

THE LAST HISTORIAN

The Last Historian

FADE IN:

INT. JACK SINCLAIR'S OFFICE, FBL - DAY

JACK SINCLAIR (40s) sits behind a clean and sterile desk in a clean and sterile room. He is clean-shaven, has short cropped hair, a dark suit, white shirt and thin black tie. His voice is even, unemotional, smooth.

JACK

Agent Manuel Luhon, you have a very impressive record at the academy.

MANUEL LUHON (20s) is across the desk where he tries to mimic the older man in hair style, clothes and demeanor. He is obviously nervous but attempts to disguise it.

JACK (CONT'D)

My family was on the forefront of implementing Unity Culture. Visionaries who saw into the future and knew what was needed. The Sinclair family is synonymous with Uni Culture. Defending the Uni society is like defending my own family.

MANUEL

Yes sir.

JACK

My agents protect the integrity of the society we have built. The best of the best.

MANUEL

I am your man, Senior Agent Sinclair.

JACK

Are you?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

ESMERALDA LUHON (20s) lies in the bed with her new daughter in her arms, BABY KIKI.

JACK (V.O.)
 This is Capital City, the
 headquarters for The Unity Alliance
 Government and the heart of the
 Unity Cultural Standards.

Manuel leans in, sees Esmeralda is there and enters. She
 proudly shows him the baby and holds her up but he backs
 away, uninterested.

ESMERALDA
 She's your daughter, Manuel. Take
 her, let her see her father.

Instead, he proudly announces...

MANUEL
 I got the position. I am the new
 Special Agent of the Enforcement
 Division of the Federal Bureau of
 Language. I will answer directly
 to Jack Sinclair, the head of the
 department.

JACK (V.O.)
 Agents under my command must be
 willing to sacrifice everything
 until the state of cultural purity
 has been achieved.

MANUEL
 I have to go back to the office for
 orientation. I start tomorrow.

ESMERALDA
 Can anything be more important than
 then this new life?

MANUEL
 Giving her a great society in which
 to live. Surely she will
 understand.

Before Esmeralda can respond, Manuel is gone. With a SIGH,
 Esmeralda looks lovingly at her daughter.

ESMERALDA
 If it costs me my life, I will not
 have you grow up as an
 inconsequential cog in a mindless
 cultural machine.

She kisses the baby.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

My dear, sweet ... Kiki. Kiki
Luhon, you shall be a historian.

INT. KIKI'S BEDROOM, ESMERALDA'S APARTMENT - DAY

KIKI LUHON (16) crawls from under her bed with a medallion on a chain that she puts around her neck then tucks everything under her top. She wears light gray clothing, unadorned without any distinguishing characteristics (similar to plain hospital scrubs).

ESMERALDA (O.S.)

Kiki, you will be late for school.

KIKI

COMING, MOM.

She grabs an electronic tablet and stuffs it into a nondescript backpack then rushes out.

INT. KITCHEN, ESMERALDA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The sterile kitchen lacks any homey touches, it is functional. Esmeralda removes a food product from a package of Uni Value Chef prepackaged meal that has blue and white with red accented labels and places it in a microwave. She pours juice into a plain glass from packaging of the same design and nondescript labeling. DING, breakfast is done and on the table.

KIKI

I am so tired of this color.

ESMERALDA

In a few months you will be promoted to the next grade then you can wear something else.

KIKI

Yeah, same dull clothes, different color.

ESMERALDA

Do you have it?

Kiki sits and looks at the food on the white square plate and frowns, her voice sarcastic.

KIKI

Yea, egg sandwich and orange juice.

ESMERALDA

Standard requirement for a student of the Capital City public school system. Is it safe?

Kiki touches her chest.

KIKI

Right where it always is, Mom.
When will you tell me what it is?

ESMERALDA

When the time is right, I will tell you the medallion's meaning. For now, I need you to keep it protected.

KIKI

What's a historian, Mom?

ESMERALDA

Where did you hear that term?

Kiki looks at her mother as though to say that the older woman should know. Esmeralda shrugs with a SIGH.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

I wish that I did not have secrets.
I wish you lived in a world where knowledge was so cherished it was not hidden away but searched for.
But this is not yet that world.

She touches the medallion under Kiki's top.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

So, for now, do as I ask and don't ask questions. ... Please...?

Kiki wants to say something else but finally nods.

KIKI

Yes, Mother.

Esmeralda eyes her with an impish smile.

ESMERALDA

Yes, Mother? Since when do you use the culturally correct term.

Kiki grins back with the same mischievous expression. They share an unspoken joke.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

Eat. You must have food energy to
memorize the meaningless dribble
they pass off as knowledge.

Kiki takes a bite of the egg sandwich and chews without much
pleasure.

KIKI

Why do they make this stuff
tasteless?

MONTAGE - KIKI TRAVELS TO SCHOOL

-- EXT. STREETS, CAPITAL CITY - DAY - Kiki bounces from the
nondescript apartment building where EITO (16) waits. He is
of Japanese descent, lean and energetic but dressed in the
same nondescript clothing as her including the color.

KIKI

Eito.

They race off together into the commuters wearing the drab
garb of their profession, men and women are the same; service
people in plain shirts and pants, manual workers in
coveralls, office personnel in dark suits, trousers, white
shirts and thin ties. Children are dressed like Kiki with
different colors for their grade levels.

-- EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE, THE CITY - DAY - Kiki and Eito swipe
their Unity ID cards to enter.

-- INT. SUBWAY STOP, CAPITAL CITY - DAY - Kiki and Eito
excitingly greet pretty young RAJI (16) who waits for the
train among people dressed like them in the same dull
clothing but assorted colors. She is of Indian decent.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Raji.

EITO

Raji.

The three kids board the train.

-- EXT. COURTYARD OF THE CAPITAL CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY -
Kiki, Eito and Raji rush toward the school then Kiki spots
JONATHAN (16) and waves to him. The teenager of English
ancestry is a bit too heavysset for his height, a sign that he
eats anything.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Jonathan, come on, we'll be late.

END MONTAGE

INT. CLASSROOM, CAPITAL CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan enter, just four members of a group all dressed the same with the same backpacks. The room is sterile, plain desks and chairs, and walls. The TEACHER waits at the head of the class. She is in the same clothing as the students including the color.

TEACHER

Today, we shall learn about how a great man of vision, Jack Sinclair, long ago wrote the definitive word on the need for cultural purity.

Kiki glances over to Raji and rolls her eyes. Raji makes a face in return and Kiki LAUGHS.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Kiki, you have something to add to the lesson?

KIKI

I was just wondering what language Jack Sinclair wrote in.

The class GIGGLES and the teacher SIGHS in frustration. This is not the first time she has had to explain.

TEACHER

Basic, Kiki. We have gone over this before. Basic is the language of civilization. It's all humanity needs to speak.

KIKI

But there were other cultures, other languages--

TEACHER

(angrily)

They were destroyed because more than one language or more than one culture caused chaos. Some have tried to reinstate those inferior cultures and languages but it is foolish to improve on Basic as our one language and the Uni Culture.

(sarcastically)

They are pretend languages. They are nothing but gibberish.

There are SNICKERS among the class but then the teacher's expression changes to stern toward Kiki.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Now, if we can have your attention
on the lesson...

The teacher's voice drolls into the background as a chastened
Kiki drops into daydreams.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Esmeralda walks out into the commuter traffic dressed as a
service worker.

FBL AGENT (V.O.)

Suspect is on the move.

EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY

The children march out in formation then the teacher releases
them and they disperse into their social groups. HARRISON
(16) bumps Kiki intentionally. Jonathan, Eito and Raji are
with her.

HARRISON

You're clumsy, Kiki Luhon.

KIKI

And you're a conformist, Harrison.

HARRISON

(stunned)

Thank you.

KIKI

It was not a compliment.

Harrison is in her face.

HARRISON

No one cares what you think.
You're a non-conformist.

KIKI

(proudly)

I am a historian.

HARRISON

(snorts)

What is that, dork girl? And who
cares? I, on the other hand, am at
the top of the class.

RAJI

Stupid boy. There are no published records of our scores.

JONATHAN

Because we wouldn't want kids like you to feel bad about yourselves.

HARRISON

HA. Shows you want you know. What any on you know.

(proudly)

My name is always at the top of any list of the class. And yours, Kiki Luhon, is always on the bottom. You and your...

KIKI

They are my history posse.

HARRISON

Posse? You don't even know what that word means. And there is no such thing as history. There is only Uni Culture. Uni Culture present, Uni Culture past and Unit Culture future.

Triumphantly, Harrison marches off, his nose in the air. But Kiki will not be deterred and smiles to the others.

KIKI

What do you have?

EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Kiki, Jonathan, Eito and Raji hurry around behind a pillar. Jonathan takes out a key from under his clothes. WOW, the others are impressed.

EITO

What is it?

JONATHAN

It's called a key. It was once used to lock doors and stuff.

RAJI

Lock them?

JONATHAN

People put it in a slot and turned it. Then a door couldn't be opened.

KIKI

We should write a book on it.

Jonathan is pleased with the idea. Then Eito produces a picture of a Samurai warrior and the kids OOH and AHH.

EITO

It's a Samurai warrior.

Kiki looks closer at it.

KIKI

He looks like you.

EITO

(whispers)

My people were once called Japanese and these were the soldiers who fought for them.

JONATHAN

Like FBL agents--?

KIKI

(angrily)

NO.

(calmer)

No. These Samurai warriors had to have honor. FBL agents...

RAJI

Kiki, are you sure that this is what historians do?

KIKI

(definitely)

Yes.

(less definitively)

At least, I think so...

EXT. STREETS, CAPITAL CITY - SAME TIME

Esmeralda glances around then ducks into the nondescript shop.

FBL AGENT (V.O.)

Subject has entered.

LING HUANG (20s) strolls along, stops and touches his ear.

FBL AGENT (V.O.)
Agent Huang is in place and signals
that he is going inside.

MANUEL (V.O.)
All units prepare to move on my
command.

INT. STORE - SAME TIME

Ling walks through the store of electronic tablets to the back behind the counter where Esmeralda waits in a partially opened hidden door.

ESMERALDA
Ling? What are you doing here?

LING
I want to attend the meeting.

ESMERALDA
You were not invited.

LING
I can be a historian, Esmeralda--

ESMERALDA
Go home. When you are ready then
we will invite you--

BAM, the front and back doors fly open and a FBL SWAT Team rushes in and prevent her from closing the door. There is SCREAMING and SHOUTING as Esmeralda is arrested. She glares at Ling.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)
Traitor.

Then she is dragged away. Manuel enters from the opposite door so she does not see him. Manuel nods with pleasure at the open hidden door.

MANUEL
Well done, Special Agent Huang.

LING
Thank you, Sir. Great praise
coming from the head of the
Enforcement Department.

INT. BASEMENT UNDER STORE - DAY

Manuel and Ling descend the stairs. The room is filled with items of all kinds and printed and handmade books.

MANUEL
(whispers)
A library.

Ling is secretly pleased with how amazed Manuel is at the sight. Manuel picks a handmade book up and examines it.

MANUEL (CONT'D)
This is an evil place, Special Agent Huang. Collect it all. And send a team to the criminal's apartment. Confiscate everything there, as well.

LING
Yes, Special Agent Luhon.

Ling hurries up the stairs while Manuel looks around.

MANUEL
How do such traitors come to be?

INT. HALLWAY, FBL - DAY

A determined Manuel marches with a pair of sunglasses in hand. Ling trails after him. Agent MAYNARD waits at the door to the interrogation room. She holds an electronic tablet out as a means of stopping Manuel. He is annoyed.

MANUEL
Is there a problem, Agent Maynard?

Maynard is tentative.

MAYNARD
There is a child, Special Agent...

MANUEL
Who should be sent to Child Services. Standard procedure.

MAYNARD
The father...

She glances back at Ling and tries to keep her voice low.

MAYNARD (CONT'D)
...he might want the child.

MANUEL

Father? There is no legal father.
(insistently)
I can assure you of that.

Now Maynard is really uncomfortable.

MAYNARD

That is not necessarily true...

Manuel finally looks at the electronic tablet Maynard is trying to show him.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, FBL - CONTINUOUS

Esmeralda sits handcuffed to a table. BAM, Manuel bursts in, sunglasses in hand, with Ling behind him. Ling has on his sunglasses and quickly steps up beside Manuel, his voice a whisper.

LING

Sir, your glasses...?

But Manuel ignores him, his intense focus is on Esmeralda.

MANUEL

YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
DIVORCE.

ESMERALDA

Hello, Manuel.

That allows Manuel time to resume his calm demeanor.

MANUEL

You were supposed to deal with the formalities of the divorce.

ESMERALDA

I was responsible for so much in our marriage. I was bound to have flubbed a thing or two.

MANUEL

We are still married. I have partial custody...

He glances over at Ling and so cannot finish the sentence.

ESMERALDA

I want to see her.

MANUEL

You have lost any rights to make demands, criminal.

ESMERALDA

(defiantly)

I am not a criminal. I am a historian. I want to talk to my daughter.

MANUEL

That - little person is no longer your concern. She will be dealt with as such persons are. By the good will and wisdom of the government.

He had fully recovered and remembers his sunglasses. He places them on and sits across from her.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Now that I have your Grand Library, I have shut down your little group of conspirators.

But he sees a flash of pleasure in her face and his arrogance is shaken. He knows that he made a mistake.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I'll track down every one of your co-criminals and we will put an end to your cultural crimes.

He points angrily at her.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You will be the last historian.

ESMERALDA

I want to see our daughter.

MANUEL

You will be sent to a rehab center. Work well on conforming to the Uni Culture and you may one day see her again.

Manuel abruptly stands and leaves before Esmeralda expected. Ling is also caught off guard and has to quickly follow. Esmeralda tries to stand but the cuff hold her to the table.

ESMERALDA
YOU KNOW I WILL NEVER CONFORM. IT
IS CRUEL NOT TO ALLOW ME TO SEE OUR
DAUGHTER.

But Manuel and Ling are gone and the door closes.

INT. HALLWAY, FBL - CONTINUOUS

Manuel hurries out of the interrogation room and walks quickly as he whips off his sunglasses in disgust and Ling tries to catch up to him.

LING
Special Agent Luhon, that can't be
all to your interrogation.

Manuel suddenly twirls around and is in the unexpected Ling's face.

MANUEL
You fool. That was not the Grand
Library.

LING
But you saw all those books and the
other materials. It will take our
evidence agents weeks to classify
and catalogue everything we took
from the library.

MANUEL
It was a workshop or transitional
station or something to that effect
but it was not the Grand Library.

Before Ling can protest further, Manuel growls at him.

MANUEL (CONT'D)
I know that woman. I know her
better than anyone else. And when
I mentioned the Grand Library and
looked into her face, I knew we had
not found it.

He thumps a finger in Ling's chest.

MANUEL (CONT'D)
And you are responsible for our
failing to locate it. You called
for the arrest too soon.

He turns and marches away.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Now I have to correct your mistake.

Manuel disappears down the hallway and leaves Ling to fume, his expression of sheer anger says it all.

INT. MANUEL'S OFFICE, FBL - DAY

Manuel enters the sterile office where HECTOR and Kiki wait. He is immediately annoyed as he walks around and sits.

MANUEL

Who are you and why did you bring this child to my office?

HECTOR

Child Management Agent Hector, Special Agent Luhon. I bought your daughter here--

MANUEL

My what?

KIKI

I don't have a father.

HECTOR

The official records show that Kiki Luhon is your legal daughter.

MANUEL

That's because her mother failed to correctly terminate our marriage contract.

HECTOR

Her mother is a criminal--

KIKI

My mom is not a criminal.

Hector cringes at the use of the term mom, but continues.

HECTOR

--and as such cannot retain custody. Therefore, it falls to the next legal relative, which is you.

MANUEL

What if I don't want her?

KIKI

And I definitely don't want him.

HECTOR

Then she will be turned over to a
Child Management facility.

Manuel shrugs, no concern in his voice.

MANUEL

Okay, do that.

Hector obviously does not like the idea. He moves closer to
Manuel and speaks softly.

HECTOR

It would not look good for a
special agent to have a legal child
in the care of Child Management.

(pauses for effect)

Some might get the wrong impression
of that special agent's competence.

Manuel initially flairs in anger then realizes Hector is
right. He considers his options and they are not good.

MANUEL

Right. I understand. Perhaps I
should keep her in my custody until
I can make other arrangements.

HECTOR

A wise decision.

KIKI

I am not going anywhere with this
creep and neither one of you can
make me. I want to see Mom.

Hector fights to retain his low key tone.

HECTOR

Child Management facilities are
very regimented. There are a lot
of rules and severe punishment for
those who disobey.

KIKI

Then I'll live on my own in Mom's
apartment.

HECTOR

You are only sixteen. The law does not allow you to live unsupervised and your mother's apartment has been seized.

Kiki considers her options and is equally irritated by them. Finally, she nods. Hector is passively pleased and holds an electronic tablet out.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Then, Special Agent Manuel Luhon, are you assuming legal custody of one Kiki Luhon?

Manuel who waves his Unity ID card over it. There is a BEEP.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Then I will leave Kiki Luhon in the care of her father, Manuel Luhon.

Hector quickly leaves. Manuel and Kiki stand in an uncomfortable silence.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel walks in but Kiki holds back, she does not want to enter.

KIKI

I don't want to be here.

MANUEL

Neither one of us has much of a choice. You can thank your mother for that.

He is growing impatient, his hand at the door panel.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I would like to close the door. My neighbors have no need to be involved in my affairs.

Kiki finally steps in and he closes the door.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Your room is the first one on the left.

KIKI

I can't believe that you locked up my mom.

MANUEL

Will you please not use that term.

KIKI

She's your wife. What kind of a husband are you?

MANUEL

She broke the law. She is a cultural criminal. Those who break the law are punished. Your mother is just fortunate that our society is merciful.

KIKI

HA.

MANUEL

(patiently)

If she rehabilitates her life, she will be released to be a conforming citizen.

KIKI

She will never become a conformist.

MANUEL

For the good of a well-ordered society, everyone must conform to Uni Gov standards. The more people conform, the more uniformed and functioning our society will become.

KIKI

How did Mom ever get married to a creep like you.

Kiki storms into her new room.

INT. KIKI'S BEDROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kiki drops into the corner, fingers the medallion and SOBS softly.

ESMERALDA (V.O.)

When the time is right, I will tell you the medallion's meaning. For now, I need you to keep it protected.

She grips the medallion tightly and whispers.

KIKI
I'm coming for you, Mom. I'm
coming.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kiki slips out of her room with her backpack. Manuel is working in the kitchen with his back to her. He puts Uni Value Chef prepackaged meals that have blue and white with red accented labels into the microwave. She tiptoes to the front door and silently leaves.

MANUEL
Is that you?

Manuel places sterile prepared food on the table and leans out of the kitchen. No one is there so he calls down the hallway.

MANUEL (CONT'D)
I have food prepared. Uni Value
Chef, the best Uni Gov has to
offer.

He sits and waits.

MONTAGE - KIKI SEARCHES FOR PLACE TO STAY

-- EXT. REHAB CENTER - NIGHT - Kiki stands at the closed and locked gates with a stern and unsympathetic GUARD on the other side. She is not getting inside tonight.

-- INT. KUMAR APARTMENT - NIGHT - Raji happily greets Kiki but behind her is MS. KUMAR who frowns and shakes her head.

-- INT. EITO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - EITO'S FATHER stands firmly in the doorway with Eito behind him and sad. Kiki is not welcome.

-- INT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - Jonathan leans out and shakes his head.

JONATHAN
Mom says she will have to call your
mother before you can stay over for
the night.

-- EXT. STREETS, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT - Kiki wonders the semi-dark, not so clean parts of the city.

END MONTAGE

EXT. ALLEY, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

Kiki strolls dejectedly when she stops, looks around and realizes she is in a dark place. Suddenly, an OFF-GRIDDER grabs her from behind and twirls her around. He is angry, unshaven and his clothes are mismatched but he is not dirty.

OFF-GRIDDER
What are you doing out here, girl?

She is stunned into silence so he sticks his face into hers.

OFF-GRIDDER (CONT'D)
Are you an off-gridder?

KIKI
I'm Kiki, Kiki Luhon.

Kiki flashes her Unity ID card and Off-Gridder LAUGHS.

OFF-GRIDDER
That's no good here, girl.

KIKI
No, see, I have citizen level credit.

That amuses Off-Gridder.

OFF-GRIDDER
Those wicked cards get you nothing here. We don't like them, don't use them. This is the world of the off-gridders.

KIKI
You don't have Unity ID cards? How do you live?

OFF-GRIDDER
We live anyway we want.

He turns to walk away.

KIKI
WAIT. Wait. I need help. I need a place to stay.

But Off-Gridder continues to walk away. Kiki quickly considers her options then decides to follow.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Can you help me?

Off-Gridder stops and considers her request. Then he moves a trash dumpster from a wall to reveal a hole in the wall. He disappears into the darkness. She SIGHS and trails after him.

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN, CAPITAL CITY - CONTINUOUS

Off-Gridder and Kiki walk from the darkness into a semi-lit area. OFF-GRIDDERS are scattered about with their possessions around them. Some cook a stew on a gas-powered hotplate. An OFF-GRIDDER WOMAN grabs Kiki.

OFF-GRIDDER WOMAN
Ooh, is this a pretty conformist?

Kiki is both scared and offended.

KIKI
I'm not a conformist.

OFF-GRIDDER
Leave her alone, she's with me.

OFF-GRIDDER WOMAN
The little conformist needs a
bodyguard. Does she pay you with
Unity credits?

But Off-Gridder pulls Kiki along before she can respond.

KIKI
I don't understand... What's your
name?

OFF-GRIDDER
No names down here. Off-Gridders
do not use names.

KIKI
How do you address each other?

Off-Gridder holds three fingers to his cheek.

OFF-GRIDDER
This is me. If someone wants me,
they make this sign.

As they walk, Kiki has to stay clear of the scary Off-Gridders who are resentful of her presence.

OFF-GRIDDER (CONT'D)
They don't like you. You don't
belong.

KIKI
Why don't you use names?

OFF-GRIDDER
City police can use names to track us down. Sometimes, they send their informants down here to hunt us. When they take us, they use names to keep us prisoners.

Off-Gridder and Kiki leave the semi-lit area behind and are swallowed by the darkness. Off-Gridder produces a flashlight.

INT. TUNNEL, UNDERGROUND CAVERN, CAPITAL CITY - CONTINUOUS

Kiki struggles to keep up with Off-Gridder in the darkness with only his flashlight to show the way.

KIKI
How do you live if you don't have Unity ID cards or even names?

OFF-GRIDDER
We trade. Sometimes we do work conformist do not want to do. Sometimes we trade things.

KIKI
It seems like a hard life.

OFF-GRIDDER
Very hard.

KIKI
Why do you live like this, if it is so hard?

Off-Gridder abruptly stops and stares at her a moment. Then he starts walking again.

OFF-GRIDDER
Only a conformist would ask such a question.

INT. ROOM, UNDERGROUND CAVERN, CAPITAL CITY - CONTINUOUS

Off-Gridder and Kiki emerge from the dark tunnel where the night lights of the city shine through a small grating.

OFF-GRIDDER
Go there.

Off-Gridder removes the grate and motions at the opening.

KIKI
Where does it go? What's on the
other side?

But Off-Gridder just points. Kiki SIGHS and ducks down to walk through the hole. Off-Gridder quickly puts the grating back in place and secures it.

EXT. STREET, CAPITAL CITY - CONTINUOUS

Kiki finds herself on a sidewalk and the grating SLAMS behind her. She reaches for the grating but the sudden appearance of the face of Off-Gridder startles her as he mutters.

OFF-GRIDDER
Conformist girl.

She is about to protest when a voice stops her.

CITY POLICEMAN (O.C.)
What are you doing there, citizen?

A CITY POLICEMAN walks toward her. She flees in the opposite direction only to run right into a CITY POLICEWOMAN

CITY POLICEWOMAN
What is a respectable girl like you
doing in this neighborhood?

CITY POLICEMAN
Unity ID card, girl.

KIKI
Let me go. I'm not doing anything
wrong.

CITY POLICEWOMAN
So you say. We find off-gridder
here all the time.
(wearily)
Are you an off-gridder?

Meanwhile, the policeman finds her Unity ID card and scans it on a cell phone size device. He looks at the policewoman with concern.

CITY POLICEMAN
Uh oh.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The two police officers stand uneasily in the hallway as Kiki walks past an unsmiling Manuel and heads toward her room.

CITY POLICEWOMAN
We brought her directly here.

CITY POLICEMAN
We see no need for submitting a report.

CITY POLICEWOMAN
Yes, City Police are always willing to bend--

CITY POLICEMAN
Adjust.

CITY POLICEWOMAN
Right, adjust the rules for a member of the FBL.

MANUEL
I appreciate the courtesy. It is duly noted.

He gives the frightened officers a nod but his formal expression does not relax as he reaches for the control panel and the door closes in their faces.

MANUEL (CONT'D)
(sternly)
Kiki, get in here.

Meekly, Kiki emerges from her room.

MANUEL (CONT'D)
What did you hope to accomplish with that stunt?

KIKI
I wanted to see Mom.

MANUEL
Do not call her that.

KIKI
Why? She's my mom.

MANUEL
She is your mother. In polite society, conformist society, the correct term is mother.

(MORE)

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I am you father and she is your
mother and you are our--

KIKI

Burden?

MANUEL

You will sleep. Tomorrow, I will
take you to school where you will
behave as any respectable citizen
does.

But Kiki wants to be defiant.

KIKI

I met some off-gridders.

MANUEL

They don't exist. They are a myth
created to scare people.

KIKI

Oh, they're real, all right. They
want to be free.

MANUEL

Society does not exist so people
can be free. People exist to
conform so that society can
function properly.

KIKI

That's the stupidest thing I have
ever heard.

MANUEL

It's what they teach in school.
They taught it to me and they
should be teaching it to you.

(mutters)

I may have to speak to your
teacher.

EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY

Harrison and MOLLY confront Kiki as she walks with Eito, Raji
and Jonathan.

HARRISON

What do we have here, Molly? Is
this a cultural criminal?

MOLLY
(sarcastically)
Oh no, Harrison. It's just her
grungy mother who is the criminal.

OH, she puts her hand to her mouth with a smirk.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
But then, the relatives of cultural
criminals are cultural criminals
until they can prove that they are
conformist.

Eito, Raji and Jonathan step in front of Kiki.

RAJI
You want to fight, Harrison?

EITO
Yeah. Think your name will still
be at the top of the list if you
get into a fight?

HARRISON
Fighting is not allowed.

MOLLY
It's against the rules.

JONATHAN
Cultural criminals don't care about
what is against the rules.

Harrison and Molly panic and back away, fearfully.

HARRISON
You wouldn't dare break the rules.

RAJI
I say that we roll around and get
all dirty and smelly.

EITO
Want to get smelly, Harrison?

Completely scared, Harrison points at each of the kids.

HARRISON
You're just - just bad cultural
badie bad people.

Jonathan lifts his arms and GROWLS. Harrison and Molly flee
and the teens have a good LAUGH.

INT. JACK SINCLAIR'S OFFICE, FBL - DAY

Jack Sinclair is older now but still the unemotional, stern temperament. Manuel sits across his desk from him.

JACK

It is a most unfortunate course of events, Special Agent Luhon. The group of cultural criminals were definitely linked to the Grand Library.

(winces)

Just the thought that there might be even more of that vile propaganda out there makes me feel culturally unclean.

MANUEL

We did break up a significant ring of cultural criminals.

JACK

And yet, I can hardly see it as anything but a major failure on the part of the Bureau and, you by extension. Which leaves me in a particularly precarious position.

Manuel fights his confusion.

MANUEL

I don't understand...

JACK

Special Agent Manuel Luhon, not only did you not find the storehouse, your wife is a part of the conspiracy to possess illegal cultural material. You are married to a cultural criminal.

(pause)

Have I understated the facts?

MANUEL

No sir, Mr. Director.

Jack nods.

JACK

Of course not. I am never wrong. Now, how does the Bureau recover from this blemish before it becomes an open sore?

MANUEL

The trail has gone cold. The other conspirators have gone underground. Esmeralda is in rehab but the rehab agents working to break her non-conformist spirit say that she has a hard shell to crack.

JACK

There is the girl.

MANUEL

I didn't...

JACK

Know that I knew? Special Agent, there is nothing that happens in my Bureau about which I do not know.

He allows Manuel a moment to think about it.

JACK (CONT'D)

Use her, Special Agent. The girl lived with a cultural criminal. She is therefore tainted. Even if she does not know that she knows something, she does. Find out what she might know.

(pauses)

Is there a problem with that?

MANUEL

Oh no. Definitely not. I am just... We do not have much of a relationship.

JACK

Be a father to her. Children like that kind of thing until they are trained differently. Obviously, your wife has not educated her in the socially conformed manner of child to parent. Therefore, she will be susceptible to someone acting like a father in the non-conformist fashion. You do know how to act like a father?

MANUEL

Yes, of course. Certainly. That is, I can adapt to the role.

JACK

Good. Then I shall expect you to find this Grand Library and destroy it.

Jack's voice does not change but there is a shift to a menacing tone to it.

JACK (CONT'D)

I selected you sixteen years ago because I thought you were a true believer in cultural purity. That is why I promoted you to the department head when I was given the director's office. Do not make this my first mistake.

INT. HALLWAY, FBL - CONTINUOUS

Manuel walks from Jack's office, the door closes then, and only then, his anger seethes from him. After a moment, he fights to restore calm to his spirit and moves on.

Ling appears. He is following Manuel without the other man knowledge. He stealthy trails after Manuel.

EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - SAME TIME

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan GIGGLE, are off by themselves with Harrison, Molly and their group watching in disgust after the encounter with Harrison and Molly.

KIKI

Thanks, guys.

EITO

What are friends for?

RAJI

What were you thinking, last night? If my mother found out I wanted to be a historian, she would punish me.

EITO

Yeah. My father thinks you're trouble.

JONATHAN

Come on, guys. We're all trouble. That's why we get along.

Kiki takes out the medallion.

KIKI
Mom had me keep this safe. I
think, whatever secret it holds, it
will get her out of rehab.

EITO
Do you think she knew she would be
arrested?

Kiki nods.

RAJI
Then we have to figure it out.
There's four of us; we can do it.

KIKI
If only I could get inside the
rehab center and talk with her.

JONATHAN
Rehab is a bad place. They watch
you all the time in there.

EITO
You don't know that.

JONATHAN
I saw it on TV.

EITO
And you believe everything they
show on the TV?

KIKI
Well ... she can ... signal me or
something.

She puts three fingers to her cheek.

RAJI
What are you doing?

KIKI
It's the name of an off-gridder.
They speak to each other with hand
signs. Mom could do the same.

RAJI
Have you thought about being nice
to your father?

KIKI
I would rather be nice to Molly.
Even Harrison.

RAJI
Kiki. Think about it. Your father
is a FBL agent. He can get in to
see your mother. Maybe, he will
take you with him if you're nice to
him.

KIKI
Why would he do that, even if I was
nice?

RAJI
To use you to get to her. But,
instead, you use him to get to her
while he is thinking that he is
using you.

JONATHAN
I'm confused.

KIKI
(grins)
I'm not...

Kiki thinks about it then nods in agreement, it makes sense.

INT. BULLPEN, FBL - DAY

Manuel walks through the desks arranged in orderly rows, all
the same and all perfectly clean. He stops at GEORGE'S desk
which surprises the agent.

MANUEL
George, you're a father, correct?

GEORGE
Yes sir, Special Agent Sir.

MANUEL
Um, how does a father talk with his
children? That is, what does he
say to them?

GEORGE
I, um, they're children. What is
there to say to them?

Manuel nods as though he understands but that does not help him as he walks on and almost bumps into the JANITOR cleaning surfaces.

JANITOR
 (softly, meekly)
 You should talk to your child like
 a person.

MANUEL
 What? How?
 (irately)
 Who are you to give me advice?

JANITOR
 Children are people only littler.
 You talk to them just like you talk
 to other people.

The janitor continues on with his cleaning.

MANUEL
 What do you talk about with other
 people?

But the janitor is now in a hurry to leave, he made a mistake talking to the special agent.

INT. KITCHEN, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel microwaves food from the Uni Value Chef prepackaged meals in the blue and white with red accented labels and places them on the table. Kiki sits at the table touches the medallion under her clothes tries to look interest when he turns around.

MANUEL
 The First Citizen toured the Bureau
 today. He praised our work in
 purifying the culture.

KIKI
 What is he like, the First Citizen?

Manuel is surprised and happy that she is speaking to him.

MANUEL
 He is a plain man, as all should be
 who would lead. He leads a simple
 life with simple desires. No
 pretense about him.

KIKI

Why do we need a First Citizen or even a Federal Bureau of Language?

MANUEL

I'm beginning to think that they don't teach you as well in school as they did when I was a student.

He forces a smile and she forces a smile while she picks at the bland food.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

There was a time when the world was in chaos. Different people wanted to do things differently. One group would act and speak in one fashion while another would speak and act completely different.

KIKI

Is that so wrong?

MANUEL

It caused conflict. One group would claim that their way was better and fight to make everyone just like them. Then another would start a war to have their own way. The Unity Alliance of Nations was formed to bring peace by creating one culture that could not offend anyone.

KIKI

How is that different from those who wanted to impose their own culture and language?

MANUEL

Um, well, ... It's one culture, yes, but one that does not offend anyone. And the belief that things were better when there was any other language but Basic is a fairy tale.

KIKI

Mom didn't like it.

Manuel flashes with anger.

MANUEL

Your mother is a cultur--
(calms down)

Your mother did not appreciate the peace and tranquility that comes with having one culture to fit all people. She believed there could be more than one language. But all those other languages and cultures are dead and gone and can never be brought back.

KIKI

I want to see Mo - my mother.

MANUEL

Impossible. If you visit your mother, you will be labeled a potential non-conformist.

KIKI

But you can see her.

MANUEL

Of course. I have security clearance to interrogate her.

Kiki angrily walks away from the table.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You haven't finished eating. It's illegal to waste food.

KIKI

I'm not hungry anymore for that tasteless crud.

MANUEL

You need to do your homework. Your scores are terrible.

KIKI

There are no scores in Unity schools.

MANUEL

I saw the school list. Your name is on the bottom of the list.

BAM, she slams her bedroom door. He finishes his food, his expression says she is right that it is tasteless. However, he then takes her plate and reluctantly eats the remaining food.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Once again, Kiki sneaks out of her room. Manuel works in the kitchen, his back to her. She eases up to the desk where his electronic tablet and Unity ID card sit. She snatches the card and hurries out of the apartment.

EXT. TRANSIT SYSTEM - NIGHT

Kiki uses her Unity ID card to ride the subway system.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Manuel finishes in the kitchen and returns to his desk to work. Then he realizes something is wrong. He searches for his Unity ID card and is suspicious.

MANUEL

Kiki...?

Nothing. He goes to her door and KNOCKS softly.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Kiki...?

He peeks in and angrily knows what she is doing.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

No. You stupid, foolish girl.

He rushes from the apartment.

EXT. REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

Kiki takes a deep breath and approaches the gate. She swipes the Unity ID card over the panel. A green light flicks on and the gate opens. Kiki walks confidently through when, suddenly, ALARMS sound and she is surrounded by ARMED GUARDS.

INT. VEHICLE - NIGHT

Ling Huang watches the building and fights back boredom. But then he is abruptly alert to a vehicle that pulls out of the underground parking garage. He pulls into the street behind it.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

Kiki sits at a table with handcuffs on and an armed guard. Manuel is escorted in by the HEAD GUARD. He shakes his head in disappointment and motions to the cuffs while he gruffly addresses the head guard.

MANUEL

Take those off.

The guard hesitates.

HEAD GUARD

Sir?

MANUEL

This is my daughter. Take off the handcuffs.

Again the guard hesitates so Manuel takes out his cell phone device and scans the guard's Unity ID card clipped to his uniform.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Let's have a look at your file--

The head guard quickly swipes a device over the handcuffs on Kiki's wrists and they fall away. Manuel's voice is firm.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Now leave.

The head guard motions and the other guard follows. With a SIGH, Manuel confronts Kiki.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You stole my ID card? What were you thinking?

KIKI

I wanted to see Mom.

MANUEL

And you thought that committing a crime was the way to accomplish that feat?

Before Kiki can angrily respond, the door opens and a confused Esmeralda enters, her hands cuffed in front of her.

KIKI

MOM.

Kiki rushes to her and they hug awkwardly because of the cuffs.

MANUEL

No touching.

ESMERALDA

Manuel, don't be an idiot. Mothers and daughters hug.

MANUEL

Not in a Uni Culture and definitely not in a rehab center.

But mother and daughter do not budge.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

There are security cameras now, stop that indecent behavior.

Esmeralda and Manuel stare at each other, both are determined but she finally backs down and releases Kiki.

ESMERALDA

Thank you for bringing Kiki to see me.

MANUEL

I didn't bring her. She came here on her own; breaking a number of laws doing it.

ESMERALDA

What else is new? The average citizen breaks dozens of laws every day.

MANUEL

This is the second time she has attempted to see you. Therefore, I decided to get this foolishness out of her system.

He motions to the table.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You need to sit across from each other and no more illegal touching.

Esmeralda glances at Kiki with an impish expression that Kiki understands and they comply. Manuel does not see the looks between the two females but he takes the seat beside Kiki.

ESMERALDA

If we are not allowed to touch,
what would you like us to do?

MANUEL

I would like you to tell her that
she needs to apply herself to
becoming a good Uni citizen.

Esmeralda sees Kiki touch her chest where her mother knows she keeps the medallion. They make eye contact. Kiki knows that her mother wants to tell her about the medallion but Esmeralda speaks with soft voice.

ESMERALDA

Your father is right. It is
time...

Esmeralda suddenly has a nervous motion with her hand. She places it palm down on the table then turns it over and flexes it. She makes the motion a couple of more times and then looks deep into Kiki's eyes.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

You need to find your place in
society.

MANUEL

Well finally, someone talking
sense.

Kiki nods ever so slightly. Manuel is clueless as to what is happening.

EXT. REHAB CENTER - SAME TIME

Ling approaches the gate and swipes his Unity ID card but the gate does not move. Guards approach along with the head guard. Ling flashes his ID card.

LING

Special Agent Ling Huang--

HEAD GUARD

Your security clearance does not
allow you access.

LING

That's ridiculous. I am a Special
Agent of the FBL.

But the guards do not budge so Ling is insistent.

LING (CONT'D)

I know there is a Special Agent
Luhon in there and I need to see
him right now.

The guards remain in place and the head guard walks away from
an unhappy Ling.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

The head guard enters and speaks softly to Manuel.

HEAD GUARD

Special Agent, it is time.

Esmeralda and Kiki MOAN.

KIKI

Can't we stay a little longer?

The guard ignores her and still speaks to Manuel.

HEAD GUARD

We have allowed personal access...

Esmeralda understands with sarcasm in her voice.

ESMERALDA

Oh, a personal visit. Are those
legal?

MANUEL

I would have thought you would be
more appreciative.

ESMERALDA

Be grateful to you father for what
he did for us.

She again looks deep into Kiki's eyes and they share a secret
communication. Manuel, Kiki and Esmeralda stand. Mother and
daughter attempt to hug, much to the head guard's disdain.

MANUEL

Stop that.

He quickly pulls them apart, irritated then speaks to the
guard.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I need access to your computer
system.

INT. GUARD STATION, REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

The head guard motions to a computer and waits. Manuel sits but has an expression that says go away. The guard understands and leaves which makes Kiki CHUCKLE.

KIKI

Do you like frightening people?

Manuel concentrates on the screen.

MANUEL

It's not me. It's the FBL. People have a healthy fear of what the government can do to them if they do not conform.

He makes several keystrokes, his focus on the screen.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You could learn from him and others like him.

KIKI

What are you doing?

MANUEL

I have to erase your illegal entry.

KIKI

Isn't that illegal to erase illegal stuff or something?

Manuel quickly finishes.

KIKI (CONT'D)

How do you do that? Will you teach me?

MANUEL

Certain FBL agents have special access and, no, I will not teach you.

He switches off the computer.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Let's go home.

INT. VEHICLE - SAME TIME

Ling has the record that shows Manuel and Kiki visiting Esmeralda on his electronic tablet. Suddenly, the record slowly vanishes.

LING

What?

He works to find it but cannot. Then he spots a vehicle leaving the gate and films it with the tablet.

INT. VEHICLE - NIGHT

Manuel drives out of the rehab center with Kiki beside him. He does not see Ling in his vehicle as the other car pulls out behind them.

MANUEL

I hope that, now you have gotten this out of your system.

KIKI

Thank you for what you did.

MANUEL

So, I can now expect you to behave like a respectable citizen?

KIKI

I know exactly what I need to do.

MANUEL

Good. Very good.

EXT. MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel and Kiki climb from the vehicle and walk to the building. Ling sit across the street and films them with his electronic tablet.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel and Kiki enter and she wants to go to her bedroom.

MANUEL

Do you want to watch the news with me?

KIKI

Um, well I have homework.

MANUEL

It will only take a half-hour and I can make some hot chocolate. Uni Value Chef has a new recipe.

Kiki fights to look pleased.

KIKI

Oh, Uni Value Chef, that would be, um, great.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel and Kiki sit on the couch with plain white mugs. THE FIRST CITIZEN appears on the television screen with the NEWS ANCHOR'S VOICE comments on the scene. Manuel sips from his mug.

MANUEL

Good, right?

Kiki forces a smile but she is not enjoying it.

KIKI

Exactly as I expected.

NEWS ANCHOR'S VOICE

(on TV)

...As the First Citizen spoke to workers at the compact car manufacturing plant about how great the world had become since The Unity Alliance of Nations was formed.

KIKI

The plant exists so everyone can have a car?

MANUEL

Uni Culture dictates that only those who need vehicles have them.

NEWS ANCHOR'S VOICE

Then the First Citizen awarded the top workers for their job performances.

On the TV, the First Citizen shakes hands and hands each worker a framed certificate.

NEWS ANCHOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)

The framed certificates
commemorated their excellent work.

KIKI

How is it that they get
certificates but we don't get our
scores?

Manuel is too intent on watching the First Citizen to hear Kiki. He sips his chocolate with contentment. The News Anchor's voice slips into the background.

MANUEL

You know, I dreamed of being the
First Citizen. I thought about how
great it would be to sacrifice my
whole life so that everyone could
live in a society where everyone
enjoyed being the same.

KIKI

Why? I mean, why does everyone
have to live the same lives?

MANUEL

When everyone is living the same
lives, there will be no more envy,
no fighting, no trying to take from
others. If we all have the same
lives, people will all be happy.

KIKI

It bothers me to look like everyone
else.

MANUEL

But that is the beauty of the Unity
Culture. We learned that in
school. Everyone, even the First
Citizen, live the same. Look
around, the First Citizen lives in
an apartment just like this one.

(SIGHS)

It's so perfect.

KIKI

Speaking of school, I really need
to do my homework.

MANUEL

Fine, go be a good Uni student.

Kiki quickly hands him the mug still half full and rushes to her room.

INT. KIKI'S BEDROOM, MANUEL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kiki hops into bed, turns on the lamp on the night stand and removes the medallion from under her clothes. It looks like a star with rays extending from a yellow center. The front yields nothing and she is disappointed.

KIKI

Nothing.

She turns it over and studies the back. Then she discovers that there is a hidden compartment in the back and carefully opens it.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Oh my...

There is a piece of paper inside. She removes it and unfolds it into a map that catches her breath.

KIKI (CONT'D)

A map.

A NOISE from the other room reminds her that her father is there. She quickly slides under the covers.

EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY

Kiki huddles in a circle with Raji, Eito and Jonathan with the map in the center. On the bottom of the map is a spot marked with the words La Gran Biblioteca.

RAJI

What does La Gran Biblioteca mean?
The alphabet is Basic but the words
are meaningless.

JONATHAN

Code. It has to be a code.

KIKI

Maybe it's another language?

She looks hopefully at the others but they show their skepticism.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Everyone has to get a piece of
paper and pen.

RAJI
Paper and pens are only permitted
under controlled circumstances.

KIKI
Then we'll swipe it. We need to
make copies of whatever this is.

EITO
Wow, just like real historians.

KIKI
We are real historians and we are
going to figure out what this is.

JONATHAN
It kind of looks like a map.

KIKI
(whispers)
A map...

The BELL RINGS and Kiki quickly but carefully folds the map. She puts it back in the secret compartment in the medallion and hides it under her clothes.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Okay, everyone swipes a piece of
paper and pen and we'll copy it
during lunch break.

Yeah, the four kids are excited and rush back to class.

MONTAGE - KIKI'S POSSE COPY THE MAP

-- INT. CLASSROOM, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY - Raji casually takes some paper from the teacher's desk.

-- INT. SCHOOL OFFICE, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY - Eito peaks in. The ADMINISTRATOR has his back to the door. Eito eases in and grabs a pen from the desk then is quickly out.

-- EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY - Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan gather in a secluded place. Raji produces the paper she took, Eito and Jonathan have the pens, and they start to copy the map.

END MONTAGE

EXT. COURTYARD, CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan finish copies of the map and carefully fold them.

KIKI

You all have to hide them in your secret places.

RAJI

We also need to find out what the symbols mean or they are worthless.

KIKI

I know someone who might be willing to help. We can go see her after school. Who is up for an adventure?

Kiki looks around and all three faces beam with excitement. They strap their backpacks on their backs and head out.

EXT. CAPITAL CITY SCHOOL - DAY

Manuel sits in his vehicle until he spots Kiki with Eito, Raji and Jonathan leave the building. He steps out and is about to call to her when the teenagers turn in the opposite direction. He starts to call out again but changes his mind and returns to the vehicle where he follows them slowly.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Aunt ANGELA (40s) wears the drab business attire of a professional hostess. She is bored with her job. PSSST, Kiki peers in the door. Angela's face brightens and she motions the teen inside. Eito, Raji and Jonathan enter with Kiki.

ANGELA

Kiki.

Angela and Kiki hug.

KIKI

Aunt Angela, how are you? We need to talk. Super secret stuff.

ANGELA

Quickly then, this way.

INT. KITCHEN, RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Angela leads Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan inside and to a corner.

ANGELA

It is so good to see you.
(lowers her voice)
I heard about you mother.

KIKI

Father had her arrested. Can you believe it?

ANGELA

Don't be too hard on your father, my dear. He has been carefully taught to be the way he is.

KIKI

I hate him. Why can't he be untaught?

ANGELA

Look around, Kiki. What do you see?

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan look around the kitchen as the workers in coveralls, chefs in whites and bored waitresses dressed like Angela walk lethargically through their jobs.

KIKI

People working in a kitchen of a restaurant.

ANGELA

Everyone doing the jobs they have been assigned. Everyone obeying what they have been told.

RAJI

They all look so bored.

ANGELA

To Kiki's father and others like him, this is a perfect society; orderly, functional, devoid of serious crime. ... Safe...

Kiki removes the map from the medallion and shows it to Angela.

KIKI

We need your help. We think this
is a map but we don't understand
the symbols on it.

Angela gingerly takes the map in awe.

ANGELA

Symbols? It's writing.

JONATHAN

Writing? All languages were
destroyed.

ANGELA

Oh, but you are wrong, young friend
to Kiki. That is a language, I
would bet on it. They say when
there were many languages, some
were spoken by those who sounded
like poets.

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan smile at the thought of other
languages, they want to hear more. She runs a finger under
Kiki's chin.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Some were even called the languages
of love.

She grins to each child in turn.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Imagine that the words you spoke
were considered words of affection,
peace, enchantment.

She examines the map again.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

This is our language, my little
Kiki. Spanish.

KIKI

Then you know what it says?

ANGELA

Um...

(her face falls)

No. No one has been allowed to
speak or read Spanish for
generations.

(impishly)

But I do know someone who can help.

INT. CITY BUILDING - DAY

ISAAH (70s) wears coveralls and works the buffer on the floor. Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan peak around the column.

KIKI
(whispers)
Isaiah?

But he does not hear her and continues to work.

KIKI (CONT'D)
ISAAH?

He glances over and the teens quiver at his stern look. Kiki clears her throat and struggles to speak.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Angela - Aunt Angela sent us.

Still nothing. Kiki takes the map out of the medallion and shows it to him.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Um, we want to learn Spanish.

A leisurely smile crosses his face and, to the relief of the teenagers, Isaiah nods pleasantly.

INT. STAIRWELL, CITY BUILDING - DAY

Isaiah motions for the teens to follow. Kiki is right behind him but Eito, Raji and Jonathan are not sure.

INT. BASEMENT, CITY BUILDING - DAY

Isaiah leads Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan around the large pipes and ducts as steam BLOWS through release valves.

JONATHAN
I'm not sure about this.

KIKI
Come on, Jonathan. We're on an
adventure.

JONATHAN
I think that I have to pee.

They finally come to a door and Isaiah holds it open to a semi-dark for them but they hesitate. Then Kiki courageously enters.

INT. BASEMENT STORAGE ROOM, CITY BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan then Isaiah switches on a light. It is filled with cleaning supplies and equipment but there is also a small stack of books. WOW, the teenagers are impressed with them. Eito picks one up but Isaiah SHOUTS and he almost drops it.

ISIAIAH

You must treat books with care.

He gently takes the book from Eito and shows him how to hold it and turn the pages. The teens are impressed.

EITO

What kind of writing is this?

ISIAIAH

This is English.

He picks up other books.

ISIAIAH (CONT'D)

This one is German and Cantonese
and Spanish--

OOH, Kiki wants that book so Isaiah hands it to her. She carefully turns the pages.

KIKI

Can you read this?

ISIAIAH

Yes I can.

KIKI

Can you - will you teach us?

The old man's face brightens with delight. He holds a finger up, he wants quiet, checks outside the room, there is no one there, then removes a false panel from the wall and carefully removes an old book. The teenagers eagerly gather around him and he speaks in a low voice.

ISIAIAH

This is very old. It was written
in the early days of Basic when it
was thought that there should be
one language.

OOH, AAH, the teens are captivated.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

My people...

(looks at Kiki)

Our people compiled this dictionary
long before my father was a boy.
It has Basic words translated to
Spanish speech. It is so that we
will not forget where we came from.

WOW, he hands Kiki the book and she is a bit fearful and in
awe to handle it. Cautiously, she passes the book to Raji.
Then she gives it to Eito and he hands it to Jonathan.

RAJI

The map, we can translate it.

Kiki takes out the map and a pencil but Isaiah stops her.

ISAIAH

You should not write on the map.
It is an antique.

JONATHAN

A what - what's an antique?

ISAIAH

It is something very precious that
should be preserved as it is.

Raji produces her copy of the map.

RAJI

Use this one.

Isaiah clears off a table and the teenagers gather around it
with the copy of the map. Excitedly, they begin as Isaiah,
happily steps back and allows them to work.

INT. BASEMENT STORAGE ROOM, CITY BUILDING - DAY

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan step back and examine their
work. The map has Basic words under the Spanish ones and
under La Gran Biblioteca was the Basic words; The Grand
Library.

JONATHAN

Wow, The Grand Library.

EITO

What does that mean, The Grand
Library?

The teenagers look to Isaiah for the answer but he is confused.

ISAIAH

You do not know the story of The Grand Library?

They all shake their heads but they are anxious to hear it.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

When The Unity Alliance Government began to impose their Unity Cultural Standards, the Society of the Historians of the World began to protect the knowledge of the world in one place.

KIKI

The Grand Library?

ISAIAH

Yes. They stored away the knowledge of languages and cultures forbidden by the government against those who would destroy it.

EITO

Why would anyone want to destroy knowledge?

ISAIAH

They wanted to force their one culture, their one way of doing everything on the people.

Kiki interrupts.

KIKI

When everyone is living the same lives, there will be no more envy, no fighting, no trying to take from others. If we all have the same lives, people will all be happy.

Her expression says that she does not believe what she just quoted from her father as she looks into Isaiah's eyes.

KIKI (CONT'D)

But everyone is not happy, are they?

ISAIAH

(sadly)

Who can be happy when they are told
what to think, believe, how to act?
No one wants to be like someone
else. There is within all people
the desire to be a person set apart
from others.

JONATHAN

Is it true? Does the library
exist?

RAJI

Jonathan?

JONATHAN

Do you believe all the stuff we're
taught in school? People lie.
Adults especially lie.

Kiki touches the medallion on her chest.

KIKI

My mom had me protect this map.
She would not have had me protect a
lie.

EITO

So what do we do?

KIKI

We have to find the library.

RAJI

Kiki, you know that we're all with
you but according to the map, the
library is in Central America
Province.

Eito examines the map.

EITO

It is in what in Spanish was once
called Mexico.

JONATHAN

It is near Mexico City.

ISAIAH

(quietly)

The land of your people.

KIKI

What?

ISAIAH

Your family, my family, once we came from the land of Mexico. We are the descendants of explorers and conquerors.

Kiki's face shows her delight in the idea. Isaiah carefully wraps the dictionary in cloth and slips it into Kiki's backpack.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Take this with you. See that it is place in The Grand Library.

EXT. CITY BUILDING - NIGHT

Manuel watches nervously from his vehicle and is finally relieved when Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan exit.

EXT. SIDEWALK, CITY BUILDING - SAME TIME

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan walk in the opposite direction of Manuel's vehicle.

EITO

You can't be serious about going in search of The Grand Library. How are you going to travel?

KIKI

I have citizen level credit. I can take the train.

RAJI

We have citizen level credit.

JONATHAN

You're going with her, Raji?

EITO

And when your father discovers you're gone, he'll trace you. That's how they catch bad guys, you know. They track them by the credits they spend.

KIKI

There are other ways to travel.
Once I - we are out of the city, we
can figure out other means of
transport like off-gridgers.

RAJI

Like trucks.

KIKI

Yeah, like trucks. We must think
like off-gridgers.

EITO

Trucks...?

RAJI

I saw a documentary on these people
who drive trucks between cities to
deliver stuff.

KIKI

We can sneak aboard one of them.

Then Kiki spots the vehicle slowly moving down the street.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Uh oh.

EITO

You finally realize how dumb this
idea is?

KIKI

No. My father is following us.
(insistently)
Keep walking and pretend not to
know he's there.

RAJI

What are you going to do?

KIKI

Mom wants me to find the library.
Her freedom depends on it.

EITO

How? After we get to Mexico City,
how do we find a place where a
bunch of old books are kept and how
is that going to help your mother?

KIKI

I don't know, Eito. I have absolutely no idea. But unless I try, I won't ever know. I have to do it, for her.

EITO

We can lose him.

The other teenagers stop and stare at him and Eito can only shrug.

EITO (CONT'D)

If we take the subway, he can't follow in his car. We can jump the gate so there will be no record of which one we take.

Kiki pats him on the back.

KIKI

That's thinking like an off-gridder.

JONATHAN

That's illegal--

He stops when the others stare at him.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

I'm in.

INT. VEHICLE - SAME TIME

Manuel watches as the teenagers are talking among themselves.

MANUEL

Kiki, what are you doing?

They walk past the subway entrance and he slowly pursues them. Suddenly, after he is beyond the subway, they reverse directions, race past him and drop down into the subway. He brakes but too late.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

KIKI?

He leaps from the vehicle and gives chase.

INT. TRANSIT SYSTEM - NIGHT

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan hurry around the commuters. When they reach the turnstile gate where they should swipe their ID cards, Kiki, Eito and Raji leap over the arm and Jonathan ducks under it.irate commuters who see them yell at them but they keep going.

INT. TRANSIT SYSTEM - NIGHT

Manuel reaches the turnstile but he cannot bring himself to jump the arm but was unprepared so he wastes time fumbling for his ID card and swiping it.

INT. TRANSIT SYSTEM - SAME TIME

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan rush from the tunnel and leap onto the subway car as the doors are closing.

INT. SUBWAY CAR, TRANSIT SYSTEM - CONTINUOUS

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan watch with pleasure as Manuel emerges from the tunnel, too late to catch the train. Kiki waves impishly at her father.

EITO

No going back now.

KIKI

(contentedly)

Yep, no going back.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Manuel rushes from the subway entrance in a hurry until he sees Ling standing beside his vehicle. He abruptly slows his pace. However, Ling has a smug expression.

LING

Good evening to you, Special Agent
Luhon.

MANUEL

Is there something I can do for
you, Agent Huang?

LING

Someone has illegally parked a
vehicle.

MANUEL

It is beneath FBL agents to concern themselves with traffic violators. We have more important work to do.

LING

(sarcastically)

More important than obeying the laws of the city? This is Capital City, the example to the world of a city truly compliant to Unity Alliance Government and the Unity Cultural Standards.

Manuel attempts to ignore Ling as though he were unimportant, climbs into his vehicle and drives away. But Ling's face says that this is not over, not by a long shot.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Kiki addresses Eito, Raji and Jonathan as they stand beside the train turnstile.

KIKI

Last chance. Once we swipe our Unity IDs, we are committed.

RAJI

We're with you, Kiki.

KIKI

We go to the next major stop then we go off-grid.

Eito, Raji and Jonathan swipe their IDs and wait for Kiki. Pleased that her friends are going with her, she swipes her card and joins them.

INT. JACK SINCLAIR'S OFFICE, FBL - NIGHT

Ling enters cautiously with this electronic tablet. Jack's voice is cold and unemotional and does not change.

JACK

Sit, Special Agent Huang.

Ling eases over to a chair nervously.

JACK (CONT'D)

I am waiting.

LING

I've been trailing Special Agent Luhon. He illegally visited his wife, a cultural criminal, in rehab. And he took his daughter. Then he erased the records of their visit.

He shows the footage of Manuel's vehicle leaving the rehab center.

LING (CONT'D)

I have images of Agent Luhon and his daughter at the rehab center.

He flips the screen.

LING (CONT'D)

Tonight, he allowed his daughter and three of her friends to take a train south. I suspect it has something to do with his illegal visit with his criminal wife.

Jack waits and that makes Ling even more nervous.

LING (CONT'D)

I think we should arrest Manuel Luhon immediately.

JACK

You think? Just what makes you think you are qualified to think?

Ling nervously but wisely remains silent.

JACK (CONT'D)

Special Agent Manuel Luhon was brought into the Federal Bureau of Language by someone of impeccable credentials. It is unseemly to hurl unsubstantiated charges at such an agent.

LING

The evidence is undisputable.

JACK

Undisputable?

(SIGHS)

Still, his actions that you claim to have witnessed are disturbing. Therefore, I will consider your request, Agent Luhon.

There is a pause and Ling is unsure what to do.

JACK (CONT'D)
Is there anything else?

LING
No...

A flustered Ling flees the office.

INT. FIRST CITIZEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel hesitantly follows Jack in where the First Citizen sits in a plush chair in comfortable, colorful silk pajamas and a matching robe. He is served a drink by a SERVANT. The apartment is luxuriously decorated and appointed. Manuel is stunned.

JACK
First Citizen, this is Special Agent Luhon.

The First Citizen appears annoyed.

FIRST CITIZEN
We seem to have a problem, Special Agent.

MANUEL
First Citizen?

FIRST CITIZEN
Jack, that is, Director Sinclair is hearing of teenagers running rampant and talk among the lower working class of young historians on a quest. None of this is conducive to a tranquil Unity Culture.

JACK
The First Citizen and I have determined that we need an undercover agent to track down and eliminate these troublemakers. And since your daughter--

MANUEL
She's not--

Manuel sees that he made a mistake interrupting. However, Jack regains his composure.

JACK

However, we think that you can make amends for this trouble your criminal wife and daughter have caused by going undercover.

FIRST CITIZEN

Voluntarily, of course, since it means sacrificing your impeccable record. Well, impeccable to this point.

Manuel does not know what to say. He is trapped.

MANUEL

Yes, First Citizen. Of course, First Citizen.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF THE FIRST CITIZEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Manuel and Jack walk to the elevator. Manuel does not know how to form the question.

MANUEL

The First Citizen, he does not live as ... I had expected.

JACK

Within the Unity Culture, we are all equal and live the same live, Special Agent Luhon. It is just that some are more equal and live differently than others.

MANUEL

That is not what is taught in school.

JACK

There is perceived truth for the citizens and then there is real truth for those burdened with leadership. We shall talk more of these things when you complete your mission.

MANUEL

Yes, Director.

The elevator doors open.

JACK

Good. You have one hour then I will set the plan in motion.

INT. FIRST CITIZEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack returns and the servant gives him a drink. Jack and the First Citizen sit quietly for a few minutes.

FIRST CITIZEN

All concerned will need to be eliminated. Casualties of the war we fight for cultural purity.

JACK

I thought as much. I shall see to their disposal when this unfortunate affair is concluded.

The servant presents the First Citizen with a tray of candies from which he selects one and savors it.

FIRST CITIZEN

It is such a burden to be First Citizen.

Then he impatiently motions for another from the servant. He was not finished but his impatience quickly changes to delight in the tasty delicacy.

FIRST CITIZEN (CONT'D)

Such a burden I would wish on no one else.

INT. GUARD STATION, REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

Manuel flashes his ID card at the unhappy Head Guard.

MANUEL

This says that I will interrogate the criminal, again.

HEAD GUARD

This is very irregular--

MANUEL

Is there a reason you want to obstruct an FBL agent in the exercise of his duties?

The guard recognizes the threat, swallows hard and motions for Manuel to follow him.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

Esmeralda stands defiantly with the Head Guard. Manuel nods toward the handcuffs.

MANUEL

Take those off.

Reluctantly, the guard does as he is ordered then also leaves when Manuel's expression chases him away. The Special Agent glares at Esmeralda.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

What did you tell that child?

ESMERALDA

(brightens)

Kiki? She is gone?

MANUEL

You knew she would run away. You told her to.

ESMERALDA

I encouraged her.

MANUEL

Do you know what you've done? DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE?

ESMERALDA

This has been an interesting few days. I'm locked up and tortured for no reason. My daughter is taken away from me. And the normally stone cold Special Agent Luhon loses control.

Manuel wants to explode again but fights to retain control.

MANUEL

She is--

ESMERALDA

She has a name.

MANUEL

She is on a train headed south. If I were not responsible for her, I would have her arrested and brought back.

ESMERALDA

But you won't or can't because it
will blemish your flawless record.

MANUEL

You know where she is going and
why. I want to know.

ESMERALDA

I would imagine that you do.

Manuel waits but she just sits there with a smirk on her
face. Before he can fire back, the Head Guard interrupts.

HEAD GUARD

Um, Special Agent, there is a SWAT
unit at the gate. They say they
are here to arrest you.

WHAM, Manuel nails the guard and he collapses. Esmeralda is
stunned

ESMERALDA

What are you doing?

MANUEL

I've been betrayed.

Manuel tries to think then makes a decision.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Is there a back way out of here?

The question surprises Esmeralda then a slow grin appears.

MONTAGE - MANUEL AND ESMERALDA ESCAPE THE REHAB CENTER

-- EXT. REHAB CENTER - NIGHT - The SWAT TEAM forces its way
past the stunned guard at the front gate.

-- INT. REHAB HALLWAYS - SAME TIME - Esmeralda leads Manuel
hurriedly to the back entrance.

-- INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - The SWAT Team bursts in
but the unconscious guard is the only one there.

-- INT. REHAB CENTER BACK DOOR - NIGHT - Manuel and Esmeralda
face a locked door with a keypad. He takes out his ID.

MANUEL

Let's hope my clearance has not
been revoked.

ESMERALDA

Why would your clearance be
revoked?

He does not answer but swipes the card.

-- EXT. REHAB CENTER - CONTINUOUS - Manuel pulls Esmeralda
along from hiding place to hiding place. The BACK GATE GUARD
argues with a TRUCK DRIVER so Manuel and Esmeralda are able
to slip by without either noticing them.

-- EXT. REHAB CENTER - SAME TIME - The SWAT TEAM LEADER
motions for his men to fan out.

SWAT LEADER

Search the entire compound.

As the men disperse to search, he watches Manuel and Esmeralda
sneak into the shadows across the street and takes out his
cell phone.

SWAT LEADER (CONT'D)

(into phone)

He's gone. He and the cultural
criminal.

(listens)

Of course, we'll make a show and
give him time.

END MONTAGE

EXT. REHAB CENTER - NIGHT

Ling sits in his vehicle and watches the commotion inside the
compound. He is fuming over the events and does not see

DOWN AND ACROSS THE STREET

where Manuel and Esmeralda watch as the SWAT Team sweeps the
compound and the leader speaks on the phone. Esmeralda finds
their situation amusing.

ESMERALDA

Welcome to the criminal class.

MANUEL

This is your fault, your fault and
that girl--

ESMERALDA

My daughter's name is Kiki. And
Kiki Luhon is also your daughter.

MANUEL

There is a warrant out for my
arrest. If I'm taken in, I will
not be able to clear my name.

She crosses her arms over her chest smugly.

ESMERALDA

So what are you going to do?

MANUEL

WE have to run or something.

ESMERALDA

Something?

MANUEL

I'm a criminal, now. Just like
you. We need to go wherever our -
Kiki is.

ESMERALDA

You don't fool me. You just want
to save your own lousy career by
finding and arresting her.

MANUEL

Then what do you propose that we
do?

That causes her to think. What do they do?

ESMERALDA

I'll help you find her, but after
that all bets are off. You are not
bringing her back here.

MANUEL

Of course, sure. She's our
daughter and we're in this
together.

But he is not very convincing as a liar and she is weary.

ESMERALDA

Right...

EXT. STREET, MEXICAN TOWN - NIGHT

Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan wave as the truck pulls away.
Raji consults the map.

RAJI
Mexico City is still several
kilometers further south.

JONATHAN
That guy was nice but I think he
hit every bump he could find.

EITO
This is a very little place.

KIKI
Yeah. Not a lot of trucks around.

JONATHAN
I'm hungry.

EITO
You're always hungry.
(to Kiki)
How do we eat with this off grid
thing?

KIKI
We have to figure out what others
who are off the grid do.

JONATHAN
I'm so hungry that I smell food.

However, no one seems to pay any attention to Jonathan. Kiki turns and SIGHS. She has no idea what to do next. But she attempts to show confidence and leadership and announces...

KIKI
If we cannot find food, we need to
find shelter.

JONATHAN
I do smell food.

Jonathan sniffs the air. Raji and Eito smile knowingly at each other, go figure Jonathan would smell food.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Follow me, food is this way.

INT. TRAIN STATION, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

Manuel and Esmeralda rush to the ticket kiosk and he produces his Unity ID card.

ESMERALDA

I can't buy a ticket. I don't have my ID card.

MANUEL

I have the clearance to include a prisoner on any ticket.

He swipes the card but the screen BEEPS at him and flashes REJECTED. He tries again but has the same results so he tries again.

ESMERALDA

Don't be insane.

MANUEL

What?

ESMERALDA

Insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results.

MANUEL

They must have locked down my ID.

However, he tries his ID card a fourth time with no success while she glances around. She spots an entrance to the train platform used by baggage personnel and tugs at Manuel.

ESMERALDA

Follow me.

They walk to the corridor where baggage handlers with golf cart-like vehicles and hand carts move packages. Manuel knows what she is thinking and stops.

MANUEL

We can't use that access. It's illegal.

ESMERALDA

If we are going to find Kiki, we will have to break a few laws.

He still hesitates.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

Do you have another idea for traveling with a valid ID?

He cannot think of one so...

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)
Act casual, like we belong.

She joins the flow headed into the corridor and he has to hurry into

THE CORRIDOR

He catches up to her and looks around nervously.

MANUEL
How do you act casual?

ESMERALDA
First of all, relax and stop looking around. Walk like you belong.

He is still stilted and nervous. She shakes her head in disbelief.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)
Act like you're a FBL agent.

MANUEL
I am a...

He understands and puts on his official face.

INT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

Esmeralda and Manuel emerge from the corridor and watch the baggage handlers place packages of all types into a cargo train car. They finish and Esmeralda and Manuel are alone. She pulls him toward the car.

INT. CARGO TRAIN CAR, TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Esmeralda jumps in and Manuel follows. However, there is a BAGGAGE HANDLER with an electronic pad checking the packages.

BAGGAGE HANDLER
What are you doing here? You shouldn't be here.

ESMERALDA
We're with the FBL...

She looks to Manuel for assistance but he is slow to react.

BAGGAGE HANDLER

What would the FBL want in a
baggage car?

Manuel suddenly understands Esmeralda's nudging and he
flashes his ID card with an attitude.

MANUEL

Special Agent Manuel Luhon and what
business is it of yours?

The baggage handler is flustered.

BAGGAGE HANDLER

Um, nothing. I'm just doing my
job.

MANUEL

Finish your job and get out.

Whether or not he was done, the baggage handler hurries from
the car. Esmeralda settles in.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Now what?

ESMERALDA

We ride this as far as we can then
we will have to find other
transportation.

MANUEL

It could take us forever to get...
(thinks)
Where do we go when we reach Mexico
City?

ESMERALDA

(coyly)
Somewhere else.

EXT. STREET, MEXICAN TOWN - NIGHT

The STREET VENDER is making chalupas to order. Kiki, Eito,
Raji and Jonathan watch as patrons hand him roughly made
coins for a chalupas.

RAJI

What are they doing?

EITO

They're trading. It's like when your parents give you a present you don't like and you trade it to someone else for something you do want.

JONATHAN

I am so hungry. I wish we had some of those round things.

Jonathan drifts over, captivated by the smell and sight of the small tortilla like cups of fried corn dough filled with cheese, beans or a variety of stew topped with salsa and chopped lettuce.

STREET VENDER

Do you want one, amigo?

JONATHAN

My name isn't Amigo, it's Jonathan and I don't have any of those round things.

STREET VENDER

If you have no pesos, I will take something else. A ring or bracelet.

Kiki fingers the medallion under her shirt then takes it off and shows it to the vendor. He feigns disinterest.

KIKI

Will this get us some food?

RAJI

Kiki, you can't...

Kiki turns her back on the vendor, shows the other teenagers the map tucked away safely and whispers...

KIKI

Without the map, this is just jewelry.

RAJI

But your mother gave that to you.

KIKI

She gave it to me so that we can find the Grand Library. That is what is important, not things.

She holds it back up for the vendor to inspect.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Well...?

STREET VENDER

I think, young one, that it could
get you each a chalupas.

MARIA rushes up angrily.

MARIA

(in Spanish)

You are cheating those poor
children, you wicked man.

STREET VENDER

(in Spanish)

I am making a profit, old woman.

The teenagers are stunned by the use of Spanish which they do not understand. Maria speaks to Kiki in English (Basic).

MARIA

He is cheating you. That medallion
is worth many pesos.

KIKI

Can you show us where we can get
more ... pesos?

Before Maria can answer, the street vendor jumps in.

STREET VENDER

I will give you ... 50 pesos.

Kiki sees Maria shake her head ever so slightly so she ignores the vendor and speaks to Maria, her voice controlled.

KIKI

There are surely vendors who will
give us more?

STREET VENDER

80 pesos...

(then quickly)

90 - or - 100 pesos. I will give
you 100 pesos.

Kiki glances at Maria who shrugs, it could be a good deal.

KIKI

100 pesos and a, uh, cha - chalupas
food.

The street vendor holds his hand out.

STREET VENDER

Done.

Kiki does not know what to do, shaking hands is not a common practice (it is not sterile) so the street vendor has to grab her hand and shake it.

INT. BULLPEN, FBL - DAY

Ling walks though with a scowl on his face when George tentatively stops him.

GEORGE

Excuse me, Special Agent Huang.
Um, do you know where Special Agent
Luhon can be found?

LING

That's a very good question.

Then he understands something is wrong.

LING (CONT'D)

Why, George?

GEORGE

Yes, well, um, he might be the
victim of an identity theft.

LING

Get to the point.

GEORGE

I just received a Q-747 to lock
down his ID but then it was refused
at a train station right after I
did it. But Special Agent Luhon is
still logged in at the rehab
center. Therefore--

LING

What station?

GEORGE

Um, the perpetrator was trying to
buy a ticket for Mexico City.

Confused, George shows Ling the information on his tablet.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

So I think that he needs to file a
complaint but I was not sure I
should call him.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)

He's very insistent on proper protocol but you know how scary he--

LING

Yes. That is, you were right not to call him. I was just headed to the rehab center and I'll let him know personally.

GEORGE

Right. We don't want to embarrass Special Agent Luhon.

But then he is startled when Ling rushes past him for the door. George does not know what to do so he sits down and does nothing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'll just wait here for instructions, right...?

EXT. STREET, MEXICAN TOWN - NIGHT

Raji, Eito and especially Jonathan enjoy the chalupas while the street vendor finishes counting out the pesos for Kiki with Maria carefully watching.

The transaction completed, the street vendor moves off and Kiki examines a peso while she eats her chalupas.

KIKI

What is this peso supposed to be?

MARIA

Pesos, they are like credits. Once, a long time ago, people used them to pay for what they wanted.

She pats Kiki's backpack.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You should hide them away so they are not stolen. Do not show anyone how many you have.

KIKI

Where do they come from?

MARIA

People don't like that the government controls what we can and cannot have.

(MORE)

MARIA (CONT'D)

So there are those who make these coins from metals that are precious to the government. We use them to trade instead of credits.

RAJI

We've eaten and Jonathan is content. Now what do we do?

MARIA

You will stay with my family tonight.

INT. TRUCK TRAILER - NIGHT

A calm Esmeralda and a nervous Manuel bounce around with the boxes.

MANUEL

This is taking forever.

ESMERALDA

Off-gridders can't be choosers.

MANUEL

Uni Gov says that there's no such thing.

ESMERALDA

And we know that we can trust the government. Why were they arresting you, Manuel?

MANUEL

You know why. That girl - our daughter will ruin her life and ours.

But from her expression, Manuel knows she is not buying it.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Okay, my career. You already ruined your life and probably hers as well.

(nervously)

Who is this driver and why should we trust him?

ESMERALDA

He is a friend of a friend. And we will trust him because I say so.

MANUEL

Why must you do this? From the day we were married, you have fought me.

ESMERALDA

I have fought against your desire to give into the government controlling our lives.

MANUEL

Someone has to keep order, Esmeralda. Someone has to keep the society safe.

ESMERALDA

The government makes unrealistic laws then makes criminals of those who resist its power. How does that keep society safe?

MANUEL

You knew who I was so why did you marry me?

ESMERALDA

I knew who you could become. But you chose to become this man.

MANUEL

I have authority, prestige and the chance to make a difference.

ESMERALDA

You were once an imp. Remember in school when you played the practical jokes on the teachers? You were a bottom lister.

MANUEL

I matured.

ESMERALDA

You were deceived. You started to believe what they taught you even though your nature was against it.

MANUEL

I chose to believe that personal sacrifice was best for the sake of the culture, our culture.

ESMERALDA

This is not our culture. This is some sterile society they created to keep people in their place. They want us compliant.

MANUEL

I choose to disagree.

ESMERALDA

And what will you choose when we find Kiki?

Manuel starts to respond but does not and they fall into silence.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE, MEXICAN TOWN - NIGHT

Maria makes the teenagers comfortable on the floor with blankets and pillows.

MARIA

Tomorrow, I will take you to some friends who can help you get to Mexico City.

KIKI

What was that language you were speaking with the street guy, Maria?

MARIA

It's called Spanish--

The teenagers GASP.

KIKI

We thought no one spoke it anymore. The government only wants people to speak Basic.

MARIA

The government can tell us what to do but it is harder to make us do what it wants.

Kiki smiles impishly.

KIKI

I like it down here.

She leans closer to Maria so the others cannot hear.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Will you teach me to speak Spanish?

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Ling's phone RINGS and he looks at the display to see Director Sinclair's name. He considers his choices then ignores the call and switches off the phone.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE, MEXICAN TOWN - NIGHT

Raji, Eito and Jonathan sleep while in a corner under a single small light, Maria teaches Kiki to speak a few words in Spanish.

EXT. MEXICO CITY - DAY

Raji waves to the truck driver as he leaves and joins Kiki, Eito and Jonathan surveying the city. It has the same sterile appearance as Capital City.

JONATHAN
Are you sure that driver didn't
take us home? This looks like
Capital city.

EITO
What did you expect?

JONATHAN
Something different.

KIKI
We have work to do. Maria said
that we need to locate a man who
makes colorful bracelets.

RAJI
Do you think we can trade some of
your pesos for bracelets?

KIKI
We need to guard our pesos
carefully. We're living off the
grid and they are the only way we
can get food.

JONATHAN
Yeah, we need to guard those pesos
things.

RAJI

You're just thinking of your stomach.

JONATHAN

Speaking of stomachs, can we find another chalupas person?

They walk into the city.

EXT. STREET, MEXICO CITY - DAY

Kiki, Raji and Eito rush to the small shop with colorful bracelets in the small window. Jonathan struggles to catch up and eat his tortilla without dropping it.

KIKI

This is it. This has to be it.

INT. BRACELET SHOP, MEXICO CITY - CONTINUOUS

Kiki, Raji and Eito hurry inside. An OLD BRACELET MAKER works at his bench. Raji and Eito are immediately attracted to his wares while Jonathan stands in the doorway and finishes his food. Kiki approaches the old man.

KIKI

Hi. We're looking for someone who can take us to...

(quietly)

...the Grand Library.

The old man ignores her and continues to work.

KIKI (CONT'D)

We were told by Maria to come here. She said that you could help us.

Still the man works, his head down. Raji, Eito and Jonathan are now with her and showing signs of concern. Kiki takes out the map and unfolds it.

KIKI (CONT'D)

We have a map but they say that the jungle is impossible without a guide.

And yet the man pays no attention to her. Eito and Jonathan tug on her.

EITO

I don't think he's the one.

But Kiki will not budge. Then she has an idea.

KIKI
 (in broken Spanish)
 We must find the Grand Library. I
 am a historian.

The old man slowly looks up from his work.

OLD BRACELET MAKER
 (in Spanish)
 You are a historian?

KIKI
 (in Spanish)
 Yes. Yes I am.

The old bracelet maker smiles and speaks English (Basic).

OLD BRACELET MAKER
 I can help you.

INT. BACK ROOM OF BRACELET SHOP, MEXICO CITY - DAY

The WIFE OF THE OLD BRACELET MAKER serves food to the old man, Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan at the table.

KIKI
 Why can't we go today? There's
 still light out.

OLD BRACELET MAKER
 It is many hours on foot. We would
 never make it before dark. No, we
 leave tomorrow morning.

Jonathan looks lovingly at the old woman as she serves him sweet-smelling food.

JONATHAN
 Anyway, we need to eat to keep up
 our strength.

KIKI
 (to the old man)
 Have you ever been to the Grand
 Library?

OLD BRACELET MAKER
 No. Few people know where it can
 be found. It is better to protect
 it.

RAJI

How will you know where to take us?

OLD BRACELET MAKER

You have the map. Only a few have been given such a document.

KIKI

But haven't you shown others the way?

OLD BRACELET MAKER

There's been no reason. They were historians and had a map. ... But I am afraid that you young ones will get lost.

Before Kiki can protest, he continues.

OLD BRACELET MAKER (CONT'D)

You are not yet a historian.
(smiles)
But you are close...

INT. FBL OFFICES, MEXICO CITY - NIGHT

Ling storms in, flashes his ID card and the FBL DUTY OFFICER springs to his feet.

LING

I need an immediate facial-recognition search.

But the officer recovers his composure.

FBL DUTY OFFICER

Who are you?

Ling sticks his ID card in the officer's face and growls.

LING

I am Special Agent Ling Huang on assignment for Director Jack Sinclair from Capital City.

The officer panics.

FBL DUTY OFFICER

I - I - I will require verification.

Ling bluffs his way through.

LING

Then contact the director and
question his orders.

The officer hesitates. He is unsure what to do.

LING (CONT'D)

I insist. Call the FBL
headquarters in Capital City and
demand that Director Sinclair be
interrupted from his duties to
verify his orders.

FBL DUTY OFFICER

You know, that seems like an
unnecessary step. You are clearly
an agent from Capital City and FBL
agents do not break the law so...

He shows his tablet with the photos of Manuel and Esmeralda.

LING

These two people, find them.

The FBL officer quickly sits at his terminal and works.

EXT. BRACELET SHOP, MEXICO CITY - DAY

The Old Bracelet Maker, Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan walk
from the shop into the morning foot traffic.

INT. FBL OFFICES, MEXICO CITY - DAY

A frustrated Ling and the night duty officer sit and stare at
the computer monitor.

FBL DUTY OFFICER

I'm sorry, Agent Huang, they just
aren't in the city.

LING

They have to be.

He thinks while the poor officer makes another attempt but
the screen flashes; Search Unsuccessful. Then he has an idea
and pulls up Kiki's photo.

LING (CONT'D)

Look for this one.

EXT. TEOTIHUACAN, JUNGLE - DAY

The old truck stops on the edge of a clearing. Old Bracelet Maker, Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan climb out but the TRUCK DRIVER remains in the cab.

There is a magnificent view of the ancient city of Teotihuacan. The teenagers are in awe. They are about to enter the ruined city when Kiki notices that the old man does not move.

KIKI

You aren't coming with us?

OLD BRACELET MAKER

I was not invited.

He forces a sad smile, climbs back into the truck then it disappears into the foliage before she can protest.

RAJI

KIKI, COME ON.

The other teens are running toward a large temple. Kiki catches up to them at the foot of the stairs. But then she is disappointed.

KIKI

This is so old. How can it be a grand library?

EITO

We came all this way. We might as well go up there and see.

Eito and Raji start to climb so Kiki and Jonathan follow.

EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE, JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

Eito, Raji, Kiki and finally Jonathan reach the top where GUSTAVO suddenly appears and startles them.

GUSTAVO

Welcome. What can I do for you?

KIKI

We're looking for the Grand Library.

GUSTAVO

I fear you have come to the wrong place.

JONATHAN

I guess you were right, Kiki.

Jonathan is about to leave.

KIKI

Wait, Jonathan.

She takes out the map.

KIKI (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

We followed this.

A light grin crosses Gustavo's lips.

GUSTAVO

(in Spanish)

Very good, young one. What do you want.

Kiki is not sure she understands but manages to say...

KIKI

(in Spanish)

I - We want to be historians.

GUSTAVO

Well then, my young apprentice historians, follow me.

Gustavo enters a dark doorway. Kiki and Raji are right behind him but Jonathan grabs Eito by the arm.

JONATHAN

What's an apprentice?

Eito shrugs but goes after the others so Jonathan follows.

INT. ANCIENT TEMPLE, JUNGLE - DAY

Gustavo leads Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan descend the stone steps deep into the structure.

KIKI

Where are we? What is this place called?

GUSTAVO

You are in Teotihuacan.

He does not elaborate so Kiki quickly takes out the Spanish dictionary and looks up the word.

KIKI
Teotihuacan, it means City of the
Gods.

Gustavo nods, happy to see her inquisitiveness.

RAJI
So this is an old city?

GUSTAVO
Once, this was a place where people
came to explore the past. But the
Unity Government closed it down to
stop people from being curious.
The bureaucrats forgot about it.
These sites of ancient cultures
could not be destroyed so the Uni
Gov hoped that nature would take
its course and the jungle reclaim
the city and others like it.

KIKI
Is it so forgotten that it will
never be discovered?

GUSTAVO
The jungle has done its job of
protecting us. We try to do the
rest by maintaining the secret.

KIKI
This isn't the only Grand Library,
is it?

Once again, Gustavo smiles.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

Gustavo, Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan walk into the room
full of books, manuscripts of all kinds and other written
materials. The teens are mesmerized and walk among the rows
as though in trances.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - DAY

Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan walk from different rows to
find Gustavo waiting for them.

GUSTAVO
So, are you ready to begin, my
young apprentices?

EXT. BRACELET SHOP, MEXICO CITY - NIGHT

The old pickup truck pulls to a stop and the Old Bracelet Maker is about to step out when dozens of lights switch on and the truck is caught in them. An FBL SWAT team surrounds it and Ling steps from the shadows with a wicked grin.

EXT. STREET, MEXICO CITY - DAY

As the sun rises, Esmeralda and Manuel climb from the back of a panel truck and she waves thanks to the driver.

MANUEL

All right, so now what?

ESMERALDA

We'll need to secure transportation
and maybe a bracelet.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, MEXICO CITY FBL - DAY

The Old Bracelet Maker sits across from a determined Ling wearing sunglasses.

LING

You will tell me where these two
people can be found.

The old man glances down at the tablet with the photos of Manuel and Esmeralda then shakes his head.

LING (CONT'D)

You are lying.

INT. BRACELET SHOP, MEXICO CITY - DAY

The wife of the old bracelet maker is animated as she explains what has happened to Esmeralda. When Esmeralda starts to leave by the front, the older woman stops her and leads Esmeralda and Manuel to the back.

EXT. BACK OF BRACELET SHOP, MEXICO CITY - DAY

The bracelet maker's wife peeks out the back door then has Esmeralda and Manuel exit the shop. There is a small motorbike.

MANUEL

How do we find this place without
the old man's help?

ESMERALDA
We don't need his help.

She points to her temple.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)
The information is up here.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM, MEXICO CITY FBL -
NIGHT

A frustrated Ling walks from the interrogation room where the
night FBL Duty Officer waits.

FBL DUTY OFFICER
Perhaps we should call for
assistance from Capital City?

LING
Are you suggesting that I'm not up
to the job?

FBL DUTY OFFICER
Oh no. It's just that old man is
not going to break.

LING
Believers are always the hardest.
But I'll find a way.

EXT. TEOTIHUACAN, JUNGLE - DAY

Manuel and Esmeralda ride from the jungle on the motorbike.

MANUEL
Two days on this thing and you
bring me to an old ruined city?

ESMERALDA
Where else would you hide anything
important but in a place those who
would look for it the most would
never look?

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - DAY

Esmeralda and Manuel stop at the entrance. Before them are
all the shelves filled with books and materials and they are
stunned into silence.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

Gustavo escorts Manuel and Esmeralda to the part of the room where Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan work at an old table covered with printed and handmade books. For a moment, Esmeralda enjoys watching her daughter work. Manuel has to fight the sensation of pride in seeing Kiki at work.

KIKI

MOM.

Kiki suddenly looks up, notices her mother and races into her arms. But then she sees Manuel and is angry.

KIKI (CONT'D)

You brought him? Why did you bring him? He's a wicked man.

MANUEL

You will respect me. I am your father.

KIKI

Since when?

MANUEL

I am an agent of the FBL.

KIKI

(to Esmeralda)

You see? You should never have brought that man here.

ESMERALDA

He helped me to escape rehab. He is on the run just like I am. ... And so are you and your friends.

KIKI

He's lying. Don't believe him.

ESMERALDA

Um, show me what you're doing.

That distracts Kiki and she excitedly drags her mother over to the table where the other teens work.

KIKI

We're writing books.

MANUEL

That's illegal.

He looks around indignity stunned.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

This is all so very wrong.

The other teenagers ignore him in their enthusiasm.

EITO

My ancestors were Japanese Samurai warriors. I'm writing a book about what that means.

RAJI

My descendents come from India. Do you know that India was once a country of its own?

JONATHAN

I'm English and my family were knights and lords and ladies. They lived in big stone buildings called castles.

GUSTAVO

It is part of their training as historians. They must research and write a book.

MANUEL

This has to stop.

GUSTAVO

These are some of the most inquisitive young people I have met in a long time. Their minds must be trained.

MANUEL

Their minds must to focused on conforming, on accepting that the government knows what is best for them to know.

ESMERALDA

You are a fool.

MANUEL

I am a patriot. And all this must be destroyed.

GUSTAVO

You can destroy all of this and change nothing.

MANUEL

Society will be rid of the last vestiges of nonconformity.

Bug Gustavo grins slightly and there is an almost imperceptible shake of the head. Manuel understands, his voice breathless.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

There are more?

(gulps)

This is not the only Grand Library?

GUSTAVO

Since mankind learned to write down the ways of human culture, there have been those who have tried to stifle the truth. They were not successful and you will be not as well.

MANUEL

You are ... you are wrong.

GUSTAVO

Feel free to look around. Read anything. You will find the truth.

Manuel staggers away.

EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

Kiki and Esmeralda sit outside and gaze up at the stars. Kiki is disappointed.

KIKI

But I thought that I came here to find the secret to free you from rehab.

She is having difficulty processing the information.

KIKI (CONT'D)

I don't understand. If you knew where the Grand Library was located, why hide the map in the medallion?

ESMERALDA

So that, if anything happened to me, you would find your destiny.

KIKI

You knew I would figure it out?

ESMERALDA

Of course. You're my daughter.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

With the NOISE of the excited teenagers working on their books in the background, Manuel wanders the rows of printed books. He abruptly stops and carefully picks up a book. The photo on the back is a man who resembles Jack Sinclair.

MANUEL

(whispers)

The Terror of Cultural Purity by
Dr. Jack Sinclair.

GUSTAVO

The great-great-grandfather of the
current Director of the Federal
Bureau of Language.

Manuel is speechless.

GUSTAVO (CONT'D)

You should read it. He foretold
the dangers of a sterile culture
like that forced upon us by the
Unity Government. He saw how
immoral it would be to steal
people's pasts.

MANUEL

Impossible. The Sinclair family
has been known down through history
for advocating a safe, pure
culture...

GUSTAVO

Because you were taught it in
school? Read the book, Manuel.

MANUEL

My name is Special Agent Manuel
Luhon.

With an impish grin, Gustavo walks away. After a moment, Manuel finds a chair, sits and opens the book.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, MEXICO CITY - DAY

The terrified truck driver for the old bracelet maker is terrified. He sits alone in the room when. Ling BURSTS in with sunglasses on.

LING
WHERE DID YOU TAKE THE OLD MAN?

The driver is so scared that he cannot speak.

LING (CONT'D)
You will tell me or I will make you pay dearly.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - DAY

Manuel sits with the Jack Sinclair book in thought while he watches Esmeralda move from one teenager to another as she assists them with their books. His face softens at the sight. Then Gustavo sits beside him. Manuel holds the book up.

MANUEL
This is a fake.

GUSTAVO
Is that what you believe?

Manuel cannot respond.

INT. ROOM INSIDE ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

Manuel packs a backpack with food stuffs and a water bottle. Esmeralda is behind him and startles him.

ESMERALDA
Going somewhere?

MANUEL
I have to confront Director Sinclair on what his ancestor wrote in this book. I have to know if it is true.

He wraps the Jack Sinclair book carefully in cloth and puts it in the backpack.

ESMERALDA
They will take that away from you.

He shows her a chip then hides it in his shoe.

MANUEL

I have a digital copy.

ESMERALDA

They will imprison you, hurt you.
Maybe even more, kill you. That
will make no difference to them.

MANUEL

All that I have been taught,
everything that I believe cannot be
a lie. I can't live with that.

ESMERALDA

And what if you discover it is all
a lie?

MANUEL

I don't know.

He suddenly realizes.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

So long ago, that's what you were
trying to do.

ESMERALDA

I asked questions and every time,
the answers I received did not make
sense. The more I asked, the less
the culture around me had the
answers I needed. Stay here with
us. Learn with us.

MANUEL

The truth I seek is not here.

He finishes packing and is about to leave.

ESMERALDA

I love you, Manuel.

He stops, his back to her.

MANUEL

I know. I...

There is a COMMOTION in the other room.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

Ling stands over Kiki, Eito, Raji and Jonathan with his
weapon aimed at them. He growls at Kiki.

LING

I knew it. You're that criminal's
daughter. Those criminals'
daughter. Where are they?

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - SAME TIME

Above Ling and the teenagers, Manuel and Esmeralda hide and watch the scene below. He motions for her to stay and works his way around behind Ling.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - CONTINUOUS

Ling waves the weapon at Kiki.

LING

I want to know where they are, NOW.

But Kiki sees Manuel circle around and approach from behind Ling. She stalls for time.

KIKI

They're not here.

LING

Don't give me that. Your father
did not break that cultural
criminal out of rehab to run away
with her.

MANUEL

Ling...

Manuel is behind him and Ling twirls around. There is a battle for the gun.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I will go back with you, leave them
alone.

LING

Never, Luhon. You are guilty of
cultural crimes. I'm arresting
you, all of you.

The weapon FIRES. Ling drops to the floor, a large spot of blood on his shirt. Ling struggles to speak.

LING (CONT'D)

You are a cultural criminal...

Then he dies.

EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE, JUNGLE - NIGHT

Manuel fingers Ling's ID card then slides it into a pocket as Esmeralda joins him. He hefts the backpack over his shoulders.

ESMERALDA

I fell in love with you because of your passion. Little did I realize that your passion would become my rival. Now it will take you from me once again.

MANUEL

Ling found us. It will not take long for them to trace him here.

ESMERALDA

Then stay and let's figure out how to kill the beast.

But then she understands.

ESMERALDA (CONT'D)

You want to become a decoy. Lead them away from here. How?

MANUEL

That's not important. What's important is to keep Kiki safe. She's the future.

(fights for the words)

She's the best thing we ever did together.

Esmeralda leans against him and takes his arm.

ESMERALDA

I love you.

MANUEL

I know. I don't deserve it.

(quietly)

I need to do this while they're still sleeping.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, MEXICO - NIGHT

Esmeralda waves goodbye to the pickup truck driver and Manuel is not happy. She touches his lips with her hand.

ESMERALDA

Don't say it. I'm going with you.

INT. TRAIN STATION, MEXICO - CONTINUOUS

Manuel uses Ling's ID card to swipe at the kiosk for tickets and Esmeralda understands.

ESMERALDA

So the travel logs will show that Agent Huang traveled back to Capital City.

MANUEL

And they will assume he was tracking me. Last chance to stay.

Esmeralda boards the train and he follows with a sad smile.

INT. MAIN ROOM, ANCIENT TEMPLE - DAY

Kiki races around and searches everywhere while Gustavo passively watches. Raji, Eito and Jonathan are still groggy from waking up and do not understand what she is doing.

KIKI

Where are they, Gustavo? Where did they go?

RAJI

Kiki, what's wrong?

KIKI

They're gone. My parents are gone.

EITO

Maybe they're out walking in the ruins.

KIKI

They're not.

(to Gustavo)

They went back, didn't they? They went back to that evil place.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Esmeralda and Manuel sit across from each other.

ESMERALDA

Won't we need that to travel across the city?

MANUEL

If I know the FBI, we will have special transportation waiting for us. What I'm counting on is that they don't know that I have this.

Manuel slips Ling's ID card into his shoe.

ESMERALDA

If we're in rehab, what good will that do you?

Manuel shrugs with a SIGH.

MANUEL

I will wait for my chance to act. I will only need a few minutes.

She is skeptical.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I'm making this up as I go. I told you not to come.

She leans across to him, her face very close to his.

ESMERALDA

I wouldn't mess this for the world.

She kisses him lightly on the lips.

MANUEL

I regret...

ESMERALDA

It will be fine. Better to live free in prison than to live in a prison while seemingly free.

EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE, JUNGLE - DAY

Kiki emerges with Raji, Eito and Jonathan with their backpacks. Gustavo patiently waits.

RAJI

...we're going with you, Kiki. You go, we go.

EITO

Yeah.

JONATHAN

Got that right.

GUSTAVO

You're parents have their job.
Yours lies here. It is what they
wanted.

KIKI

It's not what I want.

GUSTAVO

Your mother purposely led you here.
She wants you to be a historian.
Will you sacrifice what she hoped
for you to have?

Before Kiki can answer, a pickup truck pulls from the foliage. She looks at Gustavo's slight smile. He hands her a small chip.

GUSTAVO (CONT'D)

Be wise and not foolish.

Kiki returns his smile and the teenagers bounce down the stone steps and climb into the pickup truck.

INT. TRAIN STATION, CAPITAL CITY - DAY

Manuel and Esmeralda step off the train and are immediately surrounded and arrested by FBL agents.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, FBL - DAY

Manuel is handcuffed to the table with his backpack and the Jack Sinclair book also on the table, a guard behind him. Jack enters with a calm, cool demeanor. He wears sunglasses.

JACK

Leave us.

The guard leaves and he sits across from Manuel and removes the sunglasses.

JACK (CONT'D)

Obviously, we will not be recording
this interview.

(shakes his head)

This is such a disappointment. You
should have known that we had an
alert out for your faces. The
facial-recognition surveillance
picked you up on the train.

MANUEL

Where is my wife?

JACK

She is no longer your concern.

(SIGHS)

I had such hope for you. I thought you might someday sit in the director's chair.

MANUEL

And defend the lie?

Jack reaches out but cannot quite make himself touch the book.

JACK

My father warned me when I first joined the FBL. Great-Great-Grandfather's indiscretion has been the family's deep dark secret. My grandfather thought that he had destroyed every copy of that cancerous book. He manages to purge the main computer of any files associated to it.

MANUEL

That's why you want the Grand Library found and destroyed. You knew there was a copy there.

JACK

Oh, I was not certain there would be an original copy. However, I knew these historians' penchant for making their quaint little handmade copies. Couldn't have those laying about.

He leans forward with a knowing smile.

JACK (CONT'D)

You can save yourself by telling me where to find this poisonous place.

MANUEL

I wanted to believe that you didn't know. I wanted to believe that, if you knew the truth, you would see the need to change the culture.

Jack LAUGHS and that surprises Manuel.

JACK

Change? An open society, one where the people are free to learn and make their own choices is a danger.

MANUEL

How can freedom be a danger?

JACK

Manuel, it is a danger to those who rule. You cannot control a people who are free to make their own decisions.

He sees the confusion in Manuel's face.

JACK (CONT'D)

Uniformity is a means to keep the people in their place. Those in leadership, we do not require such rigid controls. We know how to deal with privilege, prestige and affluence. You could have had it, too.

MANUEL

I don't want your fake society. I want my own choices, live in my own culture passed on by my own ancestors.

JACK

And that is why you cannot be trusted with any of it. You have shown yourself to be common.

MANUEL

It will all come out at my trial. I'll tell the world.

JACK

Trial? Manuel, trials are for those who have already accepted their guilt. We sent criminals to the rehab centers to adjust their minds for their trials.

MANUEL

You won't break me.

JACK

I am confident that you are right. Therefore, I don't expect you to survive rehab.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Yes, there will never be a trial
for you. ... Or your wife.

Manuel angrily struggles against the handcuffs but he cannot
budge from the table. Calmly, Jack picks up the book.

JACK (CONT'D)

I will destroy this then I will
destroy you and your wife. You can
save yourself and your wife
extended agony if you tell us where
the Grand Library can be found.

MANUEL

NEVER.

JACK

I thought as much. Well, we'll
see. My inquisitors are very
skilled.

Jack walks confidently to the door with the book.

MANUEL

I'll fight you. The truth will be
known.

JACK

Truth? Really, Manuel, what is
truth?

Then he is gone and Manuel left to take out his frustrations
on the handcuffs.

INT. HALLWAY OF KUMAR APARTMENT, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

Ms. Kumar opens the door, CRIES OUT and hugs Raji. Then she
pulls her quickly inside, sees Kiki, Eito and Jonathan and
also hurries them in before she checks the hallway and closes
the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM, KUMAR APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Ms. Kumar hugs Raji again.

MS. KUMAR

Raji, where have you been? We've
been so worried about you.

RAJI

Mother, it is best you don't know--

MS. KUMAR

Don't know? I am your mother.

RAJI

They need a place to stay tonight.

MS. KUMAR

They should go home to their parents.

KIKI

Ms. Kumar, my parents have been arrested as cultural criminals.

MS. KUMAR

Yes, and I should call the police to come for you.

RAJI

Eito and Jonathan can't go home. And if you call the police, they will arrest me as well as my friends.

MS. KUMAR

What have you done?

RAJI

We want to stay the night then tomorrow we will leave.

KIKI

We will leave. Raji will stay.

Raji starts to protest but a quick look from Kiki stops her.

RAJI

Yes, that's what I meant.

MS. KUMAR

Okay, that's good. I will make you some food. I have Uni burgers.

KIKI

Yum, sounds good, Ms. Kumar.

Ms. Kumar heads to the kitchen and Raji lowers her voice.

RAJI

I am coming with you.

KIKI
I know. But if your mother thinks
you are leaving, she will call the
police.

The teenagers all nod, they understand.

KIKI (CONT'D)
We need to eat and rest. We'll
leave while she is sleeping.

JONATHAN
Uni burgers? What I wouldn't give
for a chalupa.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF KUMAR APARTMENT - DAY

Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan slip out quietly.

INT. CITY BUILDING - DAY

Isaiah stops the buffing machine when he sees Kiki, Raji,
Eito and Jonathan approach. He frowns.

ISAIAH
My young historians, I had not
expected you to return.

KIKI
We need your help, Isaiah. My
parents are in trouble.

INT. BASEMENT, CITY BUILDING - DAY

Isaiah hands Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan the coveralls of
city maintenance workers and hats.

ISAIAH
You must remember at all times,
don't make eye contact with people.

JONATHAN
I don't understand...

ISAIAH
You are lowly workers. People will
not notice you so long as you don't
give them reason. You are nothing
to them.

KIKI

We don't know where my parents are
being held.

ISAIAH

Not to worry. The ones who will be
helping you will know. Just do
whatever they say, whenever they
say it.

He hands Kiki and Jonathan another set of coveralls.

ISAIAH (CONT'D)

Put these over the ones you have
on. They are for your parents
later.

Then he stuffs hats inside the hats of Kiki and Jonathan.
They put them on and all the teenagers look like completely
different people.

EXT. REHAB CENTER - DAY

A panel truck enters through the back gate and pulls up to
the service entrance. A REHAB MAINTENANCE WORKER rushes
Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan from the back and into the
building.

INT. HALLWAY, REHAB CENTER - DAY

Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan push floor buffers along with
two REHAB MAINTENANCE WORKERS toward a REHAB GUARD.
Suddenly, one of the workers stumbles and pushes one of the
buffers into the guard.

REHAB GUARD

Stupid idiot.

There is a commotion and more stumbling about. While the
guard is distracted, the other worker swipes the guard's ID
card.

KIKI

Sorry. Our fault.

Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan and the two works wave
apologetically and quickly move on as the guard goes in the
other direction.

INT. HALLWAY, REHAB CENTER - DAY

One of the rehab workers, Raji, Eito and Jonathan pretend to use the buffers while Kiki and the other worker look for the right cell. They find it and swipe the guard's ID card.

INT. CELL, REHAB CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Esmeralda jumps up as the door opens and Kiki rushes in.

KIKI

Mom.

ESMERALDA

Kiki, what are you doing here?

KIKI

Rescuing you.

ESMERALDA

Oh no. Why did you come back? You should be in the library learning.

KIKI

We had to save you.

ESMERALDA

We?

INT. HALLWAY, REHAB CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Esmeralda follows Kiki out to find the two workers, Raji, Eito and Jonathan.

ESMERALDA

Oh no, no, no.

KIKI

Mom, we don't have time for this.
We have to get Father.

Kiki swipes the door to Manuel's cell and he hesitantly exits, spots Esmeralda and hugs her.

MANUEL

Did they hurt you?

Before she can respond, he sees Kiki.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

What is she doing here?

KIKI
I'm beginning to not feel
appreciated.

Kiki and Jonathan lie on the floor, unzip their outer coveralls so that Raji and Eito can pull them off. They separate the hats and hand one to each.

MANUEL
You were supposed to stay at the library and learn to be a historian.

KIKI
Haven't you learned by now that I don't do what I'm supposed to do?

REHAB WORKER
We must hurry. The shift changes in a few minutes.

The two workers are quickly pushing the buffers down the hallway. Manuel and Esmeralda slip into the coveralls, put on the hats then follow the workers and the teenagers.

MANUEL
Where are we going? We can't just walk past the guard station.

KIKI
There are underground corridors for the custodial crews. They are not guarded.

INT. UNDERGROUND CORRIDORS, REHAB CENTER - CONTINUOUS

They leave the floor buffers behind as they hurry along and weave through different corridors until they reach a stairwell.

INT. MAINTENANCE ENTRYWAY, REHAB CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The workers stop the others and peek outside the door.

REHAB WORKER
We wait.

MANUEL
For what?

REHAB WORKER

When the shift changes, you follow us. Regardless of what happens, stay in line.

KIKI

And keep your heads down like you're really humble.

MANUEL

The guards will see us. They're just workers, what do they know?

KIKI

But they won't recognize you so long as you look down. Trust us, Dad. We traveled all across the city without being questioned.

MANUEL

What did you call me--?

Suddenly the ALARM SOUNDS.

KIKI

Here we go. Look contrite, Dad.

EXT. REHAB CENTER - DAY

The ALARM continues as groups of workers in the same coveralls funnel from the buildings to the back gate where they pass through the pedestrian entrance in single file.

The two workers, Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel join the line with their heads down.

MANUEL

They know we've escaped.

KIKI

Relax, Dad. Act normal.

MANUEL

(disbelief)
Act normal?

KIKI

Everyone shuffled slowly. We are not in a hurry.

Guards rush everywhere. There are LOUD NOISES of all kinds and SHOUTS. The guards at the gate are confused as the workers continue to file through.

Abruptly, Kiki is stopped by a guard. She keeps her head down. There is more SHOUTING, guards argue then the guard motions impatiently for her to hurry on. Kiki and the others shuffle through the gate.

EXT. REHAB CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel cross the street and continue to walk slowly away from the chaos of the rehab center.

MANUEL

We have to find a terminal. I need to upload some data.

ESMERALDA

Then it will have to be a terminal with a port.

EITO

A hologram center.

KIKI

Yes, a hologram center.

MANUEL

Why there? Those are for playing games.

KIKI

They have work stations for kids to do their homework but no one uses them.

MANUEL

Then why do they still have them?

KIKI

So kids can tell their parents that they are going to do their homework. Mostly, kids just use them to share files of games they created.

MANUEL

But that's...

He stops, embarrassed that he was going to say it was illegal.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Right, let's go.

INT. HOLOGRAM CENTER - NIGHT

The place is busy and LOUD MUSIC greets Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel when they enter. The place is filled with small rooms which display games such as batting cages, space invader-type games. They find an empty room.

INT. GAME ROOM, HOLOGRAM CENTER - CONTINUOUS

They enter and Manuel takes out his chip and Ling's ID from his shoe. He swipes the card then inserts the chip. But before he can do anything, Jack's face appears larger than life on the screen.

JACK

(on the screen)

Manuel, shame on you. As a special agent, you should have known that we would be looking for Agent Huang. Did you kill him on the train and steal his ID? Murder and theft.

Manuel ignores him and attempts to retrieve the chip.

JACK (CONT'D)

(on the screen)

I suspected you might try something like this. I figured the best way to find your data chip was to wait for you to use it. Did you really think it was that easy to break out of a rehab center?

Frustratingly, Manuel continues to try to release it.

JACK (CONT'D)

(on the screen)

At this point, the data on your little chip, there, has been purged.

ESMERALDA

We have to leave. The FBL will be coming.

JACK

(on the screen)

She's right, Manuel. It's over. Turn yourself in and make things easy on all of you.

Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan leave. Esmeralda pulls Manuel who still thinks he can get his chip back but finally gives in and goes with her.

EXT. STREET, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel hurry across to an alley and watch as the hologram center is surrounded by FBL. Then they disappear into the night.

EXT. CITY SQUARE, CAPITAL CITY - NIGHT

Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel sit in the shadows and depressingly watch pedestrians pass.

MANUEL

It's over. The FBL has the book and my digital copy.

ESMERALDA

We can work our way back to the library and get another copy.

MANUEL

Jack has been ahead of me every step of the way. I'll bet he followed our movements from Mexico City. He probably has agents waiting for us to go back to Mexico City so they can track us to the library.

With an impish grin, Kiki produces the chip Gustavo gave her.

KIKI

I have another plan.

MANUEL

What's that?

KIKI

Dad, who has been teaching you how to defy the Uni Culture?

INT. HOMEWORK CENTER - NIGHT

Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel walk purposefully to a study cubicle. A confused Manuel looks around at the nearly empty place.

MANUEL

Where are all students? When I was young, I practically lived here.

KIKI

It's very late at night.

MANUEL

Yes, and...?

KIKI

They might be looking for me on the net. Raji, Eito and Jonathan, take a cubicle.

Raji, Eito and Jonathan each sit in a cubicle and the image of the same VIRTUAL TEACHER appears, her voice echoes like in surround sound. Kiki give the chip to Raji who inserts it.

VIRTUAL TEACHER

(on Raji's screen)

How may I help you, Raji Kumar?

RAJI

I need to share this story file with my classmates.

VIRTUAL TEACHER

(on Raji's screen)

You are sharing; The Terror of Cultural Purity by Dr. Jack Sinclair.

RAJI

That's correct. It's for an assignment.

VIRTUAL TEACHER

(on Raji's screen)

That is admirable, Raji Kumar.

EITO

Got it.

JONATHAN

Me too.

KIKI

Okay, copy it to a blind file and send it to all your friends. Tell that it is secret and not to show it to anyone else.

MANUEL

How will that help us? A few dozen kids look at a file they will not share?

Esmeralda SNICKERS at his naiveté which annoys him.

KIKI

(to the other teens)

Hurry, hurry. Go, go.

(to Manuel)

Think about it, Dad. If you tell teenagers not to do something, what will they do?

Manuel is about to say that they will not share it when he suddenly understands and nods - OOH.

RAJI

Done. It's out on my network.

EITO

Mine too.

JONATHAN

Ditto.

MANUEL

Now what?

KIKI

All we can do now is wait.

INT. TRAIN STATION, CAPITAL CITY - DAY

Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan are curled up on benches where they try to sleep. Esmeralda and Manuel sit nearby and watch the teens.

ESMERALDA

It's going to be tough to jump on a train with this many people without being noticed.

MANUEL

In training school, I did my thesis on a case study of someone described as a cultural saboteur who tried to flood the net with data. To purge the data, they had to temporarily shut down the system.

Suddenly, Esmeralda is alert and rushes over to a TV screen. Manuel joins her.

NEWS ANCHOR

(on screen)

...and the FBL warns citizens that the illegal book circulating on the net should not be read. It contains anti-Unity Government propaganda and should be ignored. Citizens are encouraged to report violators...

MANUEL

Get the kids. We may only have minutes.

The screen flickers and she rushes back and wakes the teenagers.

ESMERALDA

Wake up. It's out there.

The kids race over to the screen that flickers on and off.

NEWS ANCHOR

(on screen)

This update has--

FLICKER

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(on screen)

--by the Unity Alliance Government. Computer outages have been report--

FLICKER

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

(on screen)

--fight to remove the criminal digital file that has infected--

The screen goes to black.

MANUEL

They're trying to erase the file but it is spreading too fast. It must be everywhere. It's disrupting internet service.

They look around. Everywhere the screens and terminals flicker on and off. Some blink out and do not return.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Now or never...

INT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM, CAPITAL CITY - DAY

Manuel stops Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan and Esmeralda from following him.

MANUEL

Everyone wait here just in case
this is a trap.

He approaches a RAILWAY WORKER but the others are right with him and he turns on them angrily.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

What did I just say?

KIKI

Dad, if you're going to hang with
the wrong people expect this to
happen.

He throws his arms up and speaks to the worker.

MANUEL

We can't get the terminal to give
us tickets.

RAILWAY WORKER

None of the terminals are working.
The system keeps going down.

MANUEL

What do we do? We have to catch a
train.

RAILWAY WORKER

It's your risk. Some of the trains
work and some don't. In any case,
everyone is riding them without
tickets.

The disgruntled worker moves on to another person and starts to repeat the same thing. Manuel shrugs happily.

MANUEL

This looks like our best chance
before they restore control. Kiki,
say goodbye to your friends.

RAJI

Goodbye? I'm going with you.

EITO

So am I.

JONATHAN

And me. We're going to become historians.

ESMERALDA

What about your parents?

EITO

We'll figure out how to let them know that we're okay.

RAJI

We'll send them an off-gridder message.

JONATHAN

They won't understand anyway. So it's better this way.

Esmeralda and Manuel look at each other.

MANUEL

What do you think?

But Kiki LAUGHS.

KIKI

Isn't that cute, guys? They actually think they have a say in this.

Kiki, Raji, Eito and Jonathan head for the train. Manuel nudges Esmeralda.

MANUEL

I blame you.

ESMERALDA

(smiles)

Thank you.

They join the teenagers on the train.

EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE, JUNGLE - DAY

Kiki, Raji, Eito, Jonathan, Esmeralda and Manuel emerge from the jungle and mount the steps where Gustavo waits.

KIKI (V.O.)

In the weeks that followed, citizen unrest occupied the Unity Government as people learned more about the plot to oppress them using Unity Culture. Jack Sinclair was convicted of being a cultural criminal by the First Citizen. But the First Citizen's days were also number as the Unity Alliance of Nations fell. There were months of chaos and war with factions fighting for control. Finally, out of the social rubble, a group emerged to deliver the message and restore individual cultures and languages. They called themselves historians...

FADE OUT: