienda, the dogs tearing after her --

Up ahead, Armand enters the Hacienda. Elena's almost at the parlor window, but the dogs are SNAPPING AT HER HEELS --

110 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 110

Armand walks a determined course toward the parlor, Ferroq following. He pushes open the door to find:

111 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - THE PARLOR - CONTINUOUS 111

ELENA, standing by the CLOSED WINDOW, the two dogs LEAPING INTO VIEW AND BARKING WILDLY. She turns, obviously breathless, but covering with:

ELENA
Goodness, I must've dozed off when
the dogs startled me...

ARMAND
(face dark)
Perhaps they thought you were
someone you're not.

He gestures a hand to the dogs at the window. They WHIMPER and depart. Armand's face is stone. Unreadable.

ARMAND
I'm told you arrived early.

ELENA
I couldn't wait.

ARMAND
I'm having a special meal prepared.
I hope you're hungry.

ELENA
... Famished.

112 INT. ARMAND'S HACIENDA - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 112

Marie places a silver tray in front of Elena and lifts off the dome revealing, we presume, QUAIL. Now Elena notices, oddly, he hasn't been given anything to eat.

ELENA
Thank you, Marie.

Marie glares, then goes. Armand, too, stares at Elena with grim resolve. She begins cutting her food, feeling tense.

ELENA
Aren't you hungry?

ARMAND

Have I ever told you the story of how my parents fell in love?

ELENA

... Not that I recall...

ARMAND

My father was a soldier in the Peninsular Campaigns. When he was sent to capture Lisbon, he became enamored of a local maiden... who, of course, wanted nothing to do with a conquering soldier. So my father took her to his estate... and locked her in a room.

(low, menacing)

For three years. And when my father finally let my mother out... she was desperate to accept his hand in marriage.

ELENA

(nervous, taking a bite)

... How romantic.

ARMAND

Tasty, is it?

ELENA

It's... unusual. Is it quail?

ARMAND

... Pigeon.

ELENA SEES THE SILVER CARRIER BAND AROUND THE BIRD'S CHARRED LEG! Her face falls and she BOLTS from her chair, into --

113 INT. ARMAND'S CHATEAU - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 113

Searching wildly for a way out, Elena tries doorknobs -- they're all locked -- then, one turns in her hand -- she FLINGS it open to find...

A MEAT FREEZER, AND HANGING BESIDE SLABS OF BEEF ARE THE DEAD PINKERTON AGENTS! Ferrog CLAMPS a fist around Elena's neck and PINS HER to the wall. Armand approaches, acidic:

ARMAND

I was told there was a traitor in my own home, but I didn't want to believe it was you... you've broken my heart, Elena.

He RIPS the pearl necklace from her throat, the pearls flying apart. Elena glares at him, eyes full of hate:

ELENA

Did you actually think I'd be swept off my feet by a sadistic coward like you?!

ARMAND

I thought you were a woman of vision.

ELENA

I can barely stomach the sight of you, Armand! The only way I could stand your touch was by imagining you were Alejandro!

That has its intended effect, stabbing his heart. But he has made another connection:

ARMAND

Yes... Alejandro, your peasant husband. Tell me, when you fantasized about him... did you imagine him wearing a mask?

Elena's face goes COLD with fear. Then, the sound of SOMEONE COMING from around the corner -- MCGIVENS DRAGS JOAQUIN INTO VIEW. Elena GASPS, Joaquin tearing free and throwing his arms around his mother; she PULLS HIM CLOSE for dear life:

MCGIVENS

The padre wouldn't talk. The kid's a witness.

JOAQUIN

I'm sorry, Mama --

ELENA

-- shhh, it's okay, Mi Amor --

Elena pulls Joaquin closer, a lioness protecting her cub --

114 EXT. THE VINEYARD - RAILROAD TUNNEL EXIT POINT - NIGHT 114

Zorro emerges unspooling the fuse. He slices off the tip and WHISTLES: TORNADO gallops in from the treeline. Alejandro strikes a match, the fuse begins to BURN down the tunnel...

Leaping into the saddle, Alejandro sees a cyclops LANTERN LIGHT appear down the road: a COACH is approaching from the Hacienda. Zorro VEERS Tornado into the grape vines as the coach PASSES. Ferroq is at the reins, McGivens rides alongside. Alejandro's eyes NARROW, watching as the coach stops at the "winery" entrance. ARMAND exits first, followed by:

ELENA AND JOAQUIN, who are pushed out by Ferroq. He shoves them forward, following Armand INTO THE WINERY! ZORRO'S EYES WIDEN WITH SHOCK, REALIZING WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN:

ZORRO

-- nononononono --

115 INT. RAILROAD TUNNEL LEADING FROM MANUFACTORY - NIGHT 115

THE FUSE IS BURNING, SNAKING A PATH TOWARD THE MANUFACTORY...

116 EXT. VINEYARD - CONTINUOUS 116

ZORRO GALLOPS BACK TOWARD THE MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL --

117 EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS 117

Armand walks briskly, Ferroq and McGivens pushing Elena and Joaquin after him. Armand triggers the secret entrance...

ARMAND

Pity I've attracted the attention of Federal Agents, we'll be forced to take our leave for Europe sooner than expected.

