

# PAPILLON

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Based on the book by  
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Based on a true story.

**INT. JEWELRY STORE SAFE ROOM - NIGHT**

A darkened room -- the light in the hallway illuminates the crack under the door. The sound of a man's approaching footsteps -- his shadow cuts the light under the door -- a scratching sound; he's working the lock --

The lock pops -- A YOUNG MAN slips inside and closes the door. He then pushes a nearby desk over, blocks the door...

He beelines for the window, and as he peers outside, the red glow of Montmartre at night momentarily illuminates him... tough, wiry -- wears a slick pinstripe suit -- eyes seem to sparkle and threaten at the same time. This is PAPIILLON.

Papi's POV -- looking down on Montmartre -- just one floor up -- denizens of the night coming and going on the sidewalk below. SUPER -- **Montmartre, Paris -- March 26, 1930**

Papi clocks the awning under the window -- sees he can use it to climb down to the street. His escape route now determined, he closes the blinds -- the room goes dark --

Papi starts humming Franz Lehár's "The Merry Widow" as he turns on a flashlight, shines it around, illuminating --

A desk with a typewriter on it, stored mannequin hands for displaying jewelry, a fireplace, a large mirror...

He walks up to the mirror, takes it down -- raps his knuckles against the wall -- trying different spots. Then after a moment he stops, shakes his head...

He scans the room again...lingers on the fireplace -- considering. He crouches down, shines his flashlight inside the firebox...staring at the back wall of bricks...

Papi reaches into the fireplace -- raps his knuckles against the bricks -- hears a hollow reverberation...

He reaches both hands inside, finds a seam -- the back wall of bricks is a false wall -- *a removable panel*...

He pulls the panel off, revealing a hidden compartment obscured in darkness...

Papi grabs the desk chair, drags it over, then sets the flashlight on the seat so it shines into the darkened compartment...illuminating a big, black Diebold safe.

Papi examines the safe...admiring its construction. After a moment he places his hand on the combination dial...

He closes his eyes, continuing to hum "The Merry Widow" as he starts slowly turning the dial. After a few rotations his hand goes still and he mutters:

PAPILLON

One.

He starts up again, working the dial -- eyes dancing under closed lids when *he hears footsteps in the hallway. Shit.*

He opens his eyes, looks to the door...the footsteps stop. He waits, tensing -- when they start up again...recede...

Papi closes his eyes, recommences turning the dial...slowing; the movement almost imperceptible now...he stops...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Two.

He switches to his left hand -- rubs the tips of his fingers together, then starts spinning the dial quickly -- stops, rolls it back a few degrees...hears a tumbling sound...

Papi smiles -- grabs the bolt handle --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Three --

He yanks down the bolt handle, CHACHUNK, opens the safe door.

Papi shines the flashlight inside the safe -- scans the velvet shelves full of jewelry and cash. He zeros in on some uncut diamonds. He starts to reach inside when he hears something -- *more footsteps -- voices:*

VOICE 1 (O.S.)

*There's someone in there --*

He looks over to see the doorknob turning -- the desk that's blocking the door starting to shift --

VOICE 2 (O.S.)

(to Voice 1)

*Go call the police -- hurry!*

Papi grabs the diamonds -- pulls an empty aspirin tube from his pocket, drops them inside. Then he grabs a small wad of cash -- lifts up his shirt -- slips it into a hidden pocket sewed inside his belt --

The desk legs start squealing on the floor as whoever's in the hallway starts forcing it open --

Papi heads for the window -- stops -- something occurs to him. He rushes back to the safe. Grabs a diamond necklace --

**EXT. SIDE STREET - MONTMARTRE - CONTINUOUS**

Papi climbs out the window -- hangs off the awning -- then drops, landing on his feet in front of the Jewelry shop's closed storefront. A figure appears in the open window, peering down at the street as --

Papi blends into pedestrian traffic -- walking casually -- the sound of sirens approaching in the distance --

He doesn't look back -- his face a picture of focus and calm -- as behind him men emerge from the building's entrance looking in vain for the man who just plundered their safe --

**EXT. MONTMARTRE HILL - NIGHT**

We're at the bottom of Montmartre Hill's vertiginous stone stairs, Papillon descending towards us, slowly coming into focus...he reaches the bottom, stops, lights a cigarette --

He takes a long drag, then breathes out -- looking simultaneously relieved and invigorated...

**EXT. BOULEVARD DE CLICHY - MONTMARTRE, PARIS - NIGHT**

We follow Papi as he struts down the Boulevard De Clichy with a loose confidence -- nodding to various familiars; gangsters, street singers, coquettish girls and their pimps --

Papi clocks a ragged looking homeless girl, 9, sleeping on the sidewalk, holding her little brother in her arms. Papi pulls some bills from his money belt -- puts them in the boy's hand, then continues on before the boy can thank him --

Papi passes a newstand, glances at a front page headline -- a photo of LOUIS DEGA, who we'll meet in a bit:

*LOUIS DEGA CONVICTED FOR COUNTERFEITING DEFENCE BONDS*

Papi walks into the L'ENFER BROTHEL -- its carved stone entrance fashioned to look like a demon's gaping jaws...

**INT. L'ENFER - CONTINUOUS**

Papi moves inside the crowded, smoke filled space -- his ears immediately filled with a cacophony of music and screeching laughter.

The walls are sculpted to look like bodies writhing in the flames of hell -- topless girls wearing animal head dresses dance inside a giant cauldron.

Papi beelines for a closed door in the back of the club when he's blocked by a rotund enforcer named GIRASOLE --

PAPILLON

I got something for him.

GIRASOLE

Good for you. I'll see that he gets it.

PAPILLON

I want to give it to him myself.

Girasole gives Papi a hard look -- Papi holds Girasole's stare; not backing down. Girasole breathes out, annoyed --

Girasole frisks Papi -- pulls the aspirin tube from his pocket -- looks inside it, raises an eyebrow...

**INT. BACK ROOM - L'ENFER - MOMENTS LATER**

Papi's POV as walks into the back room, sees a half dozen heavies sitting around a craps table, watching on as CRACK --

JEAN CASTILI -- whose back is to us -- slugs an underworld type in the face while two thugs hold the guy up --

CASTILI

You want to cheat a Corsican and get away with it, you gotta be smart. You guys from the north got no fucking brains --

CRACK -- Castili delivers a monster punch -- the guy's head is hanging now, blood spattering on the floor --

CASTILI (CONT'D)

(to Thugs)

Get this piece of shit out here.

(to the guy)

You better have my fucking money next week.

Castili turns to face Papi as the two Thugs drag the bloodied man from the room. Castili is in his 50s -- weathered good looks -- heavily tattooed. He looks down, notices one of the guy's teeth is embedded between his knuckles.

Papi watches as Castili nonchalantly pulls the tooth out. Castili shoots Papi an expectant look while slowly wrapping his bloodied hand in a handkerchief...

PAPILLON

Safe was full, just like you said --

Papi pours the diamonds on to the table. Castili almost smiles. He then motions to his accountant, who produces a loupe -- starts inspecting the diamonds while --

CASTILI

You pocket any for yourself?

PAPILLON

I wouldn't do that, boss.

CASTILI

From what I've heard you've got some balls on ya. Don't you hustle me -- or I'll cut'em the fuck off.

Papi nods. Judging by Castili's stare -- he means it. CASTILI'S ACCOUNTANT finishes inspecting the diamonds --

ACCOUNTANT

OK for ten thousand.

CASTILI

(to Papi)

Good boy. Sit down. Play a few rounds with us.

Papi gives Castili a nod and sits down with the heavies, masking pangs of trepidation with a confident smile --

PAPILLON

Long as these guys don't mind losing.

Some chuckles as Papi picks up the dice -- clocks a gorgeous hooker, 18, walking up on Castili. This is NENNETE.

Nennete gives Castili a kiss on the cheek, slips some bills in his breast pocket -- she gives Papi a look as Castili pulls her down on his lap; Nennete and Papi seem acquainted.

**EXT. BOULEVARD DE CLICHY - LATER**

Nennete emerges from the front entrance, lights a cigarette. Then after a moment, Papi walks out -- grabs her, turns her around, she flashes him a smile.

He unbuttons his shirt collar -- revealing he's been secretly wearing the diamond necklace he rushed back for. He takes it off, puts it around her neck -- kisses her --

PAPILLON

I knew this had to belong to you.

Her face lights up -- they look like they're in love -- or at least they think they are. She pulls two wallets out of her pocket book -- slips them to Papi --

NENNETE

I didn't open'em -- but they feel heavy.

Papi pockets the wallets -- then he crouches down, sticks his finger in his shoe...fishes out a diamond he hid there -- shows it to Nennete -- pockets it --

PAPILLON

A few more nights like this and we can write our own ticket.

She nods, eyes full of hope. He gives her another kiss --

NENNETE

I gotta get back to work.

He shakes his head, pulls her in, caressing her --

PAPILLON

You made enough tonight. Let's have some fun...

The two of them walk off, laughing -- receding into the night -- PAPI HOWLING AT THE MOON --

**EXT. MOTEL IN MONTMARTE - MORNING**

A shitty motel in a run down neighborhood full of shacks.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING**

Atop a dresser are some safe cracking tools and last night's take: the stolen wallets, some jewelry, a couple watches --

Papi lies sleeping on the floor, Nennete asleep on top of him, her head resting on his chest. The morning sunlight peeks in through shuttered windows -- it looks like they started on the bed and somehow found their way down here...



Nennete's eyes come open...she yawns, starts sleepily tracing her finger over something on Papi's chest...a BUTTERFLY TATTOO...Papi starts to wake up, gives her a smile -- a little kiss on the lips --

NENNETE

This room always seems smaller in the morning...

PAPILLON

We'll switch hotels -- get something bigger.

NENETTE

No more hotels -- I want to live in a little cottage in the countryside -- like where you grew up. You make it sound so nice. We can get the doggie you had -- what did you say it was --

PAPILLON

A pointer.

NENNETE

Yes. A pointer. Let's go today.

PAPILLON

No opportunities in the country. We stay a little longer, the boss will start throwing me the bigger jobs. I cracked that new Diebold safe last night -- there's maybe five guys in Paris who can do that. You know how much money I can make us --

NENNETE

It's me, isn't it?

Papi scoffs, tries to kiss her -- she pushes him away --

PAPILLON

I'm going to give you the life you deserve -- make you a princess.

Papi starts kissing her, his hand sliding between her thighs.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

You're not happy?

Nenette smiles, closes her eyes -- then laughs -- swats Papi's hand away -- stands up. He admires her body as she starts rifling through their discarded clothes --

NENNETE

Where are my cigarettes --

PAPILLON

I could tell you, but then I  
wouldn't get to watch you look for  
them.

She makes a face at him -- he starts trying to pull her back  
down towards him when someone knocks at the door.

LANDLORD (O.S.)

I'm here for the rent.

Papi stands up --

PAPILLON

Hold on a second --

Papi gets some pants on, goes to the dresser and pulls some  
bills from those stolen wallets. The Landlord knocks again --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Relax, I got your money --

Papi unlocks the bolt, then cracks the door with the chain on  
-- sees the LANDLORD is standing with TWO BURLY POLICE  
INSPECTORS: MAYZAUD and JEZOD --

Papi tries to slam the door -- Nennete starts screaming as  
Mayzaud and Jezod force it back open --

Jezod clocks Papi's butterfly tattoo --

MAYZAUD

(to Jezod)

It's him --

Mayzaud grabs Papi, wrenches his hands behind his back --  
handcuffs him. Jezod leers at Nennete, who's rushing to get  
a robe on, then he clocks the wallets and the jewelry --

MAYZAUD (CONT'D)

You rob that shit from Roland  
Legrand?

PAPILLON

What?

MAYZAUD

Roland Legrand was murdered last  
night. Witness identified you --

Papillon shakes his head, almost laughs --

PAPILLON

That pimp from Lyon? I don't know  
what you're talking about -- why  
the hell would I kill Roland  
Legrand?

**INT. HALLWAY - MOTEL - CONTINUOUS**

Mayzaud and Jezod start dragging Papillon to the elevator --

PAPILLON

Somebody's playing you guys --

Nennete follows after them down the hallway --

NENNETE

I was with him! He didn't kill  
anybody!

JEZOD

Go back to your room, whore.

NENNETE

Let him go --

Nennete grabs Mayzaud's jacket -- Mayzaud shoves her into the  
wall -- knocks her to the floor.

PAPILLON

You shouldn't have done that --

Papi wriggles out of Jezod's grip, then -- CRUNCH -- Papi  
headbutts Mayzaud square in the face -- body checks him into  
the wall, knees him hard in the balls. Mayzaud crumples to  
the floor as --

Jezod grabs Papi's arms -- spins him around and CRACK --  
slugs him in the face. Then he holds Papi -- Mayzaud gets to  
his feet and CRACK -- delivers a few brutal punches of his  
own before they recommence dragging Papi to the elevator --

Papi turns, nose bleeding, looks at Nennete as she gets up --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

It's OK --

Mayzaud and Jezod shove him inside the elevator. Nennete  
rushes up, tries to get in --

NENNETE

You can't do this --

Jezod shoves her out -- the ELEVATOR GUY slides the accordion cage closed. Papi can see Nenette peering through the cage as the elevator starts to descend --

NENNETE (CONT'D)

PAPI!

**EXT. THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE DE LA SEINE - DAY**

A grey sky hangs over. Nanette walks up the steps of the Palais De Justice. It's snowing...

**INT. WAITING ROOM - THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE DE LA SEINE - LATER**

Dressed in his best suit -- pale-blue bow tie -- hair slicked back, Papillon sits on a bench, handcuffed to a policeman, smoking a cigarette. Each time he lifts the cigarette to his mouth, the policeman has to raise his arm to follow.

The lead prosecutor -- PRADEL, 40s -- a tall, arrogant looking man walks up on Papi. Pradel wears a red robe -- playing with a polished nail he's bent into a ring...

PRADEL

Bon voyage, prisoner -- bon voyage.

Papi holds Pradel's mocking stare with defiant eyes...

A sound -- Papi and Pradel look over to see the big double doors leading to the courtroom have swung wide...

PAPILLON'S LAWYER -- a meek looking man with a bad cold walks up on them. Pradel gives Papi's lawyer a dismissive look, then strides confidently into the courtroom...

The policeman Papi is handcuffed to, motions for him to stand up -- starts walking with him and his lawyer --

PAPILLON'S LAWYER

The witness said the killer called himself Papillon. That's all they have -- a nickname -- and a common one at that. The police just want your kind off the streets, they don't care if you're guilty or not. But fear not, I'm confident we'll be acquitted. They have no real proof.

We watch as Papi walks into the blood red courtroom -- a CHUBBY JUDGE staring down at him -- his pink cheeks, belying cold eyes... The double doors slam shut --

CUT TO:

**EXT. COURTYARD - SAINT-MARTIN-DE-RE' - DAY**

Close on Papi's eyes -- radiating anger. We don't know where he is -- then as the angle slowly widens we see *he's standing naked...one of eight hundred convicts standing in the courtyard of the Saint-Martin prison...*

COMMANDANT (O.S.)  
(over loudspeaker)  
Attention.

Papi turns face front -- sees the COMMANDANT of Saint-Martin-De-Re', holding the loud speaker, flanked by penal administration officials, army doctors in colonial dress and priests in white cassocks --

COMMANDANT (CONT'D)  
As of this moment, you are the property of the Penal Administration of French Guiana. After serving your full term in prison, those of you with sentences of eight years or more will remain in Guiana as workers and colonists for a period equal to your original sentence. As for France, the nation has disposed of you. She has rid herself of you altogether. Forget France and dress yourselves.

**INT. INFIRMARY - THE CONCIERGERIE - DAY**

A convict shears Papi's head bald -- he's sitting among an endless line of cons, clumps of hair cascading to the floor --

A guard pulls him up, shoves him towards the next station --

**MEASUREMENTS STATION**

Papi stands against a wall -- an orderly uses a metal instrument to measure his skull. Notates his tatoos: the butterfly on his chest, and on his back is the head of a woman, a crucified sailor, a tiger hunt in progress --

ORDERLY

Open your mouth. Out with your  
tongue now --

The Orderly checks his teeth, shines a light down his throat.

ORDERLY (CONT'D)

OK, get in line for your  
vaccination shots.

#### LINE FOR VACCINATION SHOTS

Papi stands in a long line of recently sentenced convicts,  
fresh out of civilian life -- strong, healthy -- well fed.  
Papi listens to the two men in front of him conversing:

CONVICT 1

That's him -- that's Louis Dega.

Papi clocks the bespectacled man the convict is referring to --  
- he's just reached the front of the line. Papi recognizes  
him from the front page of the newspaper --

CONVICT 1 (CONT'D)

Guy's a millionaire. Got busted  
for selling counterfeit defense  
bonds.

CONVICT 2

Probably has a fortune stowed up  
his ass. Somebody's going to cut  
him open for it, might as well be  
us. It'll be easy on the boat --

The con behind Papi taps him on the shoulder, whispers:

VOICE (O.S.)

Papillon, right?

Papi turns, sees TWO CONVICTS standing in line behind him --  
JULOT, 30s -- a tough looking thief with a child-like glint  
in his eyes. And LARIOT -- a sickly looking 18 year old --  
one of his legs is withered from a bout of polio...

JULOT

You work for Castili, right?

Papi nods, maintains a cagey expression --

JULOT (CONT'D)

I've heard about you -- you're a  
hell of safe cracker.

(MORE)

JULOT (CONT'D)

I'm more of smash and grab guy  
myself. Name's Julot. This is  
Lariot.

PAPILLON

Hey.

Lariot says nothing, looks like he's in shock...

JULOT

He was born in the bagné -- son of  
a guard. Now he's going back as a  
convict. Sweet destiny. They  
really give you life for an  
underworld killing?

Papi nods --

JULOT (CONT'D)

Man, they fucked you good.

PAPILLON

Yeah, well -- if I can break into  
anything -- figure I can break out  
of anything just as easy.

JULOT

I was thinking the same thing.

PAPILLON

We should partner up.

JULOT

Nah. If I get sent to solitary for  
some half assed escape that didn't  
work, I want it to be my mistake,  
not someone else's. You have  
money?

PAPILLON

Not a sou.

JULOT

Get some -- you're going to need it  
if you want to mount a cavale.

Papillon glances back at Dega, considers. Dega's now holding  
up the line, arguing with the orderly --

DEGA

Is that the strongest one you have?  
I can pay extra for something  
stronger --

The orderly ignores him, jams the needle into his arm -- motions for the next con to step up --

DEGA (CONT'D)

That's it? I have a weak constitution -- I can't get sick -- may I please speak with the lead physician --

Then Papi hears footsteps coming up the hall, turns to see a towering, red haired convict, walking around like he owns the place. One of his eyes is missing, carries a bullwhip -- this is TRIBOUILLARD.

JULOT

That ogre's the 'trusty' -- serves the guards as official torturer. So they can beat us without exerting themselves. And if he kills somebody -- their hands are clean.

Tribouillard grabs Dega, shoves him into the wall -- breaks his glasses -- whispers into his ear:

TRIBOUILLARD

You bring me money later -- or I'll slit you open while you sleep and take it myself.

Dega doesn't answer...pees on the floor. Tribouillard steps back, disgusted. Dega flees to the next station --

Papi moves past Tribouillard to get his shot -- shoots him a hard stare. While Papi gets his shot he notices another orderly coming through with a cart full of medical supplies. Papi is handed some brown woolens and a pair of wooden shoes; what he'll be wearing on the boat for the next three weeks.

Tribouillard shoves Papi towards the next station --

TRIBOUILLARD (CONT'D)

Move --

Papillon stops, eyes the coming cart -- thinking, needs to time this just right. He turns, looks at Tribouillard --

PAPILLON

How'd you do that to your eye?

Tribouillard slugs Papi in the stomach -- shoves him hard. Papi goes down -- purposely slams into the cart, topples it over. The orderly scrambles to pick up the supplies as Papi calmly gets to his feet --



We see Papi has swiped a metal lancet from the cart -- hides it under his folded woolens --

**EXT. THE GATES - SAINT-MARTIN-DE-RE' - DAY**

Papi's POV, lined up with 1800 other deportees now dressed in woolens, a hundred or so guards -- mostly Africans from the colonial regiment -- are preparing to herd them. Julot and Lariot are right behind Papi. Dega is a few rows back, trying to get his broken glasses to stay on.

Papi hears someone weeping. He turns to see it's Lariot -- he's trembling, his eyes swelling with terror --

LARIOT

(to Julot)

I can't go back. I can't -- you don't know what it's like --

JULOT

Quiet -- it's alright --

Papi returns his gaze to the closed citadel gates -- hears the restless voices of the crowd waiting on the other side...

GUARD

Do not step out of line. If you deviate from the route in any way, you will be shot. Sacks on your left shoulders!

(beat)

Open the gates!

The gates swing wide with a reverberating SQUEAL, revealing a street lined with locals, craning their heads, trying to get a good view of the damned as they emerge on to the street.

GUARD (CONT'D)

MARCH!

**EXT. ROAD TO SEA PORT - CONTINUOUS**

Papi's POV -- guards march backwards in front of him, rifles aimed, while another guard pulls them by the belt. The crowd is a sea of heartbroken wives, stunned children and gawkers.

Suddenly A LITTLE GIRL runs out and grabs the leg of the con who's marching in front of Papi -- the guards grab her off -- HER FATHER loses it, throws a punch. Papi watches as the guards beat him into the pavement, while a few rows back --

Dega marches in a daze -- A NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHER leaps out and snaps his picture -- then, a voice --

VOICE (O.S.)  
Monsieur Dega!

He turns to see CLARA, his high society wife standing with his LAWYER --

DEGA'S LAWYER  
Fear not -- your appeal is next week. You'll be back before Christmas.

The convict marching beside Dega snickers -- we recognize him as one of the two cons Papi heard conspiring to rob Dega --

CONVICT  
No you won't.

Back to Papi as he hears a soft whistle cutting through the sea of shouting. He turns to see Nennete leaning out a second story window, reaching her hand out, eyes tearing. He gives her a look devoid of worry -- winks, mouthing --

PAPILLON  
*See you soon.*

Papi turns, sees several barges waiting to transport them to THE BATTERED OCEAN LINER WAITING IN PORT: LA MARTINIÈRE...

**INT. THE HOLD - LA MARTINIÈRE - DAY**

Papi's POV as guards herd him, Julot and Lariot down into one of the ship's darkened holds -- a dank space containing two communal cages separated by a narrow aisle. A guard starts pulling Chinese and black convicts out of line -- shoving them down the aisle --

GUARD  
Blacks and chinamen in cage two.  
White men to your right. Come on,  
don't block the doors --

Papi, Julot and Lariot are shoved into CAGE 1. Papi looks around at the cage that's about the size of a train car. Julot and Lariot start to hang their packs on hooks close to the door when --

PAPILLON  
We don't want to hang'em there --

Papi ushers Julot and Lariot to the back of the cage, next to a closed porthole --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

We're close to the engines -- it's going to get hot in here. They'll probably open this once we leave port. We're going to want the air.

Julot gives Papi a questioning look --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Used to be in the navy --

Julot and Lariot nod -- follow Papi's advice.

Papi notices the cage is filling up -- getting more and more crowded and claustrophobic -- he sees Dega being shoved into the cage, trying like hell to conceal his mounting terror as Tribouillard enters behind him. Dega tries to duck behind another con, but too late --

Tribouillard grabs Dega's pack away from him, pulls out his blanket, takes it -- then drops Dega's pack to the floor. Dega watches as Tribouillard walks off with his blanket -- clearing an extra large space for himself --

Papi approaches Dega -- who immediately backs away from him --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Come on over, I saved you a spot. I'll keep you safe -- it'll cost you -- but I'll keep you safe.

DEGA

Said the scorpion to the frog.

PAPILLON

We're all scorpions in here.

Dega clocks the butterfly peeking out from Papi's collar.

DEGA

You're Papillon --

Papi nods --

DEGA (CONT'D)

You murdered a pimp -- stabbed him with an ice pick.

PAPILLON

I'm a safe cracker, not a killer -- I was framed.

Dega nods, looks dubious...

DEGA

A common problem it seems. I think I'd be better off setting up in plain view of the guards, don't you think?

PAPILLON

I think you seem like the sort of man who can make up his own mind.

Dega smiles curtly, then turns his back on Papi, starts hanging up his hammock. It looks like he's wondering if he made the right decision -- sees Tribouillard getting in the face of another white collar type named GALGANI, 40s --

Papi looks to the cell door as a guard slams it closed. He peers up, can see the sky through the still open hatch, the french flag flapping in the breeze, the SHIP'S SIREN SOUNDING as the ship starts lumbering out of port...

**INT. THE HOLD - LA MARTINIERE - NIGHT**

Close on an oil lamp as a guard extinguishes it --

GUARD

Lights out --

Darkness -- Papi lies in his hammock, Julot and Lariot on either side of him. Papi listens to Lariot muttering to himself in a tortured, weeping whisper...

While across the way, Dega lies in a hammock close to the bars. Lying beside him is Galgani, who's vomiting on to the floor -- sea sick --

GALGANI

Sorry -- if you'll switch places with me I can try to aim outside the bars --

Dega nods, gets up -- as they switch hammocks:

GALGANI (CONT'D)

We need to pretend like we're poor.

DEGA

How? Should I try to rob someone?

Galgani doesn't answer. Dega lies down in his new hammock -- his ears assaulted by the unnerving sounds emanating from the darkness: retching, weeping, praying. Dega covers his head with his blanket and curls into the fetal position...

**INT. THE HOLD - LA MARTINIERE - LATER**

Close on Dega as he comes awake -- awoken by the CLANGING AND BELCHING SOUNDS emanating from the steam pipes which run over the roof of the cage. He makes a face, turns over...

*Sees a blanket has been pulled over Galgani's face, he's lying completely still...*

Then Dega hears a sound -- *something dripping on the floor*. He looks down, sees blood puddling under Galgani's hammock, and lying in the middle of it is a PLAN -- a small metal cylinder, unscrewed into two pieces. He looks back to Galgani -- *realizes the man's abdomen has been slit open* --

DEGA  
Guard! Guard!!

A Guard shooshes Dega as he unlocks the cage door -- opens it and steps quietly inside --

DEGA (CONT'D)  
He's -- I think he's --

The guard pulls his pistol, aims it at Dega, cocks it --

GUARD  
Shut. Up.

Dega obeys, watching on, befuddled, as the guard picks two halves of the open plan up off the floor -- finds a note still remaining inside -- pockets it. Only then does he raise his whistle to his lips --

Papi sits up as the guard blows the whistle -- sees the guards removing Galgani's corpse. He exchanges a look with Dega, before Dega looks away...

Papi looks over at Julot, shoots him a questioning look -- Julot motions at Tribouillard across the way... We see the faces of other men who saw it happen, all mute; observing the code of silence, shooting each other fearful glances --

**EXT. UPPER DECK - LA MARTINIERE - DAY**

Papi and Dega stand at the railing along with the rest of Cage 1, silently facing the sea;

there's no talking permitted during their daily allotment of fresh air. Dega clocks three guards dumping Galgani's body overboard -- while Papi's attention is fixed squarely on the horizon -- stretching his arms, inhaling the sea air...

PAPILLON  
Smells like a cavale.

Dega watches as Galgani's body splashes into the sea.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
How'd you sleep last night?

Dega nods vaguely, trying to forget what he just saw...

DEGA  
A cavale? Have you ever heard of anyone escaping from the bagne?

PAPILLON  
Doesn't mean it can't be done.

DEGA  
You're an optimist...

PAPILLON  
Don't have much choice.

Dega looks over at Papillon, not sure what to make of him...

DEGA  
Myself, I have some trouble seeing hope in hopelessness. That's why I need a man like you.  
(beat)  
I've reconsidered your offer.

Papi doesn't answer...

DEGA (CONT'D)  
Keep me alive until I've gotten set up on the island -- then I'll pay for your cavale.

PAPILLON  
It's not going to be cheap.

DEGA  
I understand. But when I say keep me alive -- I mean completely unhurt. Not a scratch. Is that within your powers?

After a moment Papi nods confidently, then looks out at the water, considering...

PAPILLON

I can't take you with me.

A guard walks past --

GUARD

No talking --

They wait for him to walk out of earshot, then continue --

DEGA

Don't worry, I enjoy being alive.  
Clara -- my wife -- is working on  
my appeal. I'm confident I'll be  
back in France by Christmas.

Papi nods, but looks highly skeptical.

PAPILLON

A fellow optimist.

Dega makes a face, not amused --

**INT. THE HOLD - LA MARTINIÈRE - NIGHT**

Julot and Lariot have succumbed to sleep -- Papi lies awake, squinting at something starting to move in the darkness...

A figure rising from his hammock across the way -- from the height of his silhouette, it's obvious it's Tribouillard...

Papi slides his lancet from his shirt sleeve, watching as Tribouillard starts making his way towards Dega's hammock...

Papi drops silently down to the floor, starts crawling under the hammocks...freezes, eyes level with Tribouillard's feet as they lumber past --

With a quick motion he slashes Tribouillard's Achilles tendon -- Tribouillard SCREAMS OUT, drops to one knee -- Papi slugs him in the side of the head, once, twice --

Tribouillard lets loose with an elbow to Papi's throat -- Papi drops the lancet as he stumbles back, choking --

Tribouillard keeps coming, walking on his knees -- he yanks Papi to the floor -- crawls on top of him -- grabs his head with both hands, squeezing --

Papi's eyes bulge, his skull seconds away from imploding as he feels blindly for the lancet; it's only a few inches from his hand -- his palsied fingers searching...until finally he clutches it in his hand --

Papi sinks the lancet into Tribouillard's ribs --  
Tribouillard releases the vice grip on Papi's skull --

Papi struggles out from under a now reeling Tribouillard and rolls under a row of occupied hammocks --

Tribouillard bulldozes through the row of hammocks, knocking cons to the floor as he chases after Papi -- the whole cage erupting into chaos now --

Tribouillard loses sight of Papi in the crush of bodies... then Papi springs up from behind, loops a loose hammock around Tribouillard's neck and starts strangling him --

Papi hangs on for dear life as Tribouillard whips him around, trying to throw him off his back. While in the periphery, guards start scrambling down into the hold --

GUARD

Turn on the steam!

A fly wheel as a guard grabs hold, gives it few hard turns --

For a brief moment the cons all freeze, *the sound of steam traveling through pipes over their head*. Close on Papi's eyes -- knows this isn't good. Then SCALDING JETS OF STEAM BLAST DOWN FROM THE CEILING --

SCREAMS ERUPT FROM THE CAGE, now obscured by the haze of rushing steam. Papi keeps his grip on Tribouillard's hammock noose, using the giant's body to shield himself. Julot throws blankets over Dega and Lariot --

The fly wheel as a guard spins it, THUNK -- the steam suddenly stops. The sound of moans and water dripping --

Papi lets Tribouillard drop -- the giant now badly burned, skin bubbling as he frantically pulls off his wool sweater -- SCREAMING -- *as his burnt skin peels off with it* --

Papi looks away from the grizzly sight, sees Julot, Dega and Lariot are OK.

GUARD 2

Strip and line up you fucking animals or it's the steam again.  
Come on -- line up in back --



Tribouillard and some other cons remain on the floor, too badly burnt to move. Papi keeps the lancet in his hand as he strips -- then as he lines up beside Julot and Dega he lets it drop to the floor -- steps on it with his bare foot...

GUARD 1 unlocks the cage, opens the door -- two other guards move inside and check out Tribouillard --

GUARD 1  
(to Tribouillard)  
Who was it? Point him out --

Tribouillard is delirious with pain -- can't see; his one eye practically melted shut...

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
Take him to the infirmary.

It takes four men to drag Tribouillard out.

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
Search for weapons.

A couple of guards start searching the convicts' discarded shoes and clothing -- while the others remain outside the cage, their rifles aimed at the line of now naked cons --

GUARD 2 walks down the line, arrives at Papi's bruised and bloodied face -- looks like he just went thirteen rounds.

GUARD 2  
This one was fighting.

Guard 1 walks over, pins a hard stare on Papi...

GUARD 1  
Do you have any weapons hidden? If you lie to me I'll have you cooked over the boilers.

Papi doesn't answer at first -- face hard -- then finally he shakes his head. Dega glances down, notices blood pooling around Papi's foot...

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)  
You're telling me you took down that trusty with just your bare hands? Are you made of iron?  
(to the other guards)  
Let's find out.

Papi is yanked out of line and dragged out -- Julot quickly steps his own foot over the lancet...

**INT. BRIG - LA MARTINIERE - NIGHT**

Papi lies contorted on the floor, hog tied with thumb and shin screws -- agonizingly painful restraints/torture devices. He's pushing around a big hunk of bread with his nose -- trying like hell to sink his teeth into it -- but without his hands it's impossible.

He hears the door unlocking -- can't maneuver himself to see who's coming in -- hears the guard talking to someone --

GUARD (O.S.)  
You have five minutes.

Papi's POV -- the sound of the door closing, someone's scuffling feet as they walk around to where he can see them. It's Dega. He gives Papi a smile -- Papi doesn't return it --

DEGA  
I'm a little worried about your ability to protect me right now.

PAPILLON  
I think what you're trying to say is thank you.

DEGA  
They plan to keep you down here for the rest of the voyage.

PAPILLON  
Anybody messed with you since I took down the trusty?

DEGA  
No. They seem afraid to go near me.

PAPILLON  
That's because they are. So don't worry about it. The deal was to keep you safe -- you're safe.

Papi motions to the bread with his head --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Help me out, will ya --

DEGA  
Feeding you wasn't part of the bargain.

PAPILLON

If I starve, those guys are going  
to be a lot less afraid of you.

Dega sighs -- starts breaking up the rock hard bread, hand  
feeding it to Papillon who gobbles it down --

Dega wipes some sweat from his brow...

DEGA

This heat... We must be getting  
close --

Papi grunts impatiently, noses the loaf of bread --

PAPILLON

(while chewing)  
More --

Dega begrudgingly continues hand feeding Papi --

**EXT. LA MARTINIÈRE - DAY**

The ship approaches the jungle choked shoreline of Saint  
Laurent -- a border town in South America's French Guiana.

**INT. BRIG - LA MARTINIÈRE - DAY**

Guards lift up a limp Papillon, begin removing his thumb and  
shin screws -- he's in agony. Outside the port window he  
sees lush green, birds flying into the air as the ship sounds  
three wails of its SIREN --

**INT. UPPER DECK - LA MARTINIÈRE - CONTINUOUS**

Struggling to move his arms after having spent days in the  
thumb screws -- Papi and the rest of cage 1 emerge from below  
deck into the glare of a fiery, sweltering sun...

Papi gets in line behind Dega, Julot and Lariot. He looks  
out at the coastline as the ship enters an estuary leading  
into the Maroni river. Dega notices Papi rubbing his numbed  
arms; trying to regain feeling in them --

DEGA

(to Papi)  
Please tell me you can move your  
arms. You need to ensure we're not  
separated.

Papi doesn't answer --

DEGA (CONT'D)

Did you hear me?

PAPILLON

You know I bet you're not the only rich guy who needs protecting around here --

Papi trails off, notices a skiff following alongside the boat now -- three armed men inside. MANHUNTERS. The leader is a white guy in his 60's -- has a dotted line tattooed around his neck with instructions "Cut on the dotted line." The other two are black and Chinese respectively.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

What are they doing?

LARIOT

Learning our faces -- so they can better hunt us if we try and escape. They're manhunters -- former convicts.

DEGA

Ex-convicts hunting convicts. Very efficient model.

Papi spits off the bow in disgust --

PAPILLON

Can they be bought?

JULOT

Everyone can be bought.

LARIOT

They'll take your money, then hunt you down for double the bounty.

Lariot motions to a triangle of three small islands a few miles off the coast.

LARIOT (CONT'D)

If they bring you back alive, you're sent to the islands -- the most dangerous convicts are held there. I was born on Royale... Saint Joseph is where the solitary cells are. The little one's called Devil's Island. There's no getting off it.

They hear the sound of a bell tolling in the distance...

PAPILLON

What's that?

Lariot doesn't answer -- goes white, seems to be remembering things he'd prefer to forget... The ship is almost to the wharf now...

JULOT

(to Papi)

Give me your lancet...

Papi gives him a questioning look.

JULOT (CONT'D)

I'm going to try and make a break from the hospital. Less surveillance.

After a moment Papi lets the lancet slide from his sleeve, then slips it to Julot --

JULOT (CONT'D)

(to Papi)

Tell me if the guards look this way. Hold my pack up for me --

Papi holds Julot's pack to his shoulder -- Julot uses the lancet to cut a hole in the knee of his pants --

The ship's engines stop -- a heavy silence takes over -- the sounds of the jungle slowly fading up -- Dega has to look away as Julot digs the lancet into his knee, slicing off four inches of flesh --

Julot drops the lancet -- his face goes white. Papi steadies him. Lariot pick up the lancet...

PAPILLON

Give it to me.

Lariot just stares. Then the line is halted -- they're made to wait as a bandaged Tribouillard is carried down the gang plank on a stretcher. Seems like it's taking forever -- Julot struggling to remain standing...

**EXT. GANGPLANK - LA MARTINIERE - CONTINUOUS**

The line starts moving again -- Papi watches the convict in front of Julot start down the gang plank. He nudges Julot -- Julot takes the first step --

Papi, Dega and Lariot watch on, tense, as Julot starts to make his way down -- pretends to lose his footing -- tumbles hard down the gangplank -- ends up in a heap at the bottom, gripping his bleeding knee...

The DEPUTY WARDEN walks over and inspects Julot's wound...

DEPUTY WARDEN

Put him in the hospital group.

Papi, Dega and Lariot watch on as Julot is loaded on to a stretcher and carried off. Lariot is looking increasingly panicked -- the gripped lancet half-hidden up his sleeve -- trembling as he limps down the gang plank; horrific memories flooding back into his mind, overwhelming him --

Papi starts shuffling down after him, Dega right behind him. Papi peers around at the alien land awaiting them; white-washed buildings -- officials in white uniforms and pith helmets. Their wives in summer dresses -- children playing. And behind them is a motley group of locals: blacks, Indians, Chinese -- some grim faced white men in ragged clothes.

Screams suddenly erupt -- Papi turns to see Lariot has just grabbed an EIGHT YEAR OLD BOY out of the crowd -- the son of an official. Lariot presses the lancet to the neck of the now screaming boy --

LARIOT

Get back! Lower your guns!

The guards nearest to Lariot comply, eyes boring into him...

GUARD 2

Don't be foolish. Let him go.

Lariot's eyes buzz with confusion as the guards slowly inch closer to him -- the boy struggling in his grip. Lariot clocks the boy's crying mother -- the sight weakens his resolve. He starts to lower the lancet from the boy's throat, about to surrender when --

Papi clocks a guard quietly moving up behind Lariot drawing his side arm --

PAPILLON

Lariot!

Papi and Dega look on in shock as -- BANG -- the guard fires a shot into the back of Lariot's head. Lariot crumples to the beach as the boy is whisked back to his mother --

WARDEN BARROT, 40s -- a big barrel-chested man, formerly a distinguished officer in the Navy -- walks over to Lariot's corpse. He looks down at it shaking his head --

WARDEN BARROT  
(to the Deputy Warden)  
We need pall-bearers.

The Deputy Warden starts pulling prisoners out of line -- directing them towards several bodies that have been carried off the ship.

DEPUTY WARDEN  
Each of you -- pick another inmate to help you. It's a long ways to the cemetery.

The Deputy Warden points at Papi -- motions to Lariot's body. Papi sighs, grimaces. He turns to Dega -- who starts shaking his head as Papi grabs him out of line. They whisper:

PAPILLON  
You said to make sure we're not separated --

DEGA  
I'm rethinking the wisdom of that request --

A guard walks them at gunpoint to Lariot's body --

GUARD  
Move it --

GUARD 2  
(to the ranks)  
Sacks up! FORWARD MARCH!

The prisoners start marching past as Papi grabs Lariot's arms. Dega goes to grab his legs -- hesitates, nauseated --

PAPILLON  
It's alright -- he's gone -- he's not in there.

Dega steadies, exchanges a look with Papi -- Papi imploring him with his stare --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Just think of something else.  
That's what I'm doing.

Dega nods -- and they lift him up --

**EXT. TOWN - EN ROUTE TO PRISON - DAY**

Papi's POV as he carries Lariot's body with Dega down a surreal, sun baked main street -- distorted piano music reverberates from a loudspeaker, locals draw their curtains as the parade of exiles approaches --

Dega keeps slowing, struggling to hold up his side of Lariot's body -- Papi compensating, getting frustrated --

PAPILLON

Come on, you're stronger than that.

DEGA

I'm not -- I swear --

Papi's POV as they pass a chapel -- locals singing hymns inside. Then he sees a bedraggled French ex-con walking an oxen hitched to a wagon full of buckets of sewage. Another French ex-con sifting through garbage --

Then like some kind of mirage Papi spots a pretty French whore, dressed in the height of Paris fashion -- she's standing in the doorway of a whorehouse run by ex-cons, nodding familiarly to the passing guards --

A guard shoves Dega in the back with the butt of his rifle --

GUARD

Hurry up -- that stiff is already starting to smell.

Papi, Dega and the half a dozen other cons tasked with carrying bodies are corralled into the town cemetery, while the rest of the prisoners are marched through the main gate into the prison --

**EXT. TOWN CEMETERY - DAY**

Papi and Dega carry the corpse into the small cemetery, populated with crude, crumbling headstones...

GUARD

No no -- that's for real people -- the prisoners' corner is over there.

Papi and Dega are lead to the outskirts of the cemetery -- Papi doing the lion's share of the lifting, Dega on the verge of passing out as they move into a snake infested thicket, where a lime coated pit awaits...



There are already two headless bodies sprawled in the pit. Papi and Dega drop Lariot -- he lands with a CRUNCH on top of the other bodies.

Papi and Dega drop to their knees, struggling to catch their breath as they stare down at their own possible futures...

**EXT. ST LAURANT PRISON COURTYARD - DAY**

The two guards lead Papi and Dega through the arched entrance of a thick wooden gate -- where they join the ranks of a couple hundred prisoners now lined up in the courtyard...

Papi clocks THE GUILLOTINE standing in the center of the courtyard -- two cons scrubbing the blood stained chopping block with coarse brushes.

A prisoner faints from sunstroke -- a guard rushes over, kicks him in the stomach --

GUARD

Get up! On your feet!

The man starts to get to his feet, coughing blood now -- another prisoner across the way collapses and gets the same --

Papi watches as Warden Barrot prepares to address the prisoners, the guillotine looming behind him.

WARDEN BARROT

(to convict)

You there, pass out the hats --

A convict starts passing out straw hats -- drops one on top of the collapsed convict. Papi and Dega are each handed a hat, they both put them on --

WARDEN BARROT (CONT'D)

You may notice some of your comrades have failed to survive their time at sea. This is for the best -- as this is not a place for the weak. I know there are many who at this very moment are thinking about escape. Well, you are free to try whenever you like. We are happy to shoot you. But should you avoid that mercy, there are two guardians, who are always on duty. On one side there's the bush -- where the best you can hope for is starvation -- unless you're willing to eat your comrades.

(MORE)

WARDEN BARROT (CONT'D)

And indeed I'm sure many of you are. Or, you may choose the sea. The sharks too, I assure you, are always hungry. Those who manage to survive the first escape will get two years in seclusion. Second attempt -- five years in seclusion. There has never been a third attempt. If you commit murder you will be executed. That is all.

Papi and Dega take that in, grim faced --

DEPUTY WARDEN (O.S.)

OK, now listen carefully. When I call your name, step out of ranks with your pack on your shoulder and go stand in front of the yellow barracks --

**INT. YELLOW BARRACKS - DAY**

Papi and Dega walk into the darkened concrete barracks...

It's a long, tunnel-like space -- murky sunlight peeks in through small, barred windows. No beds to sleep on -- just *beat-flanks* -- two long wooden platforms that extends from the barracks' walls -- a steel bar runs along the foot end, rusted shackles hanging off...

PAPILLON

Smells like the monkey house at the zoo.

Dega sits down on the *beat-flanks* -- runs his hands over names carved in the wood.

DEGA

This is a headstone, not a bed.

Papi's POV as he surveys the men living here -- sees a guy immediately hide a sharpened spoon in a rafter, another guy sitting listlessly on the *flanks* picking bugs out of his feet -- a young guy with a bloody nose getting lured into the toilets -- a white haired con repairing a watch...

Papi and Dega notice several other watches the white haired convict is repairing. He's manipulated their inner workings so the watch hands spin at ten times the normal rate...

DEGA (CONT'D)

A convict's dream...

Then Papi spots a burly Algerian convict with a boxer's nose -- a turnkey who works for the guards named SIERRA, 50s. Sierra sells matches to a new arrival as Papi approaches --

PAPILLON

Hey. Who decides what work details we're assigned to?

Sierra gives Papi a once over, shakes his head, then starts to walk off when Dega walks after him --

DEGA

Excuse my ill mannered friend, you're obviously a very busy -- very important man --

SIERRA

I'm just a turnkey --

DEGA

Yes, and you're doing a fine job; things look to be very well locked up around here. Would you be interested in making some extra money -- we're looking for someone to ensure we're assigned the right sort of work in the morning --

SIERRA

One thousand.

Dega considers, then --

DEGA

That's more than I had planned to pay. Perhaps you'd be willing --

Sierra starts to walk when --

DEGA (CONT'D)

Alright, I think we can manage that.

Sierra stops, turns and gives Dega a look...

SIERRA

You can afford a thousand?

Papi shoots Dega a "what the hell are you doing" look -- then moves in --

PAPILLON

No, my friend is confused -- we don't have much money.

(MORE)

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

But we might be able to scrape up  
four hundred -- which should be  
more than enough --

SIERRA

Your friend has already indicated  
that he has at least a thousand.  
That's the price.

Sierra starts to walk off.

PAPILLON

(to Dega)

How did you ever get to be rich?

Dega makes a face. Papi walks after Sierra -- grabs him,  
then in a whisper:

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

We'll pay -- but your life's on the  
line if you don't deliver -- you  
understand? And don't go blabbing  
about how much money he's got.

Sierra considers for a moment, then:

SIERRA

I need it now.

Papi looks at Dega -- motions to the toilets area at the rear  
of the barracks --

PAPILLON

Go -- hurry up. I'll keep an eye  
out.

Dega breathes out, heads for the toilets -- Papi and Sierra  
watching him go...

SIERRA

What animal but man would put their  
only means of survival up their  
ass.

**EXT. ST LAURANT PRISON COURTYARD - DUSK**

Papi and Dega walk around the prison courtyard with Sierra.  
Papi looks to be scoping the place out as he walks -- sees  
high walls and armed guards everywhere he looks. Convicts  
shuffle listlessly to and fro, some carry water jugs over  
their shoulders, others rake the dirt pathways -- others are  
working to construct a new cell block --

SIERRA

You've made a wise investment.  
You'll be given easy work -- unlike  
them...

Sierra motions to a grime covered work crew walking in through the main gate -- they're just returning from the jungle -- most are barely clothed, bare foot, emaciated --

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Within just a few months, more than  
half the men you arrived with will  
be dead.

They walk past the rear of the hospital, see several naked cons lying on the ground suffering from malaria, dysentery, leprosy -- waiting for medical attention --

SIERRA (CONT'D)

If the work doesn't kill'em --  
we've got plenty of diseases that  
will. We've got all kinds here --  
Arabs, Frenchmen, Corsicans,  
blacks, Indians. 'Course they all  
die the same.

They continue on -- Papi and Dega notice an eighteen year old con with dead eyes getting groped by a grizzled convict with maybe two teeth left in his mouth --

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Should you find yourself getting  
lonely...

They walk past the open door of another barracks. A half dozen zombie-like men sitting in the dank space -- Corsicans on one side, Chinese on the other -- all illuminated with a single oil lamp. They're using scraps of cardboard as cards.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Lots to do here at night. There's  
gambling -- and of course --  
gambling.

Suddenly a Corsican con pulls a corkscrew on a Chinese con -- the Chinese con bites into the Corsican's hand as the rest of the men quickly encircle the two fighters, blocking them from view. The Corsicans start singing in unison to drown out the sound of the melee -- some garbled chant about *tears and blood*. The oil lamp is extinguished -- the fight commences in darkness as Papi, Dega and Sierra move on past --

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Are you two relegates?

PAPILLON

Are we what?

SIERRA

Petty thieves -- after three convictions they ship'em here with the murderers --

PAPILLON

Well we ain't murderers, so I guess we're relegues.

SIERRA

If I were you, I'd pretend otherwise. Relegues get no respect from real bagnards --

Sierra motions to another barracks -- guards are carrying out a dead convict who's had his guts ripped out -- a group of feral looking men watch on. These beast-like cons are muscled, scarred -- head-to-toe tattoos.

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Some of these men have never been civilians -- come out of the military prisons in Africa. The bagne is their life.

Papi glances back at those hardened cons, a couple of them stare back with dead eyes. From Papi's expression we gather he's having some doubts about his ability to survive here...

Sierra walks up on an old weathered guard named BARTILONI, presents Dega and Papi to him --

SIERRA (CONT'D)

These two will require special assignments in the morning.

Sierra slips Bartiloni some of the bills he received from Dega. Bartiloni looks Papi and Dega over, nods --

They start back for the barracks --

SIERRA (CONT'D)

Yesterday an old con put poison in the soup -- killed seven innocent men just to get one. They don't care; they're animals. And before long, you'll be animals too.

Papi takes that in with a tense but defiant expression, Dega looking increasingly anxious --

**INT. BARRACKS - MORNING**

Papi's POV as he wakes up, his eyes slowly focusing as he raises his head up and peers around -- a convict masturbating across the aisle, another staring, unmoving -- looks dead...

Papi then looks over at a still sleeping Dega...*there's something on his arm. A vampire bat, quietly sucking blood --*

Papi starts to move when CLANG -- his ankle is shackled to that long pipe. Every night the cons are shackled to their beat-flanks before lights out. Papi smacks the bat -- it flies off. Dega wakes up -- looks at Papi accusingly --

DEGA

Did you just hit me?

Dega looks down, sees a nasty bite wound on his arm --

DEGA (CONT'D)

Dear God --

Papi points to a bunch of bats hanging off the ceiling. They scatter suddenly -- *spooked by distant gunshots.*

Papi exchanges a look with Dega as more shots start waking up the barracks -- he hears Sierra talking to a guard outside:

SIERRA (O.S.)

Which barracks?

GUARD 2 (O.S.)

No, he broke out of the hospital -- just one I think.

Papillon's eyes light up, he grins and turns to Dega --

PAPILLON

I bet it's Julot -- son of a bitch didn't waste any time. See -- *it can be done.*

Dega smiles weakly, gripping his now swelling bat bite -- Papi slaps him on the shoulder --

**INT. MEDICAL INSPECTION LINE - INTAKE CENTER - DAY**

Papi and Dega stand in line, waiting to get their physical inspection. Papi looks around -- disturbed by the condition of most of the convicts; unlike the strong and healthy cons that made up the medical inspection line in France, these men look like the walking dead.

Papi and Dega watch as a CONVICT steps up to the doctor, his body is covered with sores, bleary eyed.

DOCTOR  
Open your mouth, stick out your  
tongue --

The Convict obeys -- only a few teeth left in his mouth --

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Approved for work.

He stamps the convict's paperwork --

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Next --

CONVICT 2 steps up -- holds his arm out for the doctor to see -- looks badly infected, some filthy bandages hanging off it.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Get a new dressing on this.

Some hope starts to brighten Convict 2's expression --

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Then report to work.

Convict 2's expression darkens, he shuffles off. Dega shuffles up to the Doctor --

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Open your mouth and stick out your  
tongue --

Dega obeys.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
You have good teeth. Appear to be  
in excellent health.

Dega shakes his head -- not pleased, tries to show the doctor his swollen bat bite --

DEGA  
I assure you that's not the case.  
As you can see I've been mauled by  
a flying rat --

DOCTOR  
Next --

Dega sees the guard getting ready to shove him -- moves.  
Papi steps up to the Doctor --



DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Open your mouth and stick out --

PAPILLON  
Fuck you.

The Doctor looks up at Papi wearily, sighs --

DOCTOR  
Approved for work --

The Doctor stamps Papi's paperwork --

PAPILLON  
Who *isn't* approved for work?

DOCTOR  
Next --

PAPILLON  
You call yourself a doctor?

DOCTOR  
Who said I was a doctor?

A guard grabs a disgusted Papi and shoves him towards the next station --

**INT. WORK DETAIL LINE - INTAKE CENTER - DAY**

Papi stands behind Dega, who's standing before Bartiloni -- the guard Sierra paid off. Bartiloni is checking paperwork --

DEGA  
My friend and I need to be kept together. Now, I'm most useful in matters of accounting, book keeping -- a pen is the heaviest thing I should be lifting --

Dega trails off as the Deputy Warden walks up on him...gives him a long look, seems to recognize him...

DEPUTY WARDEN  
I know you. Do you know me?

Papi is watching on, not sure what to make of this.

DEGA  
Yes, of course I know you, sir.  
You're the Deputy Warden, sir.

DEPUTY WARDEN  
But what's my name?

DEGA  
Pardon me, sir -- I don't know.

DEPUTY WARDEN  
Brioulet.

Dega's face drops, obviously knows the name...

DEPUTY WARDEN (CONT'D)  
My uncle was arrested for selling counterfeit defense bonds you furnished him with in Marseilles. When my aunt asked you to pay for his lawyer, she told me you suggested she try walking the streets for money. Told her she'd earn more than she needed for she was very pretty.

Papi sighs, shakes his head --

DEGA  
Dega is a very common name in Marseilles --

DEPUTY WARDEN  
(to the Guard)  
Route Zero.  
(to Dega)  
And don't worry, we'll be sure not to separate you from your friend.

Dega is speechless, he turns to Papi, who gives him the evil eye. Dega then turns to the Deputy Warden as he walks off --

DEGA  
What's Route Zero?

**EXT. ROUTE ZERO - JUNGLE - DAY - HEAVY RAIN**

From above, rain pours down on a freshly dug trench -- THUNDER CLAPS -- the trench peppered with cons filling mining carts with mud and rocks...

Close on Papi, Dega, and several other cons struggling to push an overfilled mining cart uphill. Papi looks over, sees Dega's bat bite is now badly swollen -- his eyes glassy --

Dega's feet keep slipping, the wheels squealing on the mud slicked rails, as Papi struggles to compensate for his companion's weakness --

One of the other cons who's pushing -- a stocky, excitable man named CLOUSIOT, 30s -- starts regarding Dega angrily --

CLOUSIOT  
Come on, mec, stop leaving it to  
the rest of us -- you can push  
harder than that --

Papi sighs --

PAPILLON  
Trust me, he can't --

Dega suddenly passes out, falls face first on the track -- Papi has to dig his heels in, straining to stop the cart from rolling over Dega's head --

Papi and the others stop pushing -- Papi squats down, vainly trying to shake Dega back to consciousness --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Get up -- come on --

CLOUSIOT  
Don't take your hands off the cart  
or he'll start shooting --

Clousiot motions to the most senior guard, a brute named SANTINI, 35, who's now stomping towards them --

SANTINI  
Why are you stopping?

Santini spots Dega, lying unconscious on the tracks -- pokes him with his rifle...

SANTINI (CONT'D)  
Put him in the cart --

Papi and Clousiot pick up Dega and lay him on top of of the mud and rocks piled in the cart --

SANTINI (CONT'D)  
Back to work --

Papi and co. start pushing their cart, now heavier with Dega loaded on top... Dega starts coming to -- looks up at the sky, the rain falling as he's pushed up the hill --

**EXT. ANOTHER SECTION OF ROUTE ZERO - DAY**

The rain has stopped. It's the sun that tortures Papi, Dega and Clousiot now -- baking their shaved heads while they sit in the mud -- too exhausted to swat the insects crawling over their skin -- their eyes all focused on the convict pouring out the water rations, slowly making his way down the line...

Meanwhile Santini and the guards sit under a mosquito net, protected from the bugs, eating their lunch --

Back to Papi cupping his hands together, holding them out to receive his water ration. The convict pours the water -- most of it leaks between Papi's fingers as he rushes to bring it to his cracked lips.

Papi licks the moisture off his palms, then looks over at the con next to Clousiot, who doesn't bother holding his hands up, the convict giving out the water passes him by --

Papi notices the guy isn't moving, his face is grey --

PAPILLON

Jesus, he's dead.

DEGA

Guard --

Clousiot nudges Dega with his arm --

CLOUSIOT

Don't let'em know yet --

Clousiot holds up a piece of stale bread --

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)

We'll eat his rations first.

Clousiot breaks the bread, hands pieces to Papi and Dega -- then reaches into the dead man's pockets...

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)

He's got some malaria pills --

Clousiot hands Dega and Papi two pills each -- they gobble them down.

PAPILLON

You don't want any?

CLOUSIOT

Nah. They give you a headache, make you throw up. Not much better than malaria.

Papi and Dega sigh, exchange a look. Papi notices an anchor tattooed on Clousiot's forearm.

PAPILLON

You were in the Navy?

CLOUSIOT

Yeah, I was in the Navy, mec. You want to go sailing with me? Been here almost a year and I'm crazy to get going. You take me along, mecs won't fool with you -- I'm a volcano, you understand --

Papi looks dubious.

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)

I killed a stool pigeon in Toulouse with my bare hands --

PAPILLON

Keep your voice down.

A wrinkled old con sitting across from them named CARORA overhears --

CARORA

(to Clousiot)

A cavale man, eh? You need money? I'll give you my last twenty francs if you kill me in my sleep tonight.

Papi tell by Carora's broken expression that he means it. Clousiot scoffs --

CLOUSIOT

For twenty francs? Not worth the effort.

A wild eyed, heavily tattooed convict suddenly pipes up --

WILD-EYED CONVICT

(to Carora)

I'll kill you, mec.

PAPILLON

(to Carora)

Save your money, old man.

CARORA

(to Papi)

I escaped once. There's nowhere to go. Nobody wants France's trash --

Someone starts SCREAMING across the way. Papi gets to his feet -- SEES A JAGUAR MAULING A CONVICT --

BANG -- a bullet whizzes past -- Papi, Clousot and Dega hit the dirt. Papi sees it's Santini, walking up behind them firing his rifle -- BANG, BANG -- until the din of screaming and growling stops...

Papi looks over to see Santini lowering his smoking rifle -- both the jaguar and the convict shot dead...

CARORA (CONT'D)  
(re: jaguar and the con)  
The lucky bastards.

**EXT. TRAIL TO PRISON - DUSK - RAIN**

Headed back to the penitentiary now, Papi and Dega -- both caked with mud and looking half dead from exhaustion -- stand on a platform with wheels, pushing off with long poles -- propelling it along the train tracks. It looks like they're rowing a gondola. Papi is doing most of the work -- Dega can barely stand at this point, Papi keeps having to steady him --

PAPILLON  
Easy now -- we're almost there.

Angle widens as the cart squeals over the tracks -- revealing they're pulling a half dozen other carts -- Santini and several other guards relaxing inside while the cons march.

Papi spies a stopped truck up ahead...it's stuck in the mud. Its cargo -- A DOZEN PROSTITUTES who just arrived from Paris -- stand by the roadside, watching as two liberated cons turned SMUGGLERS, try to push it free --

SANTINI  
(to Papi and Dega)  
Stop -- stop --

Papi and Dega drag their poles to stop the carts. The two Smugglers regard Santini wearily as he smiles at the girls...

SANTINI (CONT'D)  
(to liberated cons)  
You know better than to try and  
truck your whores through here  
after a rain storm.

SMUGGLER  
Yes, sir.

The convicts -- especially those who have been here awhile -- are going out of their minds standing so close to women.

SANTINI  
 (to the convicts)  
 Turn around! Now!

The convicts turn, so they're facing the other direction...

SANTINI (CONT'D)  
 Don't worry, ladies -- these men  
 would much rather fuck each other  
 than bother with you.

Papi sees Dega is about to collapse -- reaches out and braces him with his hand. Santini sees this, walks over to them --

SANTINI (CONT'D)  
 Look, they can barely keep their  
 hands off each other. Sad when a  
 man has to fuck another man to stay  
 sane. Personally, I'd prefer  
 death.

Santini pulls his side arm, cocks it, aims it at Papi's head -- pulls the trigger -- click -- dry fires. Papi barely reacts -- stone faced, numb --

SANTINI (CONT'D)  
 Of course, most are barely alive to  
 start with.

**EXT. CART - EN ROUTE TO PRISON - TRAVELING - DUSK**

Papi's POV as he pushes off with the pole -- the prostitutes and the two Smugglers are now riding on the carts -- one of the smugglers sitting right beside where Papi is standing.

Papi glances back over his shoulder, sees Santini is distracted, talking to two of the girls. Papi whispers down to the Smuggler --

PAPILLON  
 Can you hear me?

The Smuggler doesn't react, but Dega looks over, glares at Papi -- Papi gives Dega an "it's alright" look --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
 Can you hear me?

The Smuggler doesn't answer, but nods almost imperceptibly...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

How much to take me up the coast?

The Smuggler doesn't answer at first, then after a moment he meets Papi's stare, then looks away -- mutters:

SMUGGLER

Don't be stupid.

PAPILLON

How about five thousand?

Suddenly the Smuggler turns and calls to Santini --

SMUGGLER

Guard!

PAPILLON

Don't turn me in, don't turn me in  
-- six thousand -- seven thousand.

Santini looks up --

SANTINI

What's the matter?

Papi and Dega look at each other, doom faced -- this is it...

SMUGGLER

Wanted to know which girl I should  
send to repay you.

Papi breathes out...

SANTINI

One that hasn't caught anything  
yet.

Santini returns his attention to the girls. The Smuggler whispers to Papi:

SMUGGLER

My boat's on this side of the  
river. I'll be here for three more  
days.

Dega overhears, looks worried, conflicted...

**INT. BARRACKS - NIGHT - RAIN**

Dega lies on the beat-flanks listening to the rain fall,  
gripping his bat bite;



looks completely destroyed by what he's had to endure over the course of just 24 hours. He's contemplating something, grinding gears in his head...

After a moment he turns, looks at Papi sleeping beside him --

DEGA

Papillon.

Nothing. Dega reaches over, taps Papi on the shoulder -- Papi springs awake, grabs Dega's hand, ready to fight -- sees it's Dega, shakes his head, closes his eyes --

DEGA (CONT'D)

I've changed my mind.

Papi doesn't answer, intent on getting back to sleep --

DEGA (CONT'D)

I didn't know it would be this bad.  
I'll be dead long before for my  
appeal. Please -- let me join your  
cavale...

Papi opens one of his eyes -- regards Dega for a moment -- then closes it again...

PAPILLON

You ever sail a boat -- spend any  
time on the sea?

DEGA

Yes, I've been on a boat -- though  
I was locked in a cage for most of  
it. Still, I think I understand  
the concept well enough.

Dega waits for Papi to answer...he doesn't -- looks like he went back to sleep -- then:

PAPILLON

I can't take you with me, Dega.

DEGA

You should call me Louis --

Papi finally sits up --

PAPILLON

Taking you wasn't part of the deal.  
If I do, my odds go way the hell  
down.

DEGA  
 Yes, I realize that...  
 (beat)  
 But I still need to go with you.

Papi shakes his head, lies back down, turns away from Dega -- looks like he's going back to sleep.

DEGA (CONT'D)  
 So...you agree?

PAPILLON  
 You're paying for it.

**EXT. COURTYARD - DAY**

The blazing sun shines behind the guillotine, the towering device casts a long shadow on the cracked concrete, the sound of convicts being herded into the courtyard --

A hundred or so convicts file inside, guards and the Deputy Warden directing them to assemble in front of the guillotine.

DEPUTY WARDEN  
 Down -- on your knees. Cross your arms.  
 (to Papi)  
 You there -- on your knees.

A Guard hits Papi in the back of the knees with his rifle -- Papi falls down on his knees -- Dega and Clousiot are kneeling on either side of him. All the convicts are kneeling now, crossing their arms in front of their chest -- the guillotine looming over them...

DEPUTY WARDEN (CONT'D)  
 At the moment of execution all of you are to bend your heads.

Papi hears a commotion coming from one of the cells that line the courtyard -- where the condemned wait to die. He sees four guards struggling to drag a man out the door --

Barrot walks up beside the guillotine, regards it impassively, then looks out at the kneeling convicts...

WARDEN BARROT  
 This man stabbed two guards. One of whom died this morning, leaving two children without a father.  
 (MORE)

WARDEN BARROT (CONT'D)

And for what -- so this cretin  
could have a run through the jungle  
-- to discover what he should have  
already known...

Papi's face drops, he can't believe it -- the man they're  
dragging to the guillotine is Julot.

Papi instinctively starts to stand up when a guard jams a  
rifle barrel in his back.

Papi looks into Julot's terror stricken eyes as he's laid  
down on the chopping block...

Barrot motions to the convict executioner operating the  
blade. The executioner pulls the rope. The blade falls --  
THWACK -- Julot's head tumbles into the basket.

Afterwards Papi just stares in shock, while a trembling Dega  
starts to weep.

WARDEN BARROT (CONT'D)

Remember. To keep you is no  
benefit. And to destroy you is no  
loss.

**EXT. ROUTE ZERO - DAY**

BOOM -- several tree stumps are blasted to smithereens.  
Angle widens to reveal convicts scrambling to clear the  
debris -- Santini stands off to the side, barking orders:

SANTINI

Hold on! That one didn't go off --  
we got a bad connection.

Santini motions to a stump rigged with dynamite that didn't  
detonate -- looks at Papi and Dega --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

Check the wires --

Papi and Dega start cautiously shuffling towards the stump --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

Hurry up!

They pick up the pace -- arrive at the stump. Several holes  
have been drilled in it -- plugged with wired sticks of  
dynamite. Papi spots the loose wire -- looks at Dega...both  
of them sweating, terrified to touch it...

SANTINI (CONT'D)

What are you waiting for?

Papi hears Santini racking his rifle -- he steadies himself -- Dega watching on, wincing as Papi starts reconnecting the wires with shaking, dirt stained fingers. A few sparks fly -- Papi freezes -- then nothing... Papi looks at Dega -- they both breathe out -- Papi turns to Santini, nods --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

Alright -- get clear --

Papi and Dega rush to get some distance -- crouch down in the brush, clamp their hands over their ears, waiting...when Papi's eyes suddenly go wide --

Carora (the old man) IS RUNNING STRAIGHT AT THE STUMP --

PAPILLON

No!

Papi turns to see the guard is already pushing down the blast handle on the detonator -- everyone starts yelling STOP when BOOM -- Carora is blown to pieces --

A haze of smoke -- coughing -- Papi looks over at Dega, who's in shock, standing motionless -- his body sprayed with Carora's blood.

SANTINI

Christ. What a fucking mess. What are you all standing around for -- clean it up! Pile him over there!

Several cons drop to their knees and start scavenging --

CONVICT

He promised me his plan --

CONVICT 2

Whoever finds it first, mec --

Dega breaks ranks and beelines for a muddy puddle. He gets down on his knees, manically splashing himself, trying to wash the blood off when his eyes catch sight of something...

*Carora's severed head lying in the dirt.* Dega's eyes go wide with shock -- his visage cracks...

Santini sees him -- disgusted -- grips his bull whip as he walks up on him...

SANTINI

What the fuck is the matter with  
you?!

CRACK -- Santini starts lashing Dega --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

Get up -- get the fuck up!

Dega doesn't move, covering his head -- weeping as Santini  
goes to town on him with the bull whip --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

(to the watching cons)

Men like this, will only make your  
suffering worse. You should be  
applauding me.

Santini pulls his pistol, waves it around at the other cons.

SANTINI (CONT'D)

Go on -- clap your hands!

BANG -- Santini fires his pistol in the air. All but Papi  
start clapping -- until Santini aims his pistol right at  
Papi's head --

Papi starts to robotically clap his hands --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

(to Dega)

Do you hear that?

CRACK -- Santini continues whipping Dega -- doesn't look he's  
ever going to relent -- losing himself -- CRACK, CRACK --  
blood soaking through Dega's now tattered prison clothes --

SANTINI (CONT'D)

(to Dega)

They can't wait for you to die --

Papi spots a chunk of exploded tree trunk, not far from his  
feet. He's conflicted -- looks back at Dega as --

Santini starts unleashing BIG HEAVY DEATH LASHES -- CRACK --  
CRACK -- raises the whip way up high for the master stroke --  
but as he's about to bring it down, it catches on something --

He glances over his shoulder -- sees Papi gripping the end of  
his whip in one hand, the chunk of tree trunk in the other --

Papi yanks the whip and Santini with it -- Santini loses his  
balance, raising his pistol when CRACK -- Papi clobbers his  
skull with the chunk of tree trunk --

Santini collapses, unconscious. Papi glances at Dega lying face down -- a bloody mess -- but he's groaning, alive...

Papi considers -- frantic -- scanning the surrounding jungle -- hears more guards coming --

Papi's POV AS HE TAKES OFF INTO THE BRUSH -- the sound of the guards shouting after him, GUNSHOTS --

Papi plows through the brush -- then stops, crazed eyes searching -- no idea where to go...

As his panting starts to quiet -- he's able to hear something...*rushing water* --

#### **EXT. GREEN RIVER - CONTINUOUS**

Papi bolts in the direction the sound is coming from when the ground drops off -- he stops short, looks down...it's a fifty foot drop to the green, fast flowing river below...

Papi leaps off the edge -- falls through the air -- comes splashing down, struggling to keep his head up as the current pulls him down a dark winding route --

He peers back in the direction he came from -- no sign of his pursuers. Up ahead he sees a network of large tree roots snaking over the river --

As he passes under the natural bridge TWO GUARDS EMERGE FROM THE BRUSH. Papi reaches up and grabs the slimy roots, stops himself -- the guards haven't seen him, as long as he can hold on he's hidden. He peeks up between the serpentine roots -- sees the guards on the shore -- watching the river --

Papi is struggling to keep hold of the slippery overhang -- the current tugging on his legs --

He winces -- something just bit him. He winces again. He looks down. SEVERAL PIRANHA ARE NIPPING AT HIS TORSO -- there's maybe a half a dozen -- with more coming --

Papi grits his teeth, fighting panic -- sees the guards are still standing up there, watching the stream. He notices the water around him is turning red --

He stifles a scream, can't hold on much longer -- the pain is too much -- his hands slip, the current takes him --

He's floats out from under the overhang -- starts swimming -- doesn't look back --

GUARD (O.S.)  
Hey, there he is!

Papi swims with everything he's got as bullets burrow through the water around him --

He chances a look back, gasping for breath...sees the guards struggling to pursue him on the shore -- he's losing them...they keep firing -- bullets whizzing past --

Then, silence. He glances back -- has lost sight of them now. He starts swimming towards the opposite bank -- climbs up some green slimy rocks, grips a tree branch and pulls himself up on dry land --

He checks his torso -- it's covered with ugly little piranha bites. He's exhausted, wheezing, but adrenaline pushes him on; he starts stumbling into the jungle, breaks into a run --

**EXT. YELLOW BARRACKS - NIGHT**

Dega winces as Clousiot cleans the lacerations on his back... They hear guards calling to each other outside -- Dega gets up, rushes to the barred window --

CLOUSIOT  
I'm not finished -- you don't want  
an infection in this place --

Dega isn't listening, staring out the window at the penitentiary's front gates, where a small group of guards, appear to be returning from the jungle empty handed --

Clousiot walks up beside him, looks out the window...

DEGA  
He's still out there.

CLOUSIOT  
Wasn't he supposed to take you with  
him?

DEGA  
He risked his life for me.

CLOUSIOT  
'Cause he wanted your money.

DEGA  
He already had the money. I gave  
it to him this morning.  
(beat)  
He's a man of honor.

Clousiot takes that in, then after a moment:

CLOUSIOT  
Then he's truly fucked.

**EXT. DOCK ON THE MARONI RIVER - NIGHT**

Papi's POV -- peering out of the jungle at the wharf. He scans a line of small transport boats...no people, just the sound of the slurping water, boats bumping against the dock --

Then he sees a figure emerging from the cabin of one of the boats. It's the Smuggler Papi spoke to. He stands on the bow coiling rope -- as if he wants to be seen...

Papi shambles along the shore -- blackened with blood and filth. He struggles to climb up on the dock -- sees the Smuggler giving him a strange, disappointed look...

PAPILLON  
You're a good man.

After a moment the Smuggler shakes his head, motions towards the darkened wharf. Papi tenses as THE THREE MANHUNTERS HE SAW ON ARRIVAL emerge from the darkness, racking their guns --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Son of a bitch --

Papi puts his hands up -- spits. Two of the Manhunters grab him, yank his arms back -- binding his wrists while he watches the lead Manhunter -- white guy in army fatigues -- slip the Smuggler a few notes...

**EXT. OVERHEAD SHOT OF SAINT-JOSEPH ISLAND - DAY**

The island of Saint-Joseph as seen from above -- watch towers and battlements -- tidy little white houses with red roofs --

**EXT. COURTYARD - ILE SAINT-JOSEPH - DAY**

Papi is marched into the courtyard by two guards -- his arms and legs are tightly shackled -- he's forced to hop to keep up -- the guards keep jabbing him with their rifles --

GUARD  
Stop dragging your ass and move!

Papi's POV as he loses his footing and -- THUD -- falls on his face.



The guards grab him, lift him up, start shoving him along faster -- he falls again -- they yank him back up, march him a few more feet, then stop...

Papi stands there in the smothering silence...then, footsteps ...he turns as Warden Barrot crosses the courtyard to him. Barrot looks him over for a moment, then...

WARDEN BARROT

For the next two years you will remain here on the island of Saint-Joseph. Our devourer of men. This is not a place for rehabilitation. We know it's useless. So we do our best to destroy your mind. You're not permitted to speak here. We observe absolute silence at all times.

(to the Guards)

All right, let's get going -- search him thoroughly and put him in his cell.

**EXT. SOLITARY CELL - ILE SAINT-JOSEPH - DAY**

Papi walks into his solitary cell, turns in time to see the door closing slowly -- quietly -- the lock clicks... Papi breathes out, the silence immediately bearing down on him.

He looks around -- the cell is about the size of an outhouse, nothing but a wooden bunk and a cement block to sit on -- dozens of names are chiseled into the filth stained walls...

Papi looks up -- nine feet above him are bars the size of train tracks -- and ten feet above that a guard paces on a metal grill walkway, wearing slippers so as to not make any noise. Beyond that is the roof of the enclosing structure, a couple of overhead lights bright enough to illuminate the walkway, but not the cells below it.

There's no fear or self pity in Papi's eyes -- only the fury that fuels his steadfast defiance...

**LATER**

Papi is methodically pacing the cell, hands clasped behind his back, counting each footstep under his breath, a dark focus in his eyes --

**ANOTHER DAY**

Papi's POV -- dirty water with a few leaves floating around in it -- his "soup."

Papi brings the bowl to his lips and drinks down the last drops. He then looks up to see the fat guard has stopped pacing, standing directly over him, sucking on a cigarette...

Papi returns his gaze to his soup -- when he notices something falling in the periphery. The guard has dropped his cigarette, it's lying on the floor, *still lit*...

It looks like Papi wants more than anything to pick it up.

It's unclear if the guard is trying to be nice, or if he's looking for an excuse to inflict more suffering. Papi restrains himself, lets the cigarette butt burn out.

The guard shakes his head, resumes pacing...

**ANOTHER DAY**

The fat guard's POV as he paces over the cells, staring down at the blackened wraiths huddled inside. He hears a *dry snapping sound, a gurgling*. He stops, doubles back and peers down into the cell. He looks highly annoyed. The con below just hung himself -- fashioned his pants into a noose --

FAT GUARD

(calls to other guard)

Go tell the Deputy Warden we need  
permission to open two-thirty two.

The Fat Guard then continues pacing -- reaches Papi's cell -- Papi's looking markedly thinner and weaker as he paces, head down, hands clasped behind his back -- doggedly keeping up with his regimen...

Close on Papi as we hear his whispered refrain --

PAPILLON

One, two, three, four, five -- turn  
-- one, two, three, four, five --

**NIGHT**

An enormous centipede crawls up Papi's arm...angle widens to reveal Papi watching it impassively...

Papi swipes the centipede off his arm -- winces -- *it bit him*.

He sits up -- angry -- sees it scurrying across the floor now. Papi starts trying to stomp it into the ground -- until it makes its escape, disappearing into a stone crevice.

#### DAY

The bite on his arm now horribly swollen and discolored, Papi kneels on the floor, dry heaving --

He sees the tall skinny guard pacing over his cell --

PAPILLON

I'm sick.

SKINNY GUARD

You don't talk to us,  
Reclusionnaire. I'll excuse you  
since you're new. But if you say  
another word, I'll cut your  
rations. And your light.

Papi stares up as the guard continues pacing -- remnants of hope draining from his visage...replaced by animal fear...

#### ANOTHER DAY

Papi sits in silence, eyes closed...listening to someone lethargically sweeping the outside hallway. The SWEEPER pauses as he reaches Papi's door -- brushes the broom against it -- *seems to be signaling him...*

Papi opens his eyes, hears the sound of sliding metal -- his water bucket has just been pushed inside. The little metal door slides shut. The sound of the Sweeper walking away...

Papi walks over, looks down into his water bucket -- *sees there's something floating in the water...*

Papi looks up, waits for the guard to pass overhead, then he crouches down, checks out the bucket --

Papi almost cries with joy. There's a coconut inside...and a piece of folded white paper... His eyes keep darting upwards, paranoid -- as he unfolds the paper -- it's a note:

DEGA (V.O.)

*There will be a coconut in your  
bucket every day from now on. Eat  
all of it, and it will keep you  
strong. Chin up. Louis.*

Papi smiles, then balls up the paper and shoves it into his mouth -- goes still as the guard walks back overhead...then, as soon as he passes, Papi swallows it --

### NIGHT

Papi is pacing vigorously -- the coconut appears to have given him a little burst of energy -- seems intent on pushing his muscles to total exhaustion --

He stops, struggling to catch his rasping breath as he pulls his shirt up over his face and drops back on his wooden cot -- the cloth rising and falling over his mouth as he purposely asphyxiates himself...

### INT. PAPI'S MIND - THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE DE LA SEINE - DAY

Close on Papi's blanket covered face. He lowers the blanket -- starting to relax now, taking in *his new surroundings*...

Papi is in a courtroom, everything is still, like he's inside of a photograph, the only sound is blowing wind. He stands in the prisoner box, surveying the still tableau...

The courtroom is crowded with Papi's underworld friends -- Nennete among them, gripping her hands nervously. And behind her sits Papi's FATHER, a conservatively dressed school teacher, warily staring into the eyes of his son...

Ashamed, Papi turns from his father's stare -- and instead lingers on the smug expression worn by the prosecutor and the emotionless face of the chubby judge...

Papi clutches the railing of the prisoner box...his contempt for these men radiating as the place suddenly comes to life; the sound of the room fading up --

JUDGE

*The jury has found you guilty of  
the murder of Roland Legrand. You  
will be condemned to penal  
servitude for life.*

Papi stops breathing, looks like he's ready to explode --

PAPILLON

*I'm innocent!*

Papi's POV as four policemen try to grab him -- he backs away from them -- the whole place erupting with jeers and shouting as they get their hands on him --

BACK TO:

**EXT. SOLITARY CELL - ILE SAINT-JOSEPH - MOMENTS LATER**

Papi removes the shirt from his face, eyes frazzled as he wrestles with the malignant memory...

After a moment he starts to smile...pulls the shirt back over his face...

CUT TO:

**EXT. PAPI'S MIND - THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE DE LA SEINE - DAY**

Now he's standing at the foot of the courthouse steps -- people coming and going, sound starting to fade up, voices, passing cars. He looks down...he's carrying a suitcase...

He regards the suitcase in his hand for a moment, dark purpose in his eyes... Then starts up the stone steps...

He reaches the top of the steps, sets the suitcase down by the front entrance -- then casually starts back down --

He looks back over his shoulder, sees the Judge and the Prosecutor exiting the building -- the Prosecutor notices him -- Papi gives him a big smile and a wave when --

BOOM -- THE SUITCASE EXPLODES -- INCINERATING THE JUDGE AND THE PROSECUTOR -- there are echoes of the Carora explosion, courtesy of Papi's memory overlap --

BACK TO:

**ANOTHER DAY**

Papi is finishing his now daily ration of coconut pulp, licking his fingers, getting every last bit, when he hears a CLACKING SOUND --

He looks to his door -- his wicket has been opened. He can hear other convicts whispering to each other in the hall -- sounds like everyone's wicket has been opened...

Papi hides the remainder of his coconut under his wooden bunk, then moves to his wicket -- sticks his head through...

**INT. SOLITARY ROW - CONTINUOUS**

On Papi's left and right are a whole multitude of heads. A con with barber shears is making his way down the line -- snipping their greasy locks, while two guards drag a convict's skeletal corpse from his now vacant cell --

Papi looks to the blank idiot face of his neighbor on the right...then turns and looks to his neighbor on the left. An older guy who gives him a toothless smile...

OLD GUY  
How do I look?

Papi considers, then:

PAPILLON  
You look great.

**INT. SOLITARY CELL - DAY**

Papi is pacing when he hears the Sweeper outside his door -- he stops, his expectant eyes go to the wicket -- it opens...the Sweeper starts to push the bucket inside when --

FAT GUARD (O.S.)  
Hold on -- need to check that --

Papi's eyes go wide as the bucket is yanked back out...the sound of the Fat Guard dumping it out on the floor...the Skinny Guard's footsteps as he walks up on them --

SKINNY GUARD (O.S.)  
(yelling down the hall)  
Get the Warden!

FAT GUARD (O.S.)  
(to the Sweeper)  
Who put you up to this --

SWEEPER (O.S.)  
I don't know his name, we never met  
-- I just took the money --

CRACK -- Papi listens, face racked with tension -- as the two guards start mercilessly beating the now screaming Sweeper --

SKINNY GUARD (O.S.)  
Don't lie to us --

The sound of the Sweeper hitting the ground -- the guards stomping him -- bones cracking...the screaming stops. The sound of more guards rushing down the corridor --

SKINNY GUARD (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 (to the Fat Guard)  
 Shit, I think you killed him --

Papi's eyes swell with horror as he clocks the Sweeper's blood flowing under the door. He steps back, grabs his mug, brandishing it -- ready to fight.

Papi's hazy POV as the door is unlocked with a CLANG -- it swings open -- revealing Barrot, flanked by six armed guards.

PAPILLON  
 Just try something you shitheads!

WARDEN BARROT  
 Calm down. I just want to talk.

PAPILLON  
 I'm not allowed to talk.

WARDEN BARROT  
 For the next few minutes you may speak freely.

PAPILLON  
 Whose word do I have?

WARDEN BARROT  
 Mine.

PAPILLON  
 What the fuck is that worth?

Barrot doesn't answer, calmly looks Papi over...

WARDEN BARROT  
 No wonder you haven't broken. How long has this been going on?  
 (re: the dead sweeper)  
 I'm quite sure this simpleton wasn't working alone -- who put him up to it?

Papi stares blankly...shakes his head...

PAPILLON  
 I don't know what you're talking about. I eat the same shit as everyone else.

Barrot gives Papi a pitying look...

WARDEN BARROT

Well, until you fess up you'll be  
eating a lot less shit than  
everybody else...and in darkness.

One of the guards quietly shuts the door. Papi hears a  
dragging sound coming from above. He looks up, sees the  
guards covering his barred roof with plywood...

PAPILLON

You're going to miss half the show  
if you do that --

Papi watches the striped light on the floor get smaller and  
smaller until there's only darkness...

**INT. CLERK'S OFFICE - DAY**

Dega sits at a little desk piled with ledgers and official  
documents, looking clean, rested and healthy. He dips his  
pen in an ink well, working on something -- closer -- we see  
it's a note to Papi: *Only one more year* --

He hears someone at the door, quickly covers the note with a  
ledger book as Warden Barrot's wife walks in --

WARDEN BARROT'S WIFE

Clerk, I need fifty francs. My  
vocal coach is refusing to accept  
any more credit.

DEGA

I'm afraid you've exhausted your  
budget for the month, Mademoiselle.

WARDEN BARROT'S WIFE

You'll find more -- that's what you  
do, isn't it? There's always  
plenty of extra for my husband's  
rum.

DEGA

Yes, Mademoiselle.

Dega starts flipping through ledger books, searching for  
nonexistent money. Barrot walks in with the Deputy Warden  
looking preoccupied.

WARDEN BARROT

Do whatever it takes to break him.  
I want that name.

A disturbance in Dega's expression as his heart skips a beat.



DEPUTY WARDEN

We'll keep him on starvation rations and complete darkness until he confesses. It won't be long -- he'll either break or die.

WARDEN BARROT

Whoever's helping him needs to suffer -- publicly -- so they can all take a lesson from it.

DEPUTY WARDEN

We'll tie the culprit to a tree for a couple days -- let the jungle do the work for us.

The Warden's wife starts conversing with the Warden and the Deputy Warden -- no one's looking at Dega. He quickly crumples the note he was about to write and swallows it --

**INT. SOLITARY CELL - DAY**

His eyes buzzing with hunger, Papi absently fingers a loose tooth while he listens to the sound of two guards opening the neighboring cell. Papi starts to pull the tooth from his gums -- his expression remaining blank -- even as he hears his neighbor's corpse being dragged away...

Papi looks at the tooth in his hand, then after a moment he starts scratching something into the wall with it...

He's etching his name into the filth stained concrete. By the time he gets to the last letter his tooth has been ground down to a shapeless nub...

**INT. SOLITARY ROW - DAY**

Papi's wicket is slid open. Warden Barrot and two guards stand waiting for his head to emerge. It doesn't.

The Warden peers through the wicket, sees Papi, looking completely emaciated now, lost in delirium -- lying on the floor in the fetal position, humming "The Merry Widow" -- the same tune he hummed while cracking the safe in the open.

With his name etched above him on the wall -- it looks almost as if Papi's lying beneath a headstone of his own creation.

WARDEN BARROT

You're dying, Charriere.

Barrot sets a bowl of soup on the open wicket...

WARDEN BARROT (CONT'D)  
 There's meat in it. It's all  
 yours. Just give me a name first.

**INT. SOLITARY CELL - CONTINUOUS**

Papi looks oblivious to the warden's voice -- continues humming as if he's not there. After a moment his wicket snaps shut -- the sound of the warden's footsteps receding...

Close on Papi's face -- all sense of resistance seems to have drained from his visage. He looks like a man who's waiting to die, his dulled eyes staring off to some far off place...

**A SERIES OF SHOTS -- INSIDE PAPI'S MIND:**

Close on PAPI'S MOTHER'S face -- her features unfocused as she starts playing "The Merry Widow" on the piano --

His mother's visage starts to sharpen -- eyes come to life. Angle widens as a giggling FIVE YEAR OLD PAPI steps up on a stool behind her and covers her eyes with his hands...Papi's mother plays blind without losing a beat...

Young Papi's POV as he pedals an old mechanical horse through the idyllic country house -- "The Merry Widow" continuing as he passes through beams of sunlight -- rides out the door into a lush garden, a POINTER DOG following after him --

PAPI, AN ADULT NOW, WEARING A NAVY UNIFORM, riding a bicycle down a crowded street -- a pretty girl sitting on the handle bars -- there's no sound; only a ticking clock as he speeds towards the vertiginous Montmartre stairs...

He stops the bike just in time, notices something overhead. He gets off the bike, looks up at a ten story apartment building -- sees HIMSELF and TWO ACCOMPLICES lugging a safe to the edge of the roof. They let it drop, hoping the fall will break it open -- IT COMES FALLING DOWN ON PAPI'S HEAD --

BLACKNESS -- a flashlight clicks on, Papi -- face blackened with dirt -- has just burrowed into a large safe by tunneling through the floor. He starts grabbing at the money when --

The door to the safe suddenly swings open. Papi peers out from inside the safe at HIS MOTHER'S BEDROOM -- sees her lying in bed, her face pale, his father sitting beside her...

His father turns to look at him...walks over to the safe --

PAPILLON'S FATHER  
*You could have been anything...*

Papi's father shuts the safe -- BLACKNESS...

Papi hears Nennete laughing in the darkness -- some faint light starts to illuminate her -- they're making love now; his starved senses drinking in every curve of her body...

UNTIL THE ANGLE WIDENS TO REVEAL THEY'RE IN HIS SOLITARY CELL. Someone is staring down at them -- IT'S HIM -- but he looks starved, wearing prison clothes. This other Papi starts pushing a board over the bars, the space going dark --

PAPILLON

*Wait -- I'm innocent --*

Other Papillon shakes his head...

OTHER PAPILLON

*You blew it.*

DARKNESS. Then blasting sunlight -- he's being pushed down on to a guillotine now. He lies there waiting, can see the shadow of the blade -- while he waits for it to descend he HEARS ONLY THE SOUND OF OCEAN WAVES. He looks up to see he's surrounded by kneeling convicts, arms crossed over their chests -- among them: Julot, Lariot, Carora --

PAPILLON

*I blew it.*

The shadow of the blade as it starts to drop --

BACK TO:

**INT. SOLITARY CELL - DAY**

Papi opens his eyes -- his features sunken, skin caked with blackened filth...

He looks up, notices something...the door to his cell is open. Two guards are standing there, their mouths are moving, but the sound is muffled...fading up now:

FAT GUARD

You hear me? Your two years are up.

Papi looks up at the Guard -- from his expression it's not clear if he understands. The Two Guards approach him -- he scurries across the floor on his hands and knees, ducks under the wooden cot --

PAPILLON

No -- no --

They grab his ankles and drag him out --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

NO!

**EXT. COURTYARD - ILE SAINT-JOSEPH - DAY**

Papi's POV as the two guards have to practically carry him out of the cell block into the open air -- a surreal wash of light as Papi collapses, clutching his hands over his eyes...

**EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

Dega walks up on a sun bleached building with a faded red cross painted on it. He hears something, pauses -- looks over to see a new crop of prisoners have been herded into the courtyard. He hears Barrot giving his familiar speech:

BARROT (O.S.)

*I know that many of you are  
thinking of escape --*

**INT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

Fly specked glue traps hang from the ceiling, a squeaky fan is going. Dega walks into a dilapidated space, walls lined with hospital beds occupied with sick or injured convicts.

He spots Papillon, who's lying awake in bed, staring blankly out a nearby window with big iron bars on the outside...

DEGA

Papi...

Dega rushes to Papi's bedside -- tears of joy running down his face as he throws his arms around him... But then after a moment, Dega pulls away, looking increasingly disturbed as he peers into Papi's staring, unreactive expression...

DEGA (CONT'D)

Papi, it's me...

Dega trails off -- gut punched by the sight Papi's empty stare. He hears someone coming -- looks up to see an Arab Turn Key named ABDA sitting down in a chair positioned well within earshot. Abda stares at Dega suspiciously...

DEGA (CONT'D)

Good afternoon.

Dega pulls some cigarettes from his pocket, puts one in Papi's mouth, lights it --

DEGA (CONT'D)

There we are.

The cigarette dangles from Papi's unresponsive mouth --

DEGA (CONT'D)

So, as you might have guessed, my appeal has run into some -- uh problems...

(beat)

But I've tried to make good use of my time. I'm working as the Warden's clerk now. It affords me a lot of freedoms. I can mail letters -- uncensored. Perhaps you'd like to write to someone...

Papi doesn't answer...he's not smoking the cigarette. Dega takes it from his mouth, stubs it out -- puts the butt back in the pack -- which he places under Papi's blanket.

DEGA (CONT'D)

For later then.

And then Papi starts to hum "The Merry Widow" ever so faintly. Dega sits there watching him, disturbed by Papi's vacant repose...

#### **INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

A closed door as someone unlocks it from the other side. The door opens. Abda enters the darkened space, closes the door.

He walks from sleeping con to sleeping con -- lifting the covers off the very sick, shaking them to see if they've expired in their sleep -- when he notices something...

Papi is sitting up in his bed -- his back to Abda -- still staring out that barred window...

Abda walks into the path of Papi's fixed, hundred yard stare -- meets Papi's eyes as if to test their vacancy...but Papi's stare doesn't waver. Abda clocks several mosquitoes sucking on Papi -- Papi's making no effort to swat them...

Now convinced Papi is catatonic, Abda walks off -- Papi remains like a statue... After a moment a *squeaking sound* starts emanating from across the room...

Angle widens to reveal the source of the squeaking; Abda is now sitting on the edge of a convict's bed -- his hand under the con's blanket...the bed shaking. The convict -- who is now trying to push Abda away -- is eighteen years old, girlish features -- this is MATURETTE.

After a moment, Abda gets up from the bed with a smile as Maturette spits at him. Abda starts for the exit as --

A mosquito lands on Papi's neck -- he remains still as it gorges on his blood, Abda unlocking the door to leave now...

Abda exits. And as soon as he does Papi suddenly comes to life and smacks the mosquito --

Close on Papi's eyes -- *they're not vacant at all; there's purpose hidden there -- a strengthening resolve. He's studying something...*

Papi's POV -- we reveal the window affords him a view of the hospital's courtyard...two guards patrolling the security wall...at the moment the far wall appears to be unguarded --

Papi's eyes go wide as he contemplates this chink in the armor... Then he hears Maturette's bed squeaking again, turns to see Maturette rising from his bed, heading for the toilets. The squeaking draws Papi's eyes to a loose bed leg on Maturette's bed...

#### **INT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

Dega feeds Papi some gruel, spooning it into his mouth while Papi stares into space -- Abda within earshot.

DEGA

What would you do without me to  
feed you all the time?

Papi doesn't answer. Dega dabs Papi's chin with a napkin -- wipes away some dripping gruel --

DEGA (CONT'D)

I took the liberty of mentioning  
your case to my attorney. He wrote  
back saying after examining the  
evidence, he believes he might be  
able to get your case retried --  
thinks he can secure your freedom  
in as little time as three years.

Dega waits for a reaction...but Papi's expression doesn't change. Abda walks out of earshot to go quietly harass Maturette.

As soon as he does Papi suddenly comes to life, grabs Dega's hand before he can shovel in another spoonful of gruel and whispers:

PAPILLON

*Louis. I'm still here.*

Dega smiles, joy and relief swelling in his eyes. Papi returns Dega's smile, then after a moment...

DEGA

I thought you'd gone simple on me.

PAPILLON

Me too.

DEGA

You know you would have had a much easier time if you had just given them my name.

PAPILLON

It's not like I didn't think about it... But then I remembered how god damn delicate you are.

DEGA

I fear under similar circumstances I would have fared differently.

Papi smiles...

PAPILLON

I missed you, Louis.

DEGA

Yes, I missed you as well.

PAPILLON

Do we still have a deal?

After a moment Dega nods --

DEGA

Until you're free.

PAPILLON

You don't have to say that -- you don't owe me a god damn thing.

DEGA

I disagree.

PAPILLON

I need you to get me a watch.

DEGA

Why in God's name would you want one of those?

PAPILLON

I've been watching the guards in the courtyard. For a few minutes after they change shifts, the wall by the river is left unguarded.

DEGA

You'll never make it out of the building.

PAPILLON

I have an idea for how I can steal the Arab's keys -- if I can time it just right -- think I can make it over that wall...

DEGA

There are armed guards stationed at the hospital entrance day and night.

Papi gives Dega a look. Dega shakes his head --

DEGA (CONT'D)

They can't be bought -- a successful cavale would mean their jobs.

PAPILLON

What about the lights in the courtyard? Can you pay someone to trip the switch on the transformer?

DEGA

I don't know.

PAPILLON

It's gotta be soon -- they're going to transfer me back to the work camps in a few days.

DEGA

It's five years in seclusion if you're caught escaping a second time. I can try and secure your transfer to the asylum -- as I said, my lawyer --



PAPILLON

Louis, listen to me -- I've wasted too much time already. I'd rather die than waste anymore. I'm leaving this place -- and so are you. We can't wait any longer.

DEGA

I made it this long.

PAPILLON

Yeah... Because they own you now.

Dega takes that in -- a little stung by it -- but part of him seems to know it's true...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Your lawyer isn't going to save you. The only way you're ever getting out of here, is if you come with me.

DEGA

Every man who has attempted a cavale in the last two years has failed -- and every one of those men was stronger than I am.

PAPILLON

Doesn't matter. You're already dead if you stay here. At least out there you have a chance.

Dega shakes his head wearily...

DEGA

You know the gamblers fallacy? The maturity of chances? It's the belief that if something happens more frequently than normal for a time, then it will happen less frequently in the future.

PAPILLON

Right.

DEGA

Wrong. There is no fairness in life. Or death.

PAPILLON

Maybe not, but you can't quit.

DEGA

I quit two years ago.

(beat)

I'll get you whatever you need --  
but I can't come with you.

They sit in silence, then:

PAPILLON

Clousiot still here?

Dega nods --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

See if you can get him sent to the  
infirmary --

Papi sees Abda is on the move and returns to his faux  
catatonic state. Racked with emotion now, Dega stands up and  
walks out --

**INT. TOILETS - HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

Papi's POV as he walks into the toilets -- sees Maturette  
leaning over a sink, towel draped over his head, yellowish  
smoke trickling out. Papi taps him on the shoulder --

PAPILLON

Hey --

Maturette spins around, pulls the towel off his head. Papi  
holds his hands up --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Just want to talk.

Papi sees Maturette is burning sulfur on the edge of the  
sink, trying to trap the noxious smoke inside the towel --  
it's making his skin appear jaundiced --

MATURETTE

Go away. The doctor's evaluating  
me in the morning -- be damned if  
he's going to approve me for work.

Maturette starts to put the towel back on his head until he  
sees Papi isn't going anywhere -- he sighs, turns --

MATURETTE (CONT'D)

You can't afford me.

PAPILLON

I don't want that.

MATURETTE

Yeah, none of you want that --  
until you do.

Papi checks to see if anybody's coming -- nobody is -- he  
turns and pins a hard stare on Maturette --

PAPILLON

If you repeat one word of what I'm  
about to say, you're a dead man.

Maturette's visage hardens...

MATURETTE

I don't want to know then.

PAPILLON

You want to make five hundred  
francs?

MATURETTE

I'd do you for less than that.

PAPILLON

The Arab. In a few days, I want  
you to take him in here at a  
certain time -- keep him busy.

MATURETTE

I don't need a pimp.

PAPILLON

Five hundred francs.

MATURETTE

Forget it. He's a diseased pig.

PAPILLON

A thousand then.

MATURETTE

You making a break?

A convict enters --

PAPILLON

Toilets are closed.

The convict doesn't need to be told twice -- exits. Papi  
turns back to Maturette and answers his question:

MATURETTE

I want to go with you.

PAPILLON  
That's not what I'm offering.

MATURETTE  
You think I can't handle myself.

PAPILLON  
I don't know anything about you.

MATURETTE  
You were framed for murder, right?

After a moment Papi nods.

MATURETTE (CONT'D)  
Well nobody framed me.

Papi considers...

**INT. X-RAY ROOM - HOSPITAL - DAY**

Papi's POV -- x-rays hanging on the wall...several show little metal cylinders lodged inside men's large intestines.

JESUS, 45 -- a liberated con turned X-ray tech walks in -- sees Papi sitting on the x-ray table. Jesus has a drooping eye and a scarred face as dry as smoked fish.

JESUS  
Lay back --

Papi lays back, Jesus swings the X ray machine over Papi -- slides the film into a slot beneath him --

Jesus leans over Papi to adjust the x-ray arm, whispers:

JESUS (CONT'D)  
Louis Dega sent me -- told me what you need. I can moor my boat directly outside the hospital wall -- ferry you to a sailboat waiting down river.

PAPILLON  
We'll arrive a little after nine o'clock on Sunday night. Don't be late. There will be three of us.

After a moment Jesus nods. Papi stares into his eyes -- obviously doesn't trust him.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Did Dega give you my specifications  
for the sail boat?

Jesus nods.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Want it loaded up with supplies --  
drinking water, a compass -- we're  
going to be at sea for at least a  
week.

JESUS

It's all taken care of. Dega said  
he gave you the money. I need it  
in advance.

Papi pulls out some bills, tears them in half --

PAPILLON

You'll get the other half when you  
drop us at the boat --

The DOCTOR walks in -- Jesus quickly pockets the money --

JESUS

He's ready, Doctor --

The Doctor nods, starts making adjustments to the x-ray  
machine. Jesus exits. Papi breathes out, thoughts flashing  
behind his eyes...

**INT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

Papi lies in bed, turns to see the doctor covering a man's  
dead, ashen face with a blanket --

DOCTOR

They always seem to die when it's  
low tide. A mystery of nature.

Papi turns to see Clousiot feeling his way through the ward;  
he appears to be blind, his eyes shut and full of puss --

CLOUSIOT

Papi? Papi, where are you, mec?

Papi sees Abda is now out of earshot; helping roll the dead  
man out of the ward --

PAPILLON

(whispering)  
Over here --

Clousiot smiles, finds his way to Papi's bed -- sits down on the edge of it.

CLOUSIOT

So good to see you, mec --

PAPILLON

See me? What the hell did you do to your eyes? What use are you going to be if you're blind?

CLOUSIOT

It's OK, I just rubbed some castor oil grains in -- let'em get infected. A little warm water and they'll be fine.

Maturette walks up on the two men --

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)

Who's that? Smells like a girl.

MATURETTE

Thank you.

PAPILLON

(to Clousiot)

This is Maturette. He's going to be our third.

MATURETTE

I made arrangements with the turn key.

PAPILLON

Then we're set.

(to Clousiot)

I timed it all out. The night shift comes on a little before nine -- they start their rounds on the other side of the courtyard. The wall by the river is left unguarded for almost four minutes before any of them make it over there. At nine o'clock, a turnkey Dega paid off is going to cut the power to the lights. It should help give us some cover when we're getting over that wall.

CLOUSIOT

What about the guards at the door?

(re: Maturette)

This mec doesn't sound too strong.

(MORE)

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)

I mean I can probably take them  
down myself -- but still I'm a  
little worried...

Papi motions to one of the iron legs on his bed -- toes it --  
looks like he's loosened it --

PAPILLON

We'll have weapons.  
(re: bed legs)  
Takes some doing -- but they come  
off.

MATURETTE

Smart. But all it'll take is one  
guard's whistle...

PAPILLON

No one will hear it...

**EXT. COURTYARD - HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

A stage has been set up in the middle of the courtyard --  
guards and their families milling around as Warden Barrot's  
wife performs an aria, accompanied by a small orchestra. Her  
voice is like nails on a chalkboard, and though no one in  
attendance is about to make mention of that fact, their  
expressions say it all.

Dega sits near the Warden -- who's downing rum. Dega keeps  
glancing nervously at the hospital across the courtyard...

DEGA

She has an exquisite voice. It's a  
shame the patients in the hospital  
can't hear it. Do you think they  
can turn up the PA system?

The Warden nods drunkenly, motions to an attendant --

WARDEN BARROT

Turn it up.

Dega smiles, proud of himself -- chances another glance at  
the hospital...

**INT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS**

Papi lies awake in bed -- hears the music outside getting  
louder. He's gripping a pocket watch that Dega smuggled in:  
it's five minutes to nine. He's looking anxious -- staring  
at the door expectantly, crawling out of his skin --

He hears someone unlocking the door, motions to Clousiot and Maturette who are lying in their beds across the way. The three of them feign sleep as Abda enters...

Papi's POV as he peeks through half closed eyes -- watching as Abda sits down on the edge of Maturette's bed and starts groping him. Maturette whispers in Abda's ear...then gets up, and leads him into the toilets...

Papi and Clousiot slip out of their beds, drop down to the floor and start unscrewing one of their bed's iron legs...

Clousiot loses his grip while he's removing the leg, the unsupported corner of the bed falls with a BANG!

Both men freeze...a few sick cons wake up -- Papi glares at them, they say nothing... Papi and Clousiot remains still for another beat...nothing -- thanks to the music in the courtyard, no one heard...

Papi starts to wrap the bed leg with a sheet --

CLOUSIOT  
Why you doing that?

PAPILLON  
We don't want to kill'em.

Clousiot makes a face. Papi grabs him, glaring --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
I don't give a shit how you did things in Toulouse -- *nobody dies*. You understand?

CLOUSIOT  
OK OK --

Clousiot starts wrapping his bed leg with a sheet --

#### **INT. TOILETS - HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS**

Papi and Clousiot move silently into the toilets, brandishing their wrapped iron bed legs. They both freeze...

Abda is standing with his back to them, Maturette on his knees, unbuckling Abda's pants...

Papi rushes up behind Abda -- CRACKS him across the back of the head with the bed leg. Abda goes limp, collapses on top of Maturette -- Maturette pushes him off -- kicking him --



MATURETTE  
Fucking asshole --

PAPILLON  
Keep your voice down --

Papi pulls Maturette back, squats down beside Abda -- yanks the key ring from his his belt --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Help me get his clothes off --

**INT. HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER**

Wearing Abda's clothes now, Papi walks to the door, key in hand -- looks back at Maturette and Clousiot, who are brandishing the two bed legs...

Papi inserts the key -- turns it...click --

Papi's POV as he slowly opens the door, sees three guards sitting at a table playing blackjack. One looks up as --

Papi shoves the card table -- pins two of the guards against the wall with it -- the third reaching for his carbine when --

CRACK -- Clousiot knocks him to the floor with the bed leg -- the other two guards push the table off -- Maturette beats the second unconscious with his bed leg while Papi slams the last guard's head into the wall -- drops him to the floor --

Clousiot and Maturette start undressing two of the guards, rushing to get into their uniforms. Papi checks his watch: it's one minute past nine --

PAPILLON  
Hurry up -- we gotta go.

CLOUSIOT  
Papi --

PAPILLON  
What?

Clousiot pulls a big ring of keys off a guard's belt -- holds it up to Papi...

CLOUSIOT  
Which key?

Papi's face drops. There's about a hundred keys on the ring.

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Dega keeps shooting anxious glances at the prison wall by the hospital. He looks over at the Warden --

DEGA

Do you need your drink refilled,  
Warden?

The Warden nods. Dega starts for the bar --

**INT. DOOR - HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS**

Papi tries key after key, Clousiot and Maturette watching on, panic wrenching their sweating faces...

**EXT. PRISON ELECTRIC STATION - CONTINUOUS**

A locked cage enclosing a vine covered electrical station outside the prison wall. Someone unlocks the cage -- angle widens to reveal it's Sierra the turn key.

Sierra slips inside, checks his watch -- looks up at the transformers -- he's going to have to climb part of the support structure to reach them.

He hears voices -- ducks down behind the electrical equipment. He sees two guards sneaking a smoke break, bitching about Mrs. Barrot's singing --

GUARD

(re: Mrs. Barrot's voice)  
Rather stick a bayonet in my ear  
than listen to this shit.

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

An orderly who's manning the make-shift bar hands Dega some rum on the rocks. Dega shakes his head -- points at something --

DEGA

It's for the Warden.

The Orderly hands Dega the whole bottle of rum. Dega starts back towards the stage, sneaks a pull off the rum -- peers up at the lights shining down into the courtyard, then checks his watch -- from his expression we gather Sierra is late --

Dega turns and looks at the hospital's side entrance -- sees a jalopy supply truck rolling up -- it stops a few feet from the entrance...

**INT. DOOR - HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS**

Papi inserts a key -- CLICK -- he breathes out, looks to Maturette and Clousiot -- nods, then starts opening the heavy iron door...stops, sees the lights in the courtyard are on --

PAPILLON

Shit -- the lights are still on.

Papi then turns to see that supply truck is idling a few feet away -- a CONVICT unloading crates of medical supplies -- two guards armed with machine guns in the flatbed, monitoring...

Papi closes the door. Clousiot and Maturette give him a *what the hell are we going to do now* look. A knock --

CONVICT (O.S.)

You got supplies out here --

PAPILLON

Just a minute --

Papi motions for Clousiot -- who's now wearing a guard's uniform -- to go to the door.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Open it --

Clousiot nods -- opens the door, avoiding the eyes of watching guards as the convict carries the crates inside, sets them down inside the door...

The convict's POV -- as he clocks the three undressed guards passed out on the floor, Papi and Maturette standing there. Papi looks the convict in the eyes, puts his finger to his lips...then presses some bills into his hand --

After a moment, the convict hides the bills in his pants, says nothing -- turns and heads back to the supply truck...

Papi rushes up to Clousiot, watches as the truck putters off towards the next building. He looks back at the watch, it's now five minutes past midnight. Clousiot and Maturette can tell by his expression that they've missed their window -- they look at him, terrified -- he steadies them with his gaze; unflagging confidence in his eyes...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
We're going.

CLOUSIOT  
What about the lights?

PAPILLON  
We can't wait any longer. We can  
still make it. Walk, don't run --

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Dega watches his friends silently emerging from the entrance.

GUARD (O.S.)  
What are you doing over here?

Dega turns around -- sees a guard walking towards him...

While across the way Papi -- in the turn key's clothes,  
Clousiot and Maturette dressed as guards -- are now walking  
briskly towards the wall...

**EXT. PRISON ELECTRIC STATION - CONTINUOUS**

Sierra watches as those two guards finally finish their  
smokes. As they move on past he peers up at the transformer  
he needs to shut down. He starts climbing the rickety  
support structure --

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Back to Dega, the guard is upon him now -- Dega holds up the  
bottle of rum --

DEGA  
Trying to procure the Warden  
another drink. Probably not a good  
time to detain me.

The guard grunts, about to go about his business when he  
hears a sound...turns to see Papi hoisting Maturette and  
Clousiot up the wall --

GUARD  
Son of a bitch --

Dega watches in horror as the guard aims his rifle --

The Guard's POV -- Papi, at the wall -- reaching up for Clousiot's outstretched hand -- his head drifting into the cross hairs, when SMASH -- Dega breaks the bottle of rum over the Guard's head -- knocks him out --

Shocked by his own actions, Dega looks across the way at the wall...*shit, they're already gone...*

**EXT. PRISON ELECTRIC STATION - CONTINUOUS**

Sierra has now climbed a ways up the support structure -- the switch still a few inches out of reach. He climbs higher, slips -- catches himself. He reaches up, stretching his fingers, finally makes contact -- flips the switch --

**EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS**

THE LIGHTS ILLUMINATING THE COURTYARD SUDDENLY WINK OUT -- Dega is plunged into darkness -- the sound of the guard lying by his feet starting to come to...

Dega takes a step towards the wall, then stops -- can't make up his mind -- the guard sitting up now --

Dega starts running through the darkness to the wall, HE TRIPS -- hears the guard BLOWING HIS WHISTLE. Dega gets up, sprints -- stops short at the wall --

Dega peers up...the wall is too high to climb. Panic floods his expression as BANG -- the guard starts shooting -- Dega ducks down, bullets pounding the wall when --

PAPILLON (O.S.)

Over here!

Dega turns to see Papi kneeling on top of the wall a few feet away, reaching his hand down -- Dega rushes over, grabs Papi's outstretched hand. Papi yanks Dega up as bullets riddle the wall --

Papi's POV -- as he leads the way, running along the top of the wall -- Dega, Maturette and Clousiot right behind him. Papi is searching in vain for a low point where they can safely jump -- there isn't one -- he keeps moving -- hears a sound -- an approaching engine, turns to see --

The supply truck speeding up alongside the wall, THE TWO GUARDS IN THE FLATBED FIRING MACHINE GUNS --

Papi grabs Dega, keeps him from running into machine gun fire -- Dega loses his footing, falls -- TAKES PAPI WITH HIM -- THUD -- THUD -- *they've fallen back into the yard* --

Papi's POV -- stunned, looks up at the high wall -- then he turns to see THE JALOPY TRUCK BARRELING TOWARDS HIM -- ABOUT TO SANDWICH HIM AND DEGA BETWEEN THE TRUCK AND THE WALL --

Papi scrambles, pushes Dega out of the way -- SMASH -- the truck accordions against the wall -- the guards are hurled from the flatbed --

Papi thinks fast -- hops up on to the crashed truck's flatbed -- motions for Dega to follow -- from there he's able to climb back on top of the wall -- pulls Dega up as one of the guards picks up his gun and OPENS FIRE --

BULLETS BLAST