

POUR THE WATER AS I LEAVE

Rev. 3C

Written by

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Story by

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*You have decreed me not to be cost what may
Charging me down
You laugh and weep
On your way
You purge and clean
You wipe all out*

*You have decided to wipe me out whatever the price
Yet nowhere will you find
The real
Road to me*

*For
You know roads carved and cleared
But none beyond
(Barren they be and narrow indeed
No matter how broad
And long
They seem
To you
So proud
And strong)*

*You know only the paths
That rise
From heart
And
Eyes
But that is not all*

-Mak Dizdar
Excerpt from "Roads"

NOTE: This film is an animated documentary-narrative hybrid. Interview questions have been provided herein for the reader to obtain a sense of the conceptual territory to be explored.

Dance is one of the principle modes of expression in the narrative and where there is intended choreographed movement, the text is underlined.

Another mode of expression is poetry that will be in the form of narration. Because the director believes her collaboration with the poet should be similar to that of a composer, the poetry will be organically created from the initial edits of the film. Thus, the poetic narration is absent from this screenplay.

1 IN BLACK: 1

The sounds of short choppy metallic vibrations ricochet through an unknown space followed by deeper sonorous vibrations.

A cacophony of indecipherable sounds begin to gather from these initial bursts: rattles, high pitched squeals, mantras of animalistic breaths, wind-like hisses.

FADE UP:

A pinpoint of light appears at the center of the darkness. We slowly push towards it, revealing an oblong opening into another world.

The narrow opening trembles with each resounding bass-thud, causing the room of light just beyond it to quiver and pulsate.

OOMH...OOMH...OOMH...

2 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING BASEMENT - DAY 2

A rusty silver padlock dangles on the loop of a hasp at the center of a wood planked gate.

A row of these gates stretches the length of a narrow hallway in a dank, dimly lit basement. Beyond the gates are storage units.

The bass-thuds heard once before are the sounds of BOMBS. With each thunderous boom, the entire basement shakes. The padlocks rattle against the iron hasps.

On the opposite side of the narrow hallway, a collection of human forms distends from darkness.

They are illuminated by shafts of light from the ground floor that peer through the staircase and dull patches that fall from dusty incandescent bulbs hanging in tin pendants.

A hand here, a knee there, strands of hair, someone's mouth, all forming a lattice-work of ever tensing bodies.

These human fragments belong to a group of Bosnians who are all anxiously huddled and pressed together on a makeshift bench comprised of beer crates and wood planks. Hushed voices occasionally rise and fall amongst the group, transmitting confessions, secret knowledge, and freshly remembered visions.

They have come to hide underground from the bombs that thirst for their blood. Hidden in darkness, cloaked in prayers, and blanketed by a single, unifying passion for tomorrow, they await their fate.

A black Labrador sits regally next to a LITTLE BOY. The bombs elicit occasional whimpers that are allayed by the boy's tender caresses on the top of the dog's head.

In the corner of the basement is a WOMAN in her early twenties with long dark hair that wraps her face in an almond shape. *(From here on she will be referred to as "WOMAN" and distinguished by all-caps.)*

She is dressed in a T-shirt, high waist pants, and an oversized sweater. Her wrists and fingers are embellished with rings and red strings.

The WOMAN is seated on the floor with her knees pulled tightly against her chest. Her interlocked fingers contract and release as her neck stretches forth, straining in anticipation with each sonic assault from the bombs.

The whispers and heavy hanging silence are interrupted by footsteps that descend the staircase. The silhouette of a tall MAN ushered forth by daylight from above enters the darkness. *(From here on he will be referred to as "MAN" and distinguished by all-caps.)*

As he draws closer to the basement-refugees, the features of a slender, graceful, mid-twenties Bosnian man can be discerned. He is dressed in loose trousers, a button-up shirt, and cardigan.

The MAN effortlessly cuts across the basement through the cloistered islands of clenched knees and feet and finds a home in the corner across from the WOMAN.

He squats down with his back leaned against the wall. Unaware of his neighbor on the opposite side, he closes his eyes to hide from the brutish reality.

More bombs strike the earth.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The basement quakes at the very foundation, sending electric vibrations of dread up the soles of their feet and through the entire congregation.

Dust and debris tumble from the basement ceiling onto the people and surfaces below.

The MAN opens his eyes and the first light cast reveals to him the WOMAN'S long dark hair whipping through the air like a silk lasso and emitting dust in his direction.

BOOM!

More dust falls from the ceiling above the MAN'S head. Some particles become lodged in his left eye, scratching his pupil, and obfuscating his vision momentarily. Through the broken prism of dust and tears, the WOMAN'S hair is seen falling on her bosom. Her fingers quickly comb through the strands and flick the dust to the floor.

Suddenly, their eyes meet and time stops. The world recedes into infinite night. Each breath they take is shared and preciously held.

A smile floats to the surface of the WOMAN'S warm lips and is reflected in his brightened eyes.

BOOM! BOOM!

The basement shakes and quivers once again. Larger chunks of debris are now released from the ceiling. The message of imminent death sinks deeper into the group's collective fear.

3

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ENTRANCE - DAY

3

The deafening boom of the bombs is now replaced by the high-pitched thwacks of a cheap plastic ball bouncing sharply on the concrete.

A group of children are enraptured in a game called, "Mistakes." Two opposing players are fiercely striking the ball with the bottom of their interlocked hands to bounce back and forth between their respective rectangles.

The ones watching the game and waiting for their turn to play are exuberantly cheering the players on.

Each player applies expert striking methods that could thwart the other from properly returning the ball and thus, making a "mistake" that would cause them to be eliminated.

With her back to camera, the WOMAN stands still on a flat concrete slab in front of the building entrance.

Slowly the people hiding in the basement come pouring out of the building entrance. Their movements are synchronized and stylized in a repetitive manner.

The MAN exits the building last. As the WOMAN turns to find his gaze, she is swept away by the tide of people.

The MAN stands still for a moment and then crumples and collapses delicately to the ground, overcome by the irreconcilable cocktail of dread and enchantment.

4

EXT. MARKETPLACE - DAY

4

A tall metal gate, rusted and partially painted, stands guard over a defunct street market enclosed by a fence. Like a ghost drifting through the remnants of an ancient city, we find ourselves immersed in this dilapidated market square whose features hint at a once fecund and thriving culture.

Today there is only a gigantic barren square of cracked concrete bearing a grid of abandoned, dilapidated kiosks blanketed in black dust invited in from the surrounding factories. Some kiosks are enclosed in glass; some have tarp roofs. The explosive imprint of shrapnel can be seen on the concrete and surrounding walls.

In the center of the market square is a ragtag cluster of Bosnians drearily weighed down by their scant worldly possessions, held in old suitcases and various bags.

In an eerie robotic cadence, a BARITONE MAN'S voice announces an exchange of goods over loud blaring speakers strapped to dusty yellow light poles.

BARITONE MAN

(from speakers)

(Bosnian)

Dvije narandze za dvije jabuke...

tri glavice luka za tri mrkve...

jedna glavica kupusa za jednu

glavicu salate...

[Two oranges for two apples...three

onions for three carrots...one

cabbage for one head of lettuce...]

With each exchange announced, the people circumambulate around their belongings as if playing musical chairs.

The progression of exchanges increases the speed and complexity of the circumambulation.

Near the perimeter of the market a group of military-uniformed men are pacing and vigilantly watching the exchange. Their movements are also peculiarly patterned and appear to gradually harmonize with those of the circumambulators.

Beyond the fence, on the opposite side, are bands of people standing motionless on the street. They appear to be waiting anxiously for something. The WOMAN is among them.

At first, she conforms to their stillness but then as the goods exchange and the movements of the possessed people on the other side grows more chaotic, she becomes increasingly distressed and agitated.

An ELDERLY GRAY-HAIRED WOMAN carrying a bucket of water steadily marches up from behind the WOMAN. Passing her, she leans forward and empties the bucket of water onto the street, splashing the gate.

A gentle voice suddenly rises up from out of this menagerie and whispers in a maternal tone.

MATERNAL WOMAN

(Bosnian)

Hajd' samnom...hajde da idemo da
placemo zajedno.

*[Come with me...Let's go to the
crying room.]*

The WOMAN turns towards the voice to find an affable, plump woman in a shawl smiling warmly at her. The MATERNAL WOMAN takes the WOMAN by the hand and leads her away from the market.

5

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

5

The WOMAN and her guide, the maternal woman, walk down a long narrow hallway. The guide stops in front of an apartment with an ajar door. A hazy mustard light spilling in from the windows inside the apartment stretches through the opening and rests on their feet. The soft, near-silent weeping sounds of women can be heard.

The crescent of a woman's body is seen beyond the edges of the door frame, lightly rocking back and forth, emerging and disappearing behind it.

The guide pivots her body to open a passage and welcomes the WOMAN inside.

6

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

The WOMAN pushes the door open and the two enter a living room in which a choir of GRIEVING WOMEN are seated on couches and chairs in a semi-circle; the seating arrangement subtly alludes to musical notes on sheet music.

In the room are also several CHILDREN seated on the floor. They look to the adults for cues and earnestly mimic what they see.

The women's upper bodies sway in rhythm to their suppressed tears, their arms intermittently extend in gesticulations.
They weep quietly in solemn devotion to a fathomless sorrow.

The maternal woman ambles over to an empty chair and settles her creaky body into it. She turns to the WOMAN who is still taking in the scene timidly from the front door. With her right hand, palm up and angled casually to an empty chair next to her, the maternal woman extends a warm invitation to her companion.

The WOMAN begins crossing the room towards the awaiting chair.

From a distant space, a voice of rich velvet tobacco smoothness slowly unfurls. A blonde woman in her early 60s fastidiously dressed and elegantly adorned in subtle jewelry and makeup is seated next to the living room window. She somberly stares out of it, lost in thought.

Initially this person appears to be part of the group of grieving women. However, a distinct air of contrast gradually emerges from her meditative comportment.

This is GORDANA BOZIC. She is the first interviewee.

7

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

7

INTERVIEW 1: THE CRYING ROOM

Interviewee: Gordana Bozic

Models of Inquiry:

1. Can you describe the catharsis of weeping as a community?
2. How did the tradition of sharing tears in such a way begin for you personally? Is it familial? Cultural?
3. Did the quiet tears signify a kind of inner strength?
4. What were the expectations of mourning for Bosnian men?

5. Can you speak about the cultural belief that sadness could be transformed into strength for life?

6. What do you think makes the Bosnian view on grieving unique from other cultures?

7. Why is "celebration" important to the process of grieving and healing in Bosnian culture?

8

INT. BAR - DAY

8

In the back of an ornately antiques bar, a group of BOSNIAN MEN are huddled around a gray, early 80s radio listening intently to its unsettling, broken, and static-riddled sounds. The transmission, nearly unintelligible, is the sound of the frontline of a battle between Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Muslims.

Wafts of cigarette smoke drift within the dark wood paneled walls, clinging onto old black and white photos, wall mounted clocks, odd relics and memorabilia, and settles onto the motley assortment of furniture.

Tucked away in a corner of the ashen haze, the MAN sits in solitude. He absently holds a glass of rakija, a plum-flavored Balkan brandy, in his right hand.

A game in which the contained liquid inside the glass is tested against the mindlessly playful articulations of the MAN'S hand, has come to rescue him from his own morbidity.

The glass begins to tilt to and fro ever so slightly. The meniscus of the rakija shifts back and forth between the opposite edges of the mouth of the shot glass, successfully clinging to the inside wall.

The meniscus then begins to move in a circular fashion around the glass, rising higher and higher towards the edge but never spilling over.

The MAN'S hand twirls faster and faster until the rakija shoots out the glass onto the dark rustic wood floor.

He pauses the game for a moment to observe the tiny drops beneath his feet and then continues on. The glass now spins recklessly counter-clockwise, leaping out of his fingers and landing back in them repeatedly.

The apéritif sprays his clothes and lands on the table, chair, and floor around him. The glass, near empty, continues to twirl faster and higher before slipping out of his fingers and shattering on the floor.

The remaining rakija splashes towards the feet of the men huddled around the radio but they pay the MAN and his antics no mind. They remain engrossed by the soundscapes of the frontline.

Still entranced by the siren of ghostly thoughts, the MAN stares contemptuously at the walls of the bar.

Several tables away from him, a soldier in only uniform boots and shirt sits stoically by himself, smoking a cigarette. He glances in the direction of the MAN for a brief moment and returns to his own thoughts.

As he is taking drags from his cigarette, a story begins to visibly build from his posture.

The soldier is MIJO MIJUS IVANOVIC. He is the second interviewee.

9

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

9

INTERVIEW 2: THE SOLDIER'S STORY

Interviewee: Mijo Mijus Ivanovic

Models of Inquiry:

1. Who was the enemy and why?
2. What was your role as a soldier and what kind of combat did you engage in?
3. Can you talk about an event or events during your time as a soldier that significantly reshaped your perception of yourself or the world?
4. What was life like when you returned home from the war? Was it different than what you expected?
5. Do you still perceive the enemy as your enemy today? Why or why not?
6. Do you think that Bosnia could ever heal from the wounds of the war? Why or why not?

10

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

10

We fluidly transition from the interview with the soldier and return to the MAN in the bar.

As if reacting to the vividly stirring stories told by the soldier, the MAN seems increasingly agitated by the surrounding walls.

He rises from his chair, reaches his hand up to the tin tiled ceiling and, in a fantastic defiance of the laws of physical reality, pulls it down to his head.

Using both his hands, he proceeds to transform the interior surfaces of the bar into a supple textile and wraps them around himself as if creating a cocoon-blanket from which the outside world could be shut out.

The other inhabitants of the space harmoniously conform physically with each wall that is dragged over and each section of flooring that is peeled up and folded in. They contract closer and closer to the MAN, homogenizing into a singular fluid mass. The phenomenon is akin to a protracted implosion.

The group clustered around the radio remain spell-bound even as they begin to disappear in between the seams of the spatial-field blanket.

As all the hostile noise outside fades into oblivion, the MAN'S breathing and heartbeat grow in rapidity and intensity until they are the monofrequency inside this vacuum chamber of reality.

The external world is now seen only through a small keyhole like opening where the glass of rakija once rested on the table.

11

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

11

Through the tiny opening, different groups of people are walking by the bar in synchronized movements at varying distances from each other. As they walk, their heads move rhythmically in watchful vigilance of bombing or shelling from the enemy.

One particular group of people traverse close to the bar. In their midst is the WOMAN, radiant as the primal vision that captured his heart just days before.

The tension that once knotted every organ in his body dissipates. He watches as she stops in front of the window and removes a worn paper pouch from her shirt pocket and proceeds to extract tobacco between her fingers.

As the procession of people migrate to the forest just beyond the edges of the city, the crowd begins to thin out, eventually leaving only the WOMAN to stand alone on the street.

Rolling paper comes out next. The tobacco is fastidiously sprinkled onto the folded paper.

INTERVIEW 3: LOVE IN WARTIME**Interviewee:** TBD**Models of Inquiry:**

NOTE: The audio from this interview will be woven into scenes 11 and 12 as prose voice-over narration.

1. How was romantic love kept alive during the war? Or was it sacrificed for the sake of survival?
2. How did you stay in contact with your wife/husband/lover?
3. Was there any particular object, place, or memory that allowed you to hold onto the faith that love would persist beyond the war?
4. Were you able to share your personal feelings concerning love with your fellow soldiers?
5. How did you mitigate the lack of intimacy during the war?
6. Were your superiors sympathetic to your struggles with love or lack thereof?

12

EXT. BAR ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

12

The MAN bursts out of the doors of the bar, his heart pounding. He takes several steps and then stops abruptly. The stone-cold sobriety of the WOMAN in the flesh smacks the courage out of his limbs that now droop like wet hanging noodles.

As he watches her fingers gently rub the edges of the rolling paper together to form the first creases of the cigarette, the MAN nervously searches his pockets for a lighter.

He finds the familiar shape of the cheap clear plastic lighter in his front trouser pocket. The MAN takes a quick breath and plunges into the street with as much debonair confidence as he can conjure.

With each step towards the WOMAN, the MAN'S smile naturally brightens and softens. The assured simplicity that flows through her actions settles his nerves.

As she is digging for a lighter hidden in the tobacco pouch, she notices him approaching and smiles shyly.

The MAN raises his hand to show her the lighter. She is charmed. She places the cigarette between her lips while cupping one hand over the tip to shield it from the wind.

He cups the other side of her cigarette tip and sparks a flame beneath it. The WOMAN draws in the first smoke, allowing a slight smile to creep to the corner of her lips.

A gentle breeze blows through and kicks dust up the MAN'S nose causing his face to wrinkle awkwardly. Verging on what would be a series of horrendous sneeze attacks, he inhales deeply several times before releasing impotent expulsions of air.

The MAN gestures with his hand to offer an explanation but her smirk suggests that none was necessary. A pregnant silence hangs in the balance before ushering in mutual laughter.

The WOMAN passes her cigarette to the MAN who gratefully accepts. As he smokes their eyes are once again locked together as the moon is to the earth.

13

INT. WOMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

13

In a dimly lit living room with a low ceiling, the WOMAN'S back is set against a sliding sash window with white floral patterned sheer curtains. As she looks outside, a daydream-smile reposes on her serene face.

The home is lovingly worn and comfortably crammed with mid-century furniture. A group of three BOSNIAN MEN, two WOMEN, and a TEENAGER are seated at a table playing cards. Among them, a QUIET MAN who does not appear to be involved in the game, sits with clasped hands, gently resting on the table.

He watches as the others hold their cards with circumspect fingers before glancing at the WOMAN over at the window. As if sensing his eyes on her back, she turns around and meets his gaze. There is a hint of mutual acknowledgement before the WOMAN walks into the kitchen.

14

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

14

The tiny kitchen has a sink, electric stove, and wooden stove that faces sliding sash windows on the other side. A kitchen table sits in the middle; shelves and drawers take up the remainder of the wall space.

On the electric stove is a simmering pot of water and a long-handled copper coffee pot known as a dzezva.

The dzezva is removed from the burner and placed on the kitchen counter. As the water comes to a boil, the WOMAN grabs the pot with a hand on each handle and, with ritualistic care, slowly pours the steaming water into the dzezva until three-quarters full.

A long stemmed spoon is inserted and she stirs the coffee briefly before placing the coffee pot back on the gas stove. The heat gradually raises the water towards the brim; the coffee grounds bubble and caramelize.

She pulls the dzezva off the stove before it overflows, stirs the coffee, adds more hot water, and repeats the heating process again.

The perfected coffee is awaited by an ornate tray of demi-tasse coffee cups. A dollop of crema is scooped up from the dzezva and placed into the bottom of each cup before the coffee is finally poured.

15 INT. WOMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 15

The woman returns to the living room carrying the tray of coffee cups and approaches the people playing cards. They all excitedly turn to her and graciously accept the cup of coffee placed before them.

The quiet man who has been spectating the game is served last. The WOMAN sets his cup down and he nods at her in gratitude. The pair hold each other with prolonged somber looks as if they were having a telepathic conversation.

The quiet man clears his throat and, as if their conversation had started hours ago and was only now externalized, begins to speak.

The quiet man is [NAME] and he is the fourth interviewee.

16 INT. WOMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 16

INTERVIEW 4: THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

Interviewee: TBD

Models of Inquiry:

1. Was your departure through illegal or legal means and what were your greatest concerns respectively?
2. Can you describe your path/exit from the country?
3. Who or what helped you most in escaping/leaving Bosnia?
4. Where did you go? How did you decide on this location and how long did you or have you lived there?
5. What were some of the most difficult social, cultural, or physical adjustments you had to make in your new home?

17 INT. WOMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

17

The WOMAN has returned to the window. As the tragic nature of the interviewee's story unfolds, the WOMAN becomes increasingly distressed.

She begins to anxiously fidget with the window in an effort to open it but it remains cemented shut.

The interviewee's story exacerbates her own trepidation of escaping Bosnia, a specter that looms ominously on the horizon.

The window shifts in rickety spurts and then finally slides up with a terrible screeching sound. No one in the room notices this noise except the interviewee. He looks over curiously at the WOMAN.

She turns around, visibly upset, and scurries out the front door. Through the window, her slender figure is swallowed up by the night.

18 EXT. WOMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

18

Through an apple tree's web of branches in the front yard of the house, the window gives portraiture to the CARD PLAYERS who are teasing one another and indulging in care-free laughter.

Their house is typical Bosnian architecture; red rooftop, three-storied, and white speckled walls with brick accents. The balcony on the second floor is stacked directly on top the one below it. A concrete stairway leads to the gold glass front doors on the first floor.

A few of the bottom floor windows are boarded up with planks of wood for protection from bombs. As a consequence of ricocheting shrapnel there are hundreds of tiny punctures all over the facade.

A decorative iron fence draws a border around the property as it runs along the edge of the yard and garden. Beyond the fence, stretches a narrow road that leads to rolling hills in one direction and the center of town in the other.

19 EXT. BOSNIAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAWN

19

Bosnia awakens to a dense mist that engulfs the tips of the red roofs sprinkled along the hills above the town. Lush greenery and cold concrete structures compete for space throughout the landscape creating a topographic mosaic of stark contrast between nature and industry.

At the edges of town, factory chimneys spewing smoke stacks can be seen filling the horizon, casting dust and fumes throughout the town. Industrial noise of every ilk can be heard rising out of the buildings and work yards.

The greetings from the industrial neighbors in the distance are answered vociferously by the town's roosters and dogs, their morning calls reverberating across the sleepy homes and streets.

In front of an old Austro-Hungarian house there is a small line of people waiting to fill jugs of water from a brass faucet that extends from the concrete floor.

20 EXT. MILITARY BASE - DAY 20

Once serving as a high school, the building's transformation into a military base is only made apparent by several soldiers guarding the entrance and a few military vehicles parked on the street.

The scars of bombing attacks are evident around the property and surrounding environment. Some of the walls are corroded and blackened; bomb craters obscenely deface the streets in every direction. The large concrete playground once inhabited by high school students is now a parking lot.

21 INT. MILITARY BASE - DAY 21

We push through the double doors of the building and travel down a sprawling hallway accented by a few random tattered bulletin boards. The cork face holds educational posters and charts. There are informational signs posted next to the classroom doors.

A GROUP OF YOUNG SOLDIERS in civilian clothing are squeezed together with their backs against the wall on a long bench. The wall behind them is painted sage green on the bottom half and beige on the top half.

A palpably oppressive atmosphere holds the soldiers captive as they await their orders.

One of the young men is [NAME], the fifth interviewee.

22 INT. MILITARY BASE - DAY 22

INTERVIEW 5: THE ACT OF KILLING

Interviewee: TBD

Models of Inquiry:

1. How did you become a soldier?

2. Did you believe in what you were fighting for?
3. If you were opposed to fighting, how did you reconcile the act of killing with your personal beliefs?
4. How did your family view your role as a soldier?
5. (For a sniper) Did the act of killing from a distance make it easier to kill?
6. Can you talk about the first time you killed someone?
7. Did you have faith in your leaders?

23

INT. MILITARY BASE - DAY

23

We pan away from the fifth interviewee to the opposite wall where ANOTHER GROUP OF SOLDIERS are huddled together on a bench. There is a distinct rhythm of synchronized movements that pulses through the group with the exception of one soldier, the MAN.

The MAN is cast in a mask of cold sobriety, lost in thought. His eyes are anchored to the opposite wall where an entire timeless universe secretly resides in the creases and cracks of the paint; the tiny, steady stream of water that runs down from the ceiling.

As his eyes follow the stream of water to the gray marmoleum floor, snails surface from the wall and crawl along the glistening trail of moisture left behind.

With a mere tilt of his head to the left, another dimension is cracked open and the snails are exposed to be cascading round-nosed full metal jacket bullets inching along the same path.

A school bell rings a piercing squall that violently ejects the soldiers from their inner worlds.

A LONG-HAIRED SOLDIER stands up, removes his dirty tennis shoe and throws it against the red brass bell near the ceiling and savagely curses at it.

LONG-HAIRED SOLDIER
(Bosnian)
E, da ides u picku materinu!
[Motherfucking cocksucker!]

The whole room roars with laughter.

24 INT. MILITARY BASE - DAY 24

The soldiers, seated in different positions on the bench, are now attired in a meager hodgepodge of garments and weapons charged with the task of being military uniforms.

25 EXT. MILITARY BASE - DAY 25

The soldiers pour out of the high school doors and disperse. Some stop and chat with one another. Some dash on to their next engagement. A few such as the MAN and the interviewee take a moment to enjoy a cigarette.

The MAN smokes and watches as Interviewee 5 sprinkles tobacco on some rolling paper and begins to roll a cigarette. He offers him a light and the interviewee leans in with the tip over the flame and begins inhaling with a series of quick, light puckers of the lips.

26 EXT. FRONTLINE - DAY 26

In a stark silent and vast amorphous field somewhere on the frontline, the figure of the MAN is seen struggling to move across a swamp-like landfill of contorting and mutating shapes. He rises and tumbles, peels a leg sucked into the void only to be snagged by something else and plummets back in.

The dark blob that holds him hostage is a teeming SEA OF FELLOW BOSNIANS. There are soldiers, civilians, children, young and old, friendly and hostile; the collective humanity of his life.

They are fixed to a pattern of rising and falling in various actions; some crawl on their knees, lose strength and fall to the ground. Others climb on each others' backs and the compounded weight consequently brings the collapse of the lot. Another set of people walk wearily, keel over, and then struggle to regain their standing.

The nightmarish sea of people grows denser and higher as the MAN fights to move against the tide of uncanny conditions that now resemble waves of water.

27 INT. BOSNIAN HOUSE - DAY 27

Through a window, we peer into a Bosnian home. A woman is seated in the kitchen talking on the phone. She appears to be telling a very detailed story.

This is [NAME], the sixth interviewee.

INTERVIEW 6: THE BOSNIAN HOME**Interviewee:** TBD**Models of Inquiry:**

NOTE: The interviewee answers the questions through a conversation on a landline telephone.

1. How did you come to live in this home and how long have you lived here?
2. What is your favorite room in your home and why? Can you describe some of your favorite memories in this particular room?
3. Who would you like to own your home once you pass and why? Or, alternatively, what would you like to have happen to your home once you pass and why?
4. Do you have "house rules" and if so, what are some of the most important ones?
5. What is the largest gathering you've held in your home and what type of event was it?
6. What is the longest time you've been away from home and why?
7. How would you describe the way your home smells? How would others describe the way your home smells?
8. If you had to abandon your home for some reason and you could only take two objects with you, what would they be?

Inside a cavernous restaurant with dark mahogany walls and sprawling murals of cubist figures resembling famous Bosnians wining and dining, a private party is underway.

The signs of a festive celebration are painted throughout the space: glassware in every stage of use is strewn about the room, some wine bottles stand tall, others lay in light slumber.

At a long table filled with people chatting merrily, there are half-eaten platters of food, empty plates and used utensils. Several small propane lamps running the length of the table hiss quietly, emitting warm glowing orbs that cast a skyline of shadows across the linen surface.

On a small stage is a BALKAN BRASS BAND comprised of accordion, trumpet, trombone, tenor horn, snare drum and bass drum. They are sailing on the wings of a romantic waltz replete with sentimental longing as if to serenade the lovers in the room.

Near the stage is a YOUNG COUPLE dancing with sublime abandon, buried in each other's arms. The woman has her head on his shoulder as he kisses her head, drinking in the perfume of her hair.

Surrounding the couple are a cast of musical devotees, young and old. They sway with delight to the music. Some of them are singing to each other; some move their hands or their heads tenderly, harvesting every note.

In the back of the room, the WOMAN, is leaned up against the wall, inebriated. She is also exploring the romantic splendors created by the band.

The luster emitted by the young couple draws her into their world. She watches in adoration as their lips kiss and smile, and as they press their foreheads against one another.

The memories of the MAN race through her mind in a zoetrope of time-fragments; a flurry of ribbons of light and nebulous haze forming shapes of their immaculate silences in the basement and on the street outside the bar.

The romantic waltz fades into the room's frolicking chatter for a brief spell before bursting forth again in a jubilant pattern of kolo music.

The room erupts in whoops and yelps, arms shoot to the sky, hands rhythmically rake the air, and feet strike the floor in harmony.

Gradually, the dancers shift into a traditional kolo dance in which people form a circle while holding hands and engage in syncopated shuffling steps. One group forms an inner circle that revolves clockwise while another group forms a larger outer circle that revolves counter-clockwise.

The WOMAN slides off the wall into the outer circle and is absorbed into the kolo dance. There is an initial giddiness followed by ecstatic laughter that tickles each of her steps.

The room is electrified in wild Dionysian energy. An ELDERLY GRAY-HAIRED MAN swings a baby blue handkerchief like a propeller as he dances. His companion, a THICK BESPECTACLED LANKY MAN throws back the remaining rakija in his shot glass and throws it to the ground with a gleeful shriek that inspires similar sounds. The glass breaks and shards shoot in multiple directions on the floor.

Suddenly, more glasses are heard breaking followed by other ecstatic expressions of celebration.

A HEAVY-SET WOMAN pulls her TODDLER closer to her as the noise begins to frighten him. She smothers him with kisses and laughs as others dance around her, egging her on to join in.

30 INT. RESTAURANT LOBBY - NIGHT 30

The mahogany double doors of the restaurant jiggle slightly.

31 INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - NIGHT 31

The glassware on the table along with the liquid contained in them tremble in quick spasms.

32 INT. RESTAURANT LOBBY - NIGHT 32

The bronze door-pulls jiggle and then become still leaving only the vibrations of the party in the dining room to speak.

33 INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - NIGHT 33

On one of the tables, the flame of a propane lamp flickers; the glass shade rattles.

The band is now off the stage and playing on the main floor. They snake around the room dancing with the guests not engaged with the kolo circle.

34 INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - NIGHT 34

The narrow window of the door trembles and then shakes violently.

35 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT 35

The face of a DARK-HAIRED POLICEMAN grimaces and then turns to look behind him.

36 INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - NIGHT 36

A distressed SHORT STOCKY MAN in an ill-fitting burgundy velvet suit runs up to a table where the RESTAURANT OWNER is seated, singing along to the music. He leans in to yell something in the restaurant owner's ear who is immediately alarmed. The two begin yelling back and forth in each other's ears. The short stocky man darts out of the dining room into the restaurant lobby.

The restaurant owner steps onto his chair and then stands on the table.

He waves his arms and screams commands at the crowd but his words are inaudible. He attempts again to bellow out what appears to be pressing warnings.

The CROWD interprets his signals to be drunken toasts. This elevates the revelry and they reciprocate by raising their glasses.

CROWD
(Bosnian)
Zivjeli! Zivjeli!
[Cheers! Cheers!]

Three armed policemen march into the dining room with a disgruntled authoritarian posture. They are a YOUNG POLICEMAN, a MIDDLE-AGE POLICEMAN, and the dark-haired policeman. The TROMBONE PLAYER notices them first and, deflated, removes the mouth piece from his lips.

Like a domino effect, the other instruments stop abruptly, exuberant voices fall into hushed tones, hands once clapping arrive at a feeble patter, and shuffling feet slide to a halt, leaving only the pungent intoxicating fumes of alcohol and musty sweat to awkwardly bear the silence.

The restaurant owner steps down from the table with an obsequious, apologetic gesture of his open hands. The toddler who had been terrified of the adult-mayhem squeals delightfully and claps his hands to the music still reverberating in his ears.

His mother snickers and lovingly shushes him by pressing her nose against his cheek and clasping both his hands in her own. The intrusive clapping from the toddler draws an irritated glance from the middle-age policeman.

Inspired by the innocent spirit of the toddler, the WOMAN begins softly singing Nikola Kojo's "Nesanica" as she bewitchingly dances towards the young policeman with a filled shot glass of rakija in her hand.

The WOMAN'S eyes lock onto the young policeman's. He blushes several shades pinker. Someone in the crowd whistles a sharp catcall and chuckles of amusement breakout.

The enchantment of the moment summons forth two other guests, a SLENDER BRUNETTE WOMAN and a VOLUPTUOUS BLONDE WOMAN. They begin dancing with glasses of rakija and join the WOMAN in the seductive song. More friendly catcalls ensue.

Presented with the glass of rakija, the young policeman stands stupefied. Behind him, the middle-age policeman kicks the man's heel cap with his toe, waking him from his stupor.

The blonde and the brunette offer the rakija respectively to the other two policemen. The middle-age one stands at attention and places both hands behind his back with each one gripping the opposing wrist. He closes his eyes, tilts his head up, and opens his mouth. This is his sly expression that says, "My hands are tied."

The rakija drizzles into his mouth until the glass is empty. As if boiling beneath the lid of feigned law and civility, the tribal energy bursts through in a sudden bolt of revelry. The band plays on picking up from the previous words of the song and transforms it into an upbeat, fast-paced gypsy waltz. The crowd begins dancing wildly again.

The young and dark-haired policemen follow the middle-age one's lead and invite the rakija to be poured into their mouths with their "hands tied." The crowd cheers loudly.

37

INT. RESTAURANT DINING ROOM - LATER

37

Balkan folk music shakes the walls of the restaurant for the unrelenting dancers and drinkers. A thinned out celebration leaves only the barbaric young, the barbaric old, the policemen, the band, and a handful of sleeping dreamers who guard the tables and walls with immutable nonchalance.

Drenched in sweat, the policemen's uniforms have slipped out of stiff decorum. Their shirts are untuck and the top buttons are unbuttoned to the bottom of their chest. Their utility belts are loosened and the holstered handguns swing lazily from their hips as they dance with the women who offered them rakija.

The WOMAN pulsates in an ecstatic trance with her arms fluttering in the air. The young policeman vies for her attention with his clunky movements but to no avail.

The slender brunette woman dancing with the dark-haired policeman places her hands on his hips. They slowly drift to his belt and finally her left hand rests on the grip of his gun. Feeling the weight of her hand, he instinctively grips it with his right hand.

Sensing that malevolence was not a part of her intentions, they smile at each other. With their hands still resting on the gun grip, he leans in and kisses her on the lips. She slowly pulls the gun out of the holster as their kisses grow more passionate.

The gun is now raised above the brunette woman's head with the barrel pointing directly up at the ceiling. She pulls the trigger and fires several shots into the air.

The crowd is momentarily startled until they realize that it is the brunette stirring a raucous. She fires several more shots and ignites a wildfire of collective howling. A LONG CURLY-HAIRED BEARDED MAN dancing nearby breaks into hysterical laughter. He plops himself onto a chair and accidentally falls backwards on his back.

With a deranged thousand-yard stare beaming across the room, the middle-age policeman draws his gun and fires a succession of rapid shots into the ceiling. He then extends his arms sharply with gun in hand, assumes a wide leg stance, and falls backwards onto his back.

The young policeman attempts to catch him but upon wrapping his arms around the man's shoulder, the clunky weight sends him stumbling backwards and both men tumble onto a round table, toppling it and sending glassware, bottles, and plates crashing to the floor. The people dance on furiously.

The dining room, hot as a furnace, compels the WOMAN to seek refuge in the cool night air outside. She drunkenly careens back and forth like an ocean dinghy, bumping her way across the dining room.

38 EXT. RESTAURANT ENTRANCE - NIGHT 38

The WOMAN pushes open the double doors and finds herself embraced by the oasis of night. The specter of a night-time adventure that could possibly lead to a chance encounter with the MAN calls out to her. She begins walking away from the restaurant.

39 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT 39

As the WOMAN makes her way through the city she notices SEVERAL GROUPS OF PEOPLE rushing towards her. Some of them appear to be moving in balletic bounds. In the distance, booming Bosnian folk music can be heard.

She giggles to herself, reflecting on the ubiquitous and unending celebration that had followed her onto the streets. A few of the people running and dancing her direction signal celebratory invocations to her with their gleeful screams. She signals back with a few springing steps and her raised hands twirling in the air.

Behind the dancers, a YOUNG MAN with a buzz cut is barreling down the street towards her waving his hands frantically and yelling something unintelligible. His erratic gesticulations spark a sobering realization that something is wrong.

The WOMAN stops in her tracks and listens. Her breaths, slow and soft, are chilled by the crisp, cold air.

The music is louder now and the screams, once seemingly gleeful, are possessed by an element of distress.

As the young man draws closer to her, she can see that he is terrified.

YOUNG MAN
(Bosnian)
Hajde! Hajde! Sta cekas?
[Go! Go! What are you doing?]

Befuddled by the disparate signals swirling around her and disturbed by the young man, her lips drunkenly wrap around the first word of a question that she is about to yell out.

Suddenly, a red searing projectile whips through the air like lightning and slices clean through the young man's neck, decapitating him and detonating his torso in a flash of smoke, blood, and flesh. Scorched skin and organ matter along with thick, chunky blood splatters on her face and neck.

Aghast with horror, the WOMAN instantly dives to the ground with her hands covering her head as she had learned to do so many times before.

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT! BOOM-BOOM-BOOOM!

The city is besieged by a barrage of shelling. Its inhabitants, scattered in every direction, panicking and screaming in terror as they lunge for cover, hiding behind cars, ducking into buildings, and hugging the ground.

A whirlwind of dust, asphalt crumbs, shrapnel and other debris flies above the WOMAN'S head, as she clings to the ground.

Several other people seek cover on the ground near her. One of them is the MAN. They lie just within arm's reach of each other but neither souls are aware of this.

To the right of the WOMAN is the SEVENTH INTERVIEWEE. Their bodies are parallel to one another at an intimate conversational proximity. When the WOMAN turns her head to face right she discovers this person's head is also turned profile with her cheek resting on the ground facing her.

Their eyes meet. The undeniable humanity of this moment sits squarely between them; the fear, the hope, and the surrender.

The neighboring victim of the shelling is [NAME].

NOTE: Initially the interviewee will be captured in a close-up with her face lying horizontal in the frame.

As she begins to describe their means of escaping Bosnia, the frame rotates 90° so that she appears to be standing up right. NIGHT becomes DAY during the rotation.

40

EXT. STREET - DAY

40

INTERVIEW 7: LAST DAY IN BOSNIA**Interviewee:** TBD**Models of Inquiry:**

1. Tell us about your last day in Bosnia.
2. Where did you go? How did you decide on this location and how long have you lived there?
3. Did what you envisioned your new home to be match with reality?
4. Who or what was the hardest thing/person to leave behind?
5. Have you been back to Bosnia? What was it like the first time you came back?
6. If you haven't been back to Bosnia, do you plan on returning and what do you hope to experience upon doing so?
7. Do you think Bosnia has changed and if so how?

NOTE: The close-up vertical frame rotates 90° to a horizontal shot of the interviewee, returning her to the position she was in originally. DAY becomes NIGHT during the rotation.

41

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

41

Both women remain lying on the ground in an intimate face to face conversation. The WOMAN listens intently to Interviewee 7's story as the aftermath of the shelling sends the city's inhabitants spiraling into chaos.

A PASSERBY stands over the WOMAN, searching for signs of life. The person grabs her by the hand and shoulder and carefully pulls her off the ground. Still dazed, she struggles to her feet.

The WOMAN leans onto her rescuer's arms for support as the two flee, leaving the interviewee behind. Interviewee 7 continues to lie on the ground in a catatonic state facing the void across from her. She ends her story abruptly and seeks only a sign of understanding from her imaginary interlocutor.

[INTERVIEWEE'S NAME]

(Bosnian)

Jel' me razumijes? Je li?...Je li?

[Do you understand what I'm saying?

Do you?....Do you?]

The WOMAN stumbles along while grappling with the terrible guilt of abandoning the woman on the street. She turns back repeatedly in a woeful effort of atonement, straining for a glimpse of the lonely figure on the ground.

42

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

42

Speckled among a group of other refugees, the WOMAN runs towards the dark, dense forest beyond the edges of the city; the outline of the forest's trees is sunk deep into the void of the night sky.

43

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

43

A handful of grimy white buses with blue stripes are haphazardly parked on the road. Massive swarms of BOSNIAN REFUGEES squeezed together push and fight their way through the desperate hordes for sanctuary and the promise of freedom on the buses.

Clusters of luggage and boxes are strewn about the roadside. Some people clutch their possessions tightly to their bodies already clumsily weighed down by multiple layers of clothing in an attempt to conserve packing space. Others have bags and satchels strapped around their necks and shoulders.

In the distance, more swarms of people can be seen approaching the bus station. At the front of the oncoming tide there are two LATE TWENTY-SOMETHING WOMEN with shawls wrapped around their heads pushing DECREPIT ELDERLY MEN on wheel barrels.

At a bus packed with PASSENGERS, a group of people accost the DRIVER standing guard at the door. They wildly wave all manner of documentation at him while either lobbing humanitarian pleas, implementing guile, or asserting judicious diplomacy all of which falls on deaf ears. He simply cannot fit anyone else on board.

The driver's patience in reasoning with them has all but disintegrated. He starts to belligerently snatch as many papers out of the waving hands as will fit in both his clenched fists.

The driver scatters the papers into the crowd. The owners of the documents frantically retrieve their papers while hurling exclamations of outrage and contempt at the man.

Inside the bus, a pair of ARMED BOSNIAN SOLDIERS can be seen escorting a group of YOUNG BOSNIAN MEN towards the front door. The double doors of the bus fold in and the men step off followed by the soldiers. As they weave through the crowd away from the bus, there is a resurgence of demands to be let on board.

The commotion with the documents, the escorting of the young Bosnian men, and the general kinetic energy of the desperate crowds all align in a style of performative movement in which their actions are synchronized.

In the midst of this pandemonium, the MAN stands worlds away with a stone-cold somberness; his backpack on his back; his army green duffel bag gripped in his right hand.

The shockingly quiet death of mortar shells, their pungent walls of nitroglycerin, the innumerable pools of blood that stain asphalt like archipelagos on a map, the absence of recognition in his friend's eyes just moments before taking his last breath. These are the barbed phantom memories that lurk inside, reaching far into the present to haunt him.

The familiar image of long dark hair dripping down the back of a woman glimmers in the screaming crowd. The woman turns slightly in his direction and she is manifest as the resplendent creature whom he met during the bombing in the basement.

His heart leaps, delivering him from the claws of his memories. The MAN swallows a tremendous breath of joy. His mouth goes dry with anticipation.

The locomotive momentum starts in his feet as he rocks back and forth on his heels to find a clearer view of the woman. He starts to excitedly shove his way past the people in front of him.

The MAN calls out to her but she doesn't hear him. He calls out her name again. No response. The woman brushes some hair off her shoulder and turns profile. She is revealed to be someone else; another woman with similar features to his angel.

His heart sinks. The man obstructing his path whom he was attempting to pass by wedging his hand in between cleaving shoulders, shoves him back with a scowl. The MAN falls back several steps and lands in a pit of despair. The glassy veil of a tear covers his eyes and a single drop rolls down his cheek.

MAN'S POV:

Above him, an army of pigeons cut across the ocean blue sky in a V formation creating a crescendo of coos.

His eyes follow their passage in the direction of the forest.

44 EXT. BUS STATION - DAY 44

PIGEONS' POV:

The tops of the white buses dot the landscape. The swarms of people darken and animate the ground like armies of wriggling ants. The dirt road containing this chaos drives through canopy splotches in both directions.

45 EXT. FOREST - DAY 45

The mass exodus of Bosnian refugees penetrate the edges of the forest and flow through.

The MAN and the WOMAN enter the forest from different corners in their respective groups. They travel in parallel paths that never intersect.

46 EXT. FOREST - DAY 46

Beneath the glacially drifting clouds of grey-white mist a forest of Aspen trees sway tranquilly in the arms of mountain winds.

47 EXT. ASPEN FOREST - DAY 47

Somewhere in the distance, familiar rumbling sounds can be heard reverberating. It is unclear whether it is bombing, rolling thunder, or felled trees striking the earth.

The MAN and the WOMAN along with their fellow refugees find themselves passing through a vast meadow. On the other side of it, a majestic forest of Aspen trees watches over the approaching intruders.

The MAN and the WOMAN are now deep in the bowels of the Aspen forest. The soft slender trees whose bone-white bark is covered with dark ink-blot eyes stretches high above them. The mysterious rumbling sounds in the distance echo through the forest.

48 EXT. ASPEN FOREST - DAY 48

Needing to urinate, the MAN breaks off from his fellow travelers and wanders off the beaten path. He finds a small clearing behind some shrubbery and looks around to ensure privacy.

As he is about to unzip, a muted musical humming sound catches his attention. He can neither make out what it is or where it might be coming from but there is no mistaking the uncanny kindredness of it to the human voice.

49 EXT. ASPEN FOREST - DAY 49

As the WOMAN is repacking her belongings into her backpack following an urge to reorganize, she hums Nikola Kojo's "Nesanica," the song that had psychically devirginized the young policeman during the party. She pauses to examine a letter from her mother, an object of great sentimental value.

50 EXT. ASPEN FOREST - DAY 50

As the MAN searches for the source of the music, an Aspen tree that stands out in majesty from the rest beckons to him. He looks at it curiously. An enormous dark eye on the tree stares back at him.

Inexplicably, he intuits that the source of music was derived from this particular eye of this particular Aspen. The truth had revealed itself to him. He walks up to the tree in awe. The humming sound grows louder and more distinctly musical.

He bends over and presses his ear up against the eye and hears the ethereal sounds of a children's choir. The MAN gasps. The air sits in his lungs as a sustained note of astonishment before being released in a prolonged exhalation.

51 EXT. ASPEN FOREST - DAY 51

A breeze blows through the forest and brushes the letter out of the WOMAN'S hand. She quickly snatches for it but it escapes her grasp. The breeze pushes the letter whirling and fluttering deeper into the Aspen forest.

The WOMAN chases after it and finds that the breeze has lightly pinned the letter against an Aspen tree. Relieved that she isn't further estranged from her belongings, the WOMAN peels it off the tree. Beneath the letter is a giant dark eye that mesmerizes her.

Like the MAN, she notices a muted humming sound with an uncanny musical quality emanating from it. She bends down and presses her ear against the eye. The ethereal sounds of a children's choir sings to her from a distant land. Stunned, the WOMAN gasps.

52

EXT. ASPEN FOREST - DAY

52

NOTE: In this scene both the MAN and WOMAN are experiencing the events simultaneously from their respective locations in the forest.

Low rumbling echoes throughout the forest. From behind each of the Aspen trees and for as far as their eyes can see, DANCING MEN, WOMEN, and CHILDREN emerge and gradually form a colossal network of birotational kolo circles.

A warm gust of wind surges through the forest and scoops the MAN and WOMAN off the ground, elevating them above the dancers. Their bodies, initially tense, now appear relaxed. Something shifts inside them and they relinquish control. Their limbs dangle to their sides like paper-dolls as they serenely drift in the air, pushed along by the gently churning sea of dancers below.

The kolo circles multiply in number and greatly vary in size. Regardless of this, the dancers lithely weave in between the trees, essentially creating malleable, breathing rings that are the amoeba in the oceanic nexus of people.

The MAN and WOMAN have made contact with god in a godless world. The future and the past collapse into themselves, leaving only this moment. A stream of tears form and glides down their cheeks into the kolo waters below.

Another gust of wind combs through the forest, bending the trees and causing the leaves to quiver and release waves of rustling chimes. The wind sends the MAN and WOMAN'S paper-doll bodies through several somersaults before lowering them to the ground and laying them on their backs.

As they lie there, the tips of the Aspen trees continue to sway like wispy pendulums in the wind. The succession of migrating refugees continues all around them as people walk by occasionally looking down curiously at them; sometimes their feet barely missing them.

They both awaken from what feels like a deep sleep and pick themselves off the ground. The MAN and WOMAN gather their belongings and press on through the forest, now densely filled with significantly more refugees.

53

EXT. FOREST - DAY

53

From behind, we see droves of refugees flow quietly through the forest in a subdued manner. Their energy and rhythm is countered by intermittent lines of other refugees that cut through in stylized movements.

Near the edge of the forest, with the Croatian border in sight, the people begin to organize themselves into individual rows. The MAN and WOMAN are a handful of people apart in the same row but still unaware of one another.

INTERVIEWEE 8 (V.O.)
*[Personal story of his passage to
 the Croatian border]....*

The voice narrating the journey to the border is revealed to belong to one of the refugees walking out from the forest.
This is [NAME], the eighth interviewee.

Initially, it appears as if the interviewee is having a conversation with someone but a series of wider shots shows that he's speaking no one in particular.

It is ambiguous as to whether he is rehearsing a monologue or scene from a play or is simply mad.

54

EXT. FOREST - DAY

54

INTERVIEW 8: THE PASSAGE

Interviewee: TBD

Models of Inquiry:

1. Where did you decide to escape to?
2. How did you devise a plan for escaping and did you have a contingency plan?
3. Who were you with and did everyone make it out of Bosnia safely?
4. What did you bring with you and was there anything you wished you had left behind?
5. What were some of the biggest challenges you faced on your journey?
6. Did any strangers help you along the way? Did you ever see them again?
7. What was the first thing you did when you arrived in your new home?

55

EXT. BOSNIAN-CROATIAN BORDER - DAY

55

Border gates can be seen through the openings of a massive tapestry of silhouettes advancing towards Slavonski Brod, a city in eastern Croatia that lies on the other side of the northern Bosnian border.

The hordes of civilian and military personnel collide at the border and the noise of the crowds is deafening.

The MAN and the WOMAN are akin to islands in a flowing river of people. They move through space with a singular cadence and resoluteness, unconsciously and slowly moving closer to each other.

Their faces flicker in and out of sight in the crowds of people like sunlight beaming through leaves that tremble and dance in the wind.

The MAN stops and takes in the chaos at the border as everyone else naturally streams by him like water.

The WOMAN walks slowly. There is a ghostly empty space around her body as the compressed masses flow past her.

Beyond the border, the tranquil lights of Slavonski Brod can be seen.

The MAN and the WOMAN are pushed closer to each other by the tides of refugees, on the cusp of a long coveted reunion.

Suddenly, a BOSNIAN TEEN to the left of the WOMAN catches a glimpse of someone familiar ahead of him.

BOSNIAN TEEN
(Bosnian)
Tata! Tata!
[Father! Father!]

A GAUNT POCK-FACED FATHER behind the MAN spins around and lights up with joy at the sight of his son.

Nearly breaking into tears, the teen ecstatically pushes his way forward.

The father and son shove their way through the crowd to embrace each other heartily. Their movement creates a ripple in the river of refugees that steadily peels the MAN and WOMAN away from each other.

In the span of a few breaths, they are steadily propelled in opposite directions as the crowds begin to form single lines in front of the border checkpoints.

56

EXT. BOSNIAN-CROATIAN BORDER - DUSK

56

The MAN and WOMAN gradually disappear into the filigree and shadow of history. The city of refuge pulsates with life and promise beyond the border. The boisterous voices of the refugees themselves are spirited by hope and gravitated by fear.

The cacophony of voices gathers to a shattering crescendo and suddenly, fragments of words can be made out. The words form fragments of sentences and slowly the sentences can be identified as parts of different conversations.

The conversations are acoustically interwoven and thus unintelligible. But as the crowd continues to advance past the border and into the city, the individual fragments of dialogue somehow string together cohesive lyrical thoughts that resemble a pastiche of emotive expressions.

Certain words are keyed into intelligibility based upon their principle significance to the stories; a kind of self-enclosed retrospective of the narrative in lyrical form.

As the conversations become more pronounced, the viewer begins to recognize the individual voices. They belong to the group of interviewees we have met throughout the film.

The interviewees are walking and having these conversations among the crowds. The borders of fact and fiction, of real and imaginary, of documentary and narrative film dissolves and there is but one thread of existence.