ELENA

What makes you think we're going with you?

ARMAND

What makes you think you have a choice?

And he pushes them down into the underground staircase --

118 INT. TUNNEL LEADING TO MANUFACTORY - CONTINUOUS 118

In the shadowy train tunnel, the BURLY WOOD STOKER stops to take a leak. Unbeknownst to him, he's leaving a POOL OF PEE on the fuse Alejandro's tucked against the track...

119 INT. MOUTH OF TRAIN TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS 119

Zorro races on Tornado to cut the fuse --

120 INT. TUNNEL LEADING TO MANUFACTORY - CONTINUOUS 120

The Stoker zips up, stops... noticing the fuse against the track. Alert, he begins to FOLLOW IT down the track --

121 INT. FURTHER DOWN THE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS 121

The BURNING FUSE rounds a corner. In the distance, activity in the manufactory becomes visible...

ZORRO surges forward on Tornado, his face taut with effort... he might just make it... BUT A SHOVEL SWINGS THROUGH THE AIR CATAPULTING HIM FROM THE SADDLE! The Wood Stoker steps from shadow, holding his shovel. Tornado heels around galloping back down the tunnel. Alejandro scrambles up:

ZORRO
ESTUPIDO! GET BACK HERE!

The guy tosses the shovel aside, levelling his fists:

ZORRO
Trust me, this is a very bad time --

The BURNING FUSE shoots past them -- Zorro DIVES FOR IT, but the Stoker THUMPS him down --

IN THE MANUFACTORY: Armand enters, Ferroq and McGivens pushing Elena and Joaquin onward...

IN THE TUNNEL: Zorro's getting the hell beaten out of him -- SEES THE FUSE moving toward the locomotive, manages to BREAK AWAY only to be TACKLED by the Stoker, Zorro's hand just out of reach of the fuse as it STREAKS ON -- and it's too late, there's no way he'll stop it now...

Except to his surprise, THE FUSE SUDDENLY FIZZLES... having run into the Stoker's POOL OF PEE.

Zorro ATTACKS with renewed vigor -- the Stoker grabs a TORCH, swings wildly at Zorro who deflects, SMASHING the torch from his hand -- it lands... RE-IGNITING THE GODDAMN FUSE!

IN THE MANUFACTORY: Armand stops to confer with Beauregard...

ARMAND

We'll rendez-vous at Clanton's
Pass, you and your men can assume
control of the train there.

A mutual nod, then Beauregard EXITS and Armand moves on --

IN THE TUNNEL: ZORRO'S FACE SLAMS INTO A PULLEY AND CHAIN, dangling from a steel girder that reinforces the tunnel wall. The Stoker NOOSES the chain around Zorro's neck, his eyes POP, choking, fingers reaching desperately for his sword --

THE FUSE is nearing the hanging bottle by the engine --

Zorro rockets the sword handle backward INTO THE STOKER'S GUT. The Stoker doubles over, the chain UNCOILS and Zorro drops...

He lashes his sword SEVERING the chain, the steel pulley FALLING HARD ONTO THE STOKER'S HEAD AND KNOCKING HIM OUT COLD. In a BLUR, Zorro's left the frame --

BY THE PASSENGER CAR, Armand pauses to bow to his fellow knights:

ARMAND

Until we meet again in Europe,
Gentlemen -- au revoir.

Suddenly: ZORRO leaps from the tunnel next to the locomotive, DIVING FOR THE FUSE AS IT REACHES THE HANGING BOTTLE -- AND IN SLOW MOTION, THE BOTTLE DROPS -- FALLING TOWARD THE GROUND -- CENTIMETERS BEFORE IT HITS, ZORRO CATCHES IT AS HE LANDS.

McGivens draws his pistol and FIRES, the bullet ricocheting off the locomotive and SPARKING near the bottle in Zorro's hand. Armand stops McGivens before he fires again:

ARMAND

YOU FOOL, YOU'LL KILL US ALL!

He moves to Zorro, there on the ground, holding the bottle.

ARMAND

... If you please?

Armand gestures for the bottle. A GUARD HAS A GUN TO ELENA'S NECK; FERROO HAS JOAQUIN QUELLED UNDER HIS CRESCENT BLADE.

Zorro reacts, eyes fierce, trapped. Rising, no choice, he hands the bottle to Armand, who sets it on a crate...

ARMAND

... Merci.
(beat)
Your sword.

Zorro tosses it to the ground with a CLANK. Armand signals to McGivens, who SLUGS Zorro in the gut then binds his hands.

ARMAND

... Remove his mask.

ZORRO LOOKS UP FROM BEHIND THE MASK. His eyes meet Elena's. Her's are tear-streaked. Joaquin stands there, unaware he's about to live through the greatest shock of his life.

Finally, McGivens RIPS off the mask EXPOSING ALEJANDRO'S FACE

MCGIVENS

You...

And we PUSH IN on Joaquin as the revelation stuns him...

JOAQUIN

(finally, a whisper)
... Papi?

ALEJANDRO

It's alright, Niño...

Joaquin stares back, reeling. Alejandro growls...

ALEJANDRO

No matter where you go, Armand...
whatever you do... the world isn't
big enough to hide from me.

ARMAND

(touching Elena's cheek)
I can't blame you for loving her...
in spite of everything, so do I.

Elena recoils at his touch. Alejandro's eyes are searing...

ARMAND

Goodbye, De La Vega.

He cuts a look to McGivens, who draws his BOWIE KNIFE and LOOPS IT AROUND ALEJANDRO'S NECK. Joaquin screams "PAPA!" --

ELENA

Armand!

Her eyes are begging him: have mercy... and after a beat:

ARMAND

Out of respect for the love we may still share, Elena, I'll spare your son from seeing this.

He THROWS Elena into the train. Ferroq drags Joaquin in, KICKING AND SCREAMING. Armand boards, says to McGivens:

ARMAND

As soon as we're gone...

Implying: kill him. McGivens tips his hat. The whistle BLASTS as the train begins its journey down the tunnel...

ANGLE THROUGH THE WINDOW OF THE PASSENGER CAR

Alejandro's eyes meet his wife and son's. A soul-breathing look from Elena. Tears streak down Joaquin's face as he BANGS on the window desperately, the train bearing them away. A FIST lashes across Alejandro's chin. He topples on his side, still bound, unable to fight back as McGivens circles:

MCGIVENS

I send you out a sheep amidst the wolves...

122 EXT. RAILROAD TUNNEL EXIT POINT - DAWN 122

The air reverberates with a wild shriek as THE MUNITIONS TRAIN BURSTS FROM THE TUNNEL, smoke rolling from its stack. The train cars WIPE THROUGH SHOT, to reveal...

A MYSTERIOUS RIDER, astride Tornado, galloping toward the tunnel mouth...

123 INT. THE MANUFACTORY - CONTINUOUS 123

McGivens stabs his knee into Alejandro's chest, pinning him to the ground -- he raises his Bowie knife:

MCGIVENS

Shame about your friend, the Padre. He died with God's name on his lips... and a bullet in his heart.
(beat)
You're about to join him.

ZORRO

You first --

He ROCKETS a knee into McGivens' balls and SPRINGS off the floor -- a guard swings a SWORD but Zorro raises his arms and the blade SLICES THE BINDS FROM HIS WRISTS -- he KICKS the guard in the gut, plucks the sword mid-air, and using the tip, snatches up his MASK. He ties it on and WHIPS AROUND:

ZORRO

Let's try that again...

The rest of the guards attack! Zorro spins like a dervish -- engaging all of them simultaneously. McGivens peels himself up -- screw it -- grabs his gun and just before he fires...

FRAY FELIPE LAUNCHES HIMSELF OFF TORNADO AND CRASHES INTO MCGIVENS, KNOCKING THEM BOTH TO THE GROUND. AND FELIPE STARTS TO BEAT THE HOLY HELL OUT OF MCGIVENS -- lab stations tumble, knocking over beakers and A FIRE STARTS...

The knights, the guards, start FLEEING FOR THE EXIT. Felipe HURLS McGivens against a wall -- as he bounces off, Zorro cuts a "Z" into his CHEEK:

ZORRO

That was for Guillermo Cortez --

McGivens touches a finger to his bloody cheek, then HURLS himself forward -- they topple through the flames as...

Zorro grabs a WRENCH and SWINGS it at McGivens' face with such force that HIS WOODEN DENTURES FLY FROM HIS MOUTH, TOWARD THE BOTTLE OF NITRO ARMAND SET ON THE CRATE --

Alejandro and Felipe LEAP onto Tornado, SPURRING him down the tunnel as the dentures KNOCK THE BOTTLE OFF THE CRATE! It falls and CRACKS... INCINERATING IN A NITROGLYCERIN SHOCKWAVE. McGivens BELLOWS:

MCGIVENS

DELIVER ME FROM THE FIRES OF HE--

But he doesn't get to finish that sentence because he DISINTEGRATES INTO ASH as the fire engulfs him --

124

INT. RAILROAD TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

124

Zorro and Felipe GALLOP full-tilt down the track as THE RIVER OF FIRE BARRELS IN BEHIND THEM. It teases the hair on Tornado's tail -- the horse SURGES forward in a burst of adrenaline, Zorro riding hard, almost there -- and finally:

125 EXT. RAILROAD TUNNEL EXIT POINT - DAWN 125

Zorro, Felipe, and Tornado BURST from the tunnel as the wall of flame billows into the air behind them. Zorro REARS Tornado to a stop. Felipe hops off --

ZORRO
Thank God you're alive!

FRAY FELIPE
... I already have.

From under his frock, Felipe pulls out his CRUCIFIX NECKLACE, in which, we see embedded, McGIVENS' BULLET.

FRAY FELIPE
Forgive me, Alejandro, I couldn't protect Joaquin --

ZORRO
Listen: get to the Marshal's office, tell them what Armand's doing here --

FRAY FELIPE
Where are you going?

ZORRO
... To catch a train.

With a SPUR to Tornado's hide, he gallops off down the track--

126 EXT. CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE - DAY 126

Armand's train BLASTS by us, smoke roiling from its stack...

127 INT. NITRO TRANSPORT BOXCAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 127

Nitro-filled crates rock gently on platforms suspended from the ceiling. Armand moves through his arsenal, gloating...

128 INT. PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 128

Elena and Joaquin sit under Ferroq's watchful eye. Armand enters, checks his pocket watch, says to Ferroq:

ARMAND
In twenty minutes we'll meet
Beauregard at Clanton's Pass.
(MORE)

ARMAND (cont'd)
 (indicating Elena and
 Joaquin)
 A carriage will take us to the
 docks from there.

Ferroq nods. Elena just sits, arms around her son, glaring.

ARMAND
 I can learn to forgive you,
 Elena... but you have to meet me
 halfway.

ELENA
 Understand something: I will never
 love you.

Armand cups Joaquin's chin in his hands...

ARMAND
 For your son's sake, you may want
 to change your mind.

JOAQUIN
 ... I can't wait 'til my dad kicks
 your ass.

Armand smiles dismissively. Turns to the window, its shade
 rolled down. He pulls and it snaps up, REVEALING...

THE FACE OF ZORRO, GALLOPING AT FULL SPEED ALONGSIDE THE
 TRAIN! HIS FIST CRASHES THROUGH THE GLASS, KNOCKING ARMAND
 BACK AGAINST THE WALL!

129 EXT. ARMAND'S TRAIN - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 129

Zorro RACES alongside the train...

JOAQUIN pops out the window, lifting his arms to the heavens
 in a VICTORIOUS CHEER! He's quickly sucked back inside as...

130 INT. PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 130

Ferroq hurls him into a seat. Elena MOVES to defend her son
 but CHING: Ferroq's claw blade is suddenly under her chin.
 Armand staggers up, his eyes meeting Elena's. Her's are
 saying: you are dead...

131 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - TENDER CAR - CONTINUOUS 131

On the tender car, the Stoker who fought Zorro earlier is
 gathering wood for the locomotive.

He SEES ZORRO galloping alongside the train. Snarling, he starts HURLING WOOD at Zorro who ducks, then CATCHES A PIECE MID-AIR --

132 INT. PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 132

Armand lashes a SWORD BELT around his waist, ready to fight --

133 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE FLATBED/WOOD TENDER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

On the tender car is a HUGE LOG. The Stoker LIFTS IT UP. The locomotive ENGINEER sees Zorro and reaches for a RIFLE. As the Stoker gets ready to HURL the log at Zorro, Zorro THROWS the piece of wood, HITTING the Stoker who STAGGERS BACK, dropping the log, which CRASHES DOWN on the engineer before he can fire -- he's flung into the ACCELERATOR LEVER --

The locomotive's HUGE CYLINDERS cycle furiously up and down, gaining momentum as the train ROCKETS FORWARD --

Flung forward by the force of the acceleration, the Stoker falls OFF the tender car and CRASHES to the ground where he's nearly TRAMPLED under Tornado's hooves --

134 INT. PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 134

Armand fights for balance as the train surges; so do Joaquin, Elena, and Ferroq. Armand SHOUTS to nearby guards:

ARMAND

GO!!

135 INT. NITRO TRANSPORT BOXCAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 135

CHAINS RATTLING, the nitro crates sway with the accelerating train. A SHOVEL against the wall pitches forward...

136 EXT. ARMAND'S TRAIN - MOVING WITH ZORRO - CONTINUOUS 136

Zorro, galloping on Tornado, reaches for a handle on the side of the train but IT'S MOVING TOO FAST NOW -- and to make matters worse, up ahead is an INCLINE...

Zorro spurs Tornado straight up it. GUARDS appear on the passenger car's rear platform, FIRING at Zorro -- he DUCKS as bullets WHIZ past his head -- UP AHEAD, THE INCLINE TURNS INTO A CLIFF! Eyes determined, Zorro CRACKS the reins increasing speed until...

HORSE AND RIDER LEAP STRAIGHT OFF THE CLIFF! THEY LAND,
PERFECTLY, ON THE ROOF OF THE MOVING TRAIN!

137 INT. PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 137

Armand looks up hearing FOOTFALLS overhead. He unholsters a pistol and begins FIRING through the roof --

138 EXT. ROOF OF PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 138

BULLETS BLAST THROUGH THE ROOF, INCHES FROM TORNADO'S HOOVES!
And as if this weren't enough, the train curves around a hairpin ridge heading into A TUNNEL! SUDDENLY, ZORRO'S ABOUT TO BE PULVERIZED AGAINST THE MOUNTAIN!

Like lightning, he pivots Tornado toward the CATTLE CAR, but because the train's moving so fast in the opposite direction they're literally GALLOPING IN PLACE from boxcar to boxcar -- finally they LEAP through a SKYLIGHT on the roof of the CATTLE CAR, ripping the canvas apart, disappearing INTO THE TRAIN just as it's sucked into the tunnel --

139 INT. CATTLE CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 139

Zorro and Tornado CRASH to the ground. As they regain their bearings, Tornado's head turns to Zorro and SNORTS in anger:

ZORRO
(beat, understated casual)
... What?

140 INT. CABOOSE - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 140

Two more GUARDS look up, having heard the crash through the roof. Slinging RIFLES, they exit through the divider door --

141 EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS 141

The train BLASTS from the tunnel into open desert again...

142 INT. CATTLE CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 142

Through a window, Zorro sees the guards climbing to the ROOF. He LEAPS onto the saddle and spurs Tornado -- the horse BUCKS: FLIPPING HIM through the skylight back onto the roof --

143 EXT. BOXCAR ROOFTOPS - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 143

The guards climb onto the roof, only to find the skylight's shredded canvas flapping in the wind. Below that is Tornado, staring up at them with a SNORT...

GUARD #1
How'd he get down there?!

GUARD #2
I don't know...

ZORRO (O.S.)
He must be a very brave man.

They turn: Zorro knocks them through the skylight into the cattle car. They CRASH under Tornado's rearing hooves, out cold.

Zorro races along the rooftops toward Armand's carriage...

144 INT. PASSENGER CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 144

Armand, rabid, grabs Joaquin:

ARMAND
Let's find out how much your father
truly loves you --

Elena screams NO but Ferroq presses his blade to her throat --
SUDDENLY: the SKYLIGHT above EXPLODES, glass raining down as
ZORRO CRASHES IN, hurtling into Armand, they skid across the
floor and Joaquin goes free --

Seizing the moment, ELENA CRACKS FERROQ'S WINDPIPE, then
sends him skidding in a flurry of KICKS and PUNCHES.
Joaquin, mouth agape, stares at his mother in amazement:

JOAQUIN
Way to go, Mom...

She grabs his hand and they BOLT out the door. Ferroq goes
to help Armand but Armand screams:

ARMAND
GET THE BOY!!

Ferroq races after Elena and Joaquin. Armand rises to face
ZORRO, whose eyes burn like the grim reaper. They draw their
swords, mirrored surfaces reflecting SUNLIGHT...

ZORRO
I've already asked God's
forgiveness for killing you.

ARMAND
When you see him, tell him you
spoke too soon --

AND THEY GO BALLISTIC, blades SPARKING as they meet --

145 INT. NITRO BOXCAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 145

Elena and Joaquin race through the crates of nitro. Joaquin, for the first time experiencing real danger, is scared to death. Elena hurls open the back door, leading him out to...

146 EXT. DIVIDER PLATFORMS - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 146

... The DIVIDER PLATFORM linking the nitro car to the cattle car. Scenery RACES PAST in a BLUR. Elena gestures onward to the cattle car, SHOUTING against the wind:

ELENA
I want you to keep going!!

JOAQUIN
What are you doing?!

ELENA
When the cars stop, get off the
train and follow the tracks back to
town!

JOAQUIN
-- I'm scared!!

And with one look, she's telling him how much she loves him:

ELENA
You're the son of Zorro! You can
do it!
(kisses him fiercely)
GO!

She urges him onto the cattle car platform, then reaches for the LINCHPIN connecting the cars. She pulls it...

MOTHER AND SON LOCK EYES. Elena reaches up towards him, their two hands almost touching before the cars SEPARATE, Joaquin slowing as Elena continues on.

A last look, then Joaquin disappears into the cattle car...

147 INT. CATTLE CAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 147

He enters, surprised to find TORNADO, who whinnies hello --

JOAQUIN
How'd you get in here?!

148 I/E. PASSENGER CAR/ LUMBER CAR/ LOCOMOTIVE - CONTINUOUS 148

ZORRO AND ARMAND: Armand's an Olympic swordsman but Zorro manages to SLASH his chest. Armand's shirt RIPS open, his chest begins to BLEED RED WITH THE MARK OF A "Z"...

ZORRO
So the devil will know who sent
you --

Armand CHARGES in fury, their swords LOCK, in a SURGE of power, Armand REARS Zorro back -- he TUMBLES out onto:

THE COUPLING LINKING THE PASSENGER CAR TO THE TENDER CAR

The ground RACES BY at frightening speed below Zorro's head. Armand ATTACKS, Zorro parrying but he's at a disadvantage and Armand knocks his sword away -- it LANDS on the tender car -- Armand CLAMPS a boot on Zorro's arm and raises his sword for the kill --

ARMAND
Au revoir, De La Vega!

Zorro grabs a STEEL PIN off the coupling and SMASHES IT across Armand's foot. Armand SCREAMS, hurtling back into the passenger car. Zorro climbs onto the tender car, grabs his sword. Armand follows...

149 INT. NITRO BOXCAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 149

Dark. Ferroq enters, claw-blade at the ready. He takes a few steps then stops, sensing something. Turns -- A SHOVEL IS MID-SWING: Elena WHACKS Ferroq in the face. HE CRASHES BACK. She keeps swinging until he HOOKS the shovel with his claw and PULLS, HURLING her over his head into the wall.

Ferroq rises. Elena rises. A SECOND BLADE snaps from Ferroq's other sleeve. HE'S GOT TWO! And he SPINS at her, Elena ducking as Ferroq's blades slice into one of the wooden crates, splitting it open and revealing the nitro bottles --

One of his blades SEVERs a chain on the platform -- it TEETERS and the NITRO-FILLED CRATES SLIDE TOWARD THE EDGE -- at the last second, they PULL TAUT, held in place by chains:

150 EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS 150

The middle of nowhere. Slowly, the cattle car and caboose slide into frame and stop. A cargo door opens and Joaquin hops out. Sees the train in the distance, chugging onward.

JOAQUIN

... This sucks.

Tornado whinnies his agreement.

JOAQUIN

'Follow the tracks to town' she says... 'You're the son of Zorro,' she says...

(light bulb)

Wait a minute... I'm the son of Zorro.

HARD CUT TO:

151 EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - DAY 151

Joaquin, astride Tornado, LEAPS from the cattle car. SCREAMING with glee, he rides after the train at a full gallop!

152 EXT. ARMAND'S TRAIN - AERIAL SHOT OVER TRAIN - CONTINUOUS 152

SOARING OVER THE TRAIN as Armand and Zorro's sword fight continues: Armand swinging from the wood tender, Zorro parrying from the locomotive rooftop -- he FLIPS over Armand's head, landing on the wood behind Armand.

A stray plank spins through the air knocking Armand off the tender, where he CRASHES to the floor of the locomotive cab. Struggling to his feet, he looks up to see...

ZORRO'S BOOTS fly into his face. Armand's hurtled back, CRASHING to the floor again and landing next to the unconscious Engineer... and the Engineer's RIFLE.

- 153 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - ROOFTOP - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 153
- Leaping onto the front barrel of the locomotive, Zorro peers into one of the flatbed's two windows looking for Armand. He isn't there. Zorro looks through the second window...
- Only to find himself staring INTO THE RIFLE BARREL -- Armand FIRES, a bullet TEARING through Zorro's shoulder!
- He's flung back, his sword FALLING beneath the locomotive's wheels where it's CRUSHED. Zorro falls with it, managing at the LAST POSSIBLE SECOND to grab onto a guard rail...
- 154 INT. NITRO BOXCAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 154
- Ferroq SLAMS Elena against the wall and LOCKS HER THERE with one of his blades. Dripping menace, he slowly DRAGS THE OTHER BLADE ACROSS HER CHEEK, drawing blood. She cries out.
- He rears back for the kill but she DUCKS, his hand SLASHING THROUGH one of the PNEUMATIC PIPES: COMPRESSED STEAM EXPLODES OUT SCALDING HIS FACE! HE RECOILS, SCREAMING --
- 155 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - CONTINUOUS 155
- Zorro hangs from the guard rail by his good arm, feet dangling inches above the massive steel cylinders as they pump up and down. He struggles to pull himself up, but he's losing his grip against the PUMMELING WIND --
- Up ahead, he sees CLANTON'S PASS: a GROUP OF MEN waiting there...
- 156 EXT. CLANTON'S PASS - CONTINUOUS 156
- COLONEL BEAUREGARD, by a waiting stagecoach, watches slack-jawed as Armand's DRIVERLESS TRAIN blasts toward him, Zorro dangling off the side...
- 157 INT. NITRO BOXCAR/ EXT. CLANTON'S PASS - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 157
- Ferroq emerges through the smoke, snarling, his face raw-red like a demon. Elena retreats through the dense mist but she's backed against a wall -- she reaches into an open crate and GRABS A BOTTLE OF NITRO, holding it up like a shield! Ferroq FREEZES, the blade inches from Elena --

ELENA

CATCH!

AND SHE TOSSES THE BOTTLE AT HIM! With a gasp, Ferroq CATCHES it -- that's when Elena KNEES HIM IN THE NUTS -- he DROPS the bottle, now she catches it -- and as Ferroq's doubled over in pain, ELENA STUFFS THE BOTTLE DOWN THE BACK OF HIS PANTS:

ELENA

Drinks are on me --

So saying, she KICKS FERROQ out the cargo door -- he FLIES into open air, right at:

158 EXT. CLANTON'S PASS - CONTINUOUS 158

COLONEL BEAUREGARD, WHO SCREAMS AS FERROQ DROPS IN FRONT OF HIM AT A HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR... AND THEY BOTH DETONATE! The stagecoach is blown to smithereens, wheels and axles FLYING. Debris smashes into a TRACK DIVIDER, it JOSTLES FORWARD and:

159 EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 159

The track SHIFTS, Armand's train now CHANGING COURSE --

160 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 160

The force of the EXPLOSION hurtles Zorro back up onto the locomotive barrel, the track ahead veering a new course...

161 EXT. NITRO BOXCAR - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 161

Elena grabs a handrail, steadying herself as the train shifts. All around her, like a time bomb, the nitro SWAYS...

162 EXT. BEAR POINT HISTORIC SITE - DAY 162

The statehood celebration: beneath the California flag, Governor Riley addresses a crowd of HAPPY PEASANTS from a stationary caboose platform. A young, well dressed CONGRESSMAN stands beside him. Guards scan for trouble...

GOVERNOR RILEY

Today, the flag of California is joined by the stars and stripes of the American flag, symbolizing the hope and freedom of a united nation...

163 EXT. HILLTOP - CONTINUOUS 163

On a hilltop above the tracks, Joaquin gallops to a stop with Tornado. In the distance, he sees Armand's train thundering onward. His POV whips over to see...

THE STATEHOOD CELEBRATION ON THE SAME TRACK AS ARMAND'S TRAIN!

Searching desperately, JOAQUIN SPOTS SOMETHING ELSE WE DO NOT SEE. SPURRING Tornado, they race off again --

164 EXT. LUMBER CAR/ LOCOMOTIVE - CONTINUOUS 164

Zorro staggers to his feet on the front of the locomotive, his gunshot arm bleeding heavily. When he turns, ARMAND is there slashing at him, demented --

165 EXT. DESERT - HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS 165

Joaquin GALLOPS at full speed down the hill --

166 EXT. BEAR POINT HISTORIC SITE - CONTINUOUS 166

Governor Riley gestures to the Young Congressman standing beside him:

GOVERNOR RILEY

And now, with the ratification of this document before our honored Congressman from Washington, California officially assumes all rights and responsibilities bestowed upon the United States of America...

WILD APPLAUSE. The proud faces of the people. The Governor leans in to sign a DOCUMENT, when suddenly THE TRACKS BEGIN TO RUMBLE. The peasants peer ahead to see ARMAND'S TRAIN barreling toward them in the distance --

- 167 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 167
 Weaponless, Zorro DODGES Armand's blade and manages to get the upper hand: grabbing Armand's head, he SMASHES it against the smoke stack then HURLS Armand against the guard rail. Armand loses his sword, it TUMBLES over the train. He head-butts Zorro who staggers backward. They grab each other in a CHOKEHOLD, faces inches apart, eyes glaring HATE --
- 168 EXT. BEAR POINT HISTORIC SITE - CONTINUOUS 168
 The train closes its half-mile distance at INCREDIBLE SPEED. The peasants start SCREAMING IN TERROR, RUNNING in panic --
- 169 EXT. HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS 169
 Joaquin rears Tornado in front of a small MAINTENANCE SHACK, beside which is another TRACK DIVIDER.
 Leaping from the saddle, Joaquin pulls with all his might to wrench the divider forward... but it won't budge!
- 170 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 170
 Zorro and Armand punch the living hell out of each other, pausing only instantly to look up and see the governor's stationary train and fleeing peasants up ahead --
- 171 EXT. HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS 171
 Joaquin keeps pulling on the track divider but finally TUMBLES BACK -- he can't do it. Grabbing a HAMMER from the maintenance shed, he starts whacking at it... BUT THE HAMMER HANDLE BREAKS OFF!
 ARMAND'S TRAIN BARRELS CLOSER TO THE STATIONARY TRAIN, WE'RE TALKING A MATTER OF YARDS NOW -- FINALLY TORNADO REARS UP, HIS FRONT HOOVES KNOCKING THE DIVIDER FORWARD AND --
- 172 EXT. TRACKS - CONTINUOUS 172
THE TRACK SWITCHES AGAIN, ARMAND'S TRAIN VEERING OFF MILLISECONDS BEFORE THE TRAINS COLLIDE!

173 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 173

No time for relief: Armand reaches for a KNIFE in his boot and SWINGS IT at Zorro who catches it -- they struggle, the blade closing on Zorro's heart -- and just before it pierces:

ANOTHER HAND GRABS ARMAND'S. He looks up -- IT'S ELENA! She WHACKS him with a piece of WOOD. He TUMBLES over the front of the locomotive, landing on the COW CATCHER...

174 EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - CONTINUOUS 174

The train ROARS by a WATER TOWER. And now up ahead, the coup de grace: THERE'S A DEAD END DEPOT A HUNDRED YARDS AWAY!

175 EXT. LOCOMOTIVE - MOVING - CONTINUOUS 175

As Elena helps Alejandro to his feet, they see the dead end. And just when it looks like they're truly goners...

ZORRO LASHES OUT HIS BULLWHIP, it coils around the passing water tower -- sweeping Elena into his arms, THEY SWING TO SAFETY from Armand's train as it CONTINUES ON AT BREAKNECK SPEED --

ON THE COW CATCHER

ARMAND'S EYES GROW HUGE SECONDS BEFORE HE COLLIDES WITH THE DEAD END DEPOT AND ONE-BY-ONE, THE BOXCARS EXPLODE LIKE DOMINOES!

Blinding light against the desert basin... steel and debris roil overhead in a FIRESTORM... and then...

There's a silence as smoke fills the frame...

176 EXT. BEAR POINT HISTORIC SITE - CONTINUOUS 176

SMOKE drifts over the crowd of peasants and begins to dissipate. Slowly, the people realize they're safe...

A gust of WIND blows the RATIFICATION DOCUMENT off the back of the caboose landing. It wisps through the air, landing on the ground, stopping at...

A PAIR OF BLACK BOOTS. BOOM UP to reveal ZORRO, his eyes piercing from behind his mask. He picks up the document and hands it back to Governor Riley, smiles in affirmation...

ZORRO

Your people are waiting, Governor.

Buoyed, Governor Riley takes the paper and --

TIMECUT:

177 EXT. REAR PLATFORM OF GOVERNOR'S TRAIN - CONTINUOUS 177

The Governor finishes SIGNING the document. He slides the paper across to the YOUNG CONGRESSMAN, who STAMPS it with a CONGRESSIONAL SEAL:

CONGRESSMAN

Welcome to the union, Governor.

The people EXPLODE WITH CHEERS as the American flag is hoisted high beside the flag of California. It's a celebration after all. The Congressman turns to Zorro --

CONGRESSMAN

It would appear a grave disaster's been narrowly avoided. I assume you're to thank for our good fortune?

Zorro removes his hat...

ZORRO

Not me, Congressman.

He tosses the hat over the crowd. A SMALL HAND catches it -- Joaquin. He's grinning ear-to-ear, held close by Elena. She takes the hat from his hand -- we think, for a moment, to be stern. And instead, puts it on his head, tipping its brim up so Joaquin can see. A sweet moment.

The congressman waves his thanks to the boy.

ZORRO

Have a safe trip back to Washington, Congressman.

CONGRESSMAN

(offering a hand)
The name's Lincoln... Abraham Lincoln.

And as Zorro shakes hands with Young Mr. Lincoln, we RISE UP over the scene and...

DISSOLVE TO:

178 EXT. FRAY FELIPE'S CHURCH - DAY 178

The church bell rings...

179 INT. FRAY FELIPE'S CHURCH - FELIPE'S STUDY - DAY 179

Alejandro, in his Sunday best, ties his tie in a mirror.
Felipe appears behind him...

FRAY FELIPE

Now that's a true disguise: you
almost look respectable.

ALEJANDRO

(a smile)
Shouldn't you be rehearsing the
vows?

FRAY FELIPE

Nah... I've performed them once
before.

Joaquin appears at the door, dressed in his Sunday best.
Felipe smiles and heads out, giving them a moment alone.

FRAY FELIPE

I'll be outside.

Now it's quiet. Alejandro approaches, fixing Joaquin's
slightly crooked tie...

ALEJANDRO

Look at you. A real heartbreaker,
huh?

JOAQUIN

Dad, don't get sappy.

ALEJANDRO

Hey, you're my best man. You have
to put up with me all day.

A moment, the boy looking up at his father who helps him with
his tie...

JOAQUIN

Dad? I've been thinking.

ALEJANDRO

About what?

JOAQUIN

All the families out there who need Zorro.

(simply)

You don't have to give it up... I won't be mad anymore. I promise.

That stops Alejandro. Joaquin's eyes are full of forgiveness. And yes, love.

ALEJANDRO

Listen to me, Niño: I can't think of one thing on this earth, one single thing, more amazing than watching you grow up. I won't miss another second of it.

(beat)

Zorro has been many men. He will ride again... but it won't be me behind the mask.

JOAQUIN

... Then who?

Joaquin's smile is sly. And now so is Alejandro's. A moment of silent understanding. Alejandro reaches out a hand...

ALEJANDRO

You know Zorro. He could be... anyone at all.

And off that, they exit together, father and son, hand in hand. Our musical score SOARS, full of resolution and the promise of things to come...

A FLASH BULB EFFECTS A CUT TO:

180

EXT. MISSION SANTA LUCIA - COURTYARD - DAY

180

A WOOD BOX CAMERA is lowered, the photographer pulling out a slide to reveal ALEJANDRO and ELENA kissing at the altar, their second marriage having just been consecrated by FRAY FELIPE.

They turn, beaming down at Joaquin, the ring bearer, looking up at them. And then, as in the beginning, we are lulled by the same YOUNG MAN'S VOICE:

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

How shall I end a story that has no ending?

CLOSE - JOAQUIN'S EYES

Filling with tears of hope as he gazes at his parents, reunited... at last.

And amazingly, the eyes begin to CHANGE -- a MORPH as the boy becomes a man -- older, wiser, Twenty One years old now. This is the very same shot we began our story with. And now we understand, Joaquin has been our narrator...

OLDER JOAQUIN'S VOICE

... Perhaps, with this confession:
I share all the imperfections of my family -- my father's stubbornness, my mother's pride.... but also, I pray: his courage, and her dignity.

WIDER ANGLE: Joaquin's face is HIDDEN IN SHADOW; for now, his eyes will have to be enough. He is writing at the table once occupied by Don Diego before him, then Alejandro, in...

181 INT. ZORRO'S SECRET CAVE - DAY

181

And now, in the distance, the MISSION BELL TOLLS TO SUMMON ZORRO. The pen FREEZES in Joaquin's hand. His eyes SNAP UP: alert, determined. QUICK CUTS: gloves, boots, the cape -- all donned with speed.

OLDER JOAQUIN'S VOICE

My name is Joaquin De La Vega. It is a plain, ordinary name. And it has helped me to appear invisible ... hidden behind the mask worn, in spirit, by both my parents... whose steady love has been a compass, pointing me toward my destiny.

Joaquin's shadowed face TURNS INTO VIEW, eyes burning behind:

THE MASK OF ZORRO

182 EXT. DE LA VEGA HACIENDA - DUSK

182

Young Zorro GALLOPS AWAY at a full tilt, kicking up dust in a flourish -- charging off to new adventures... and we begin to RISE... where two figures take shape before us...

ELENA AND ALEJANDRO, ON THE VERANDA. Holding each other, all the feeling rises to their throats as...

YOUNG ZORRO REARS UP ON TORNADO, draws his sword and WAVES -- a grand silhouette against the sun's spectral glow.

Alejandro pulls Elena closer, their hearts swelling with pride. And that's where we leave them, growing older together on the veranda...

Just like they promised.

FADE OUT.

T H E E N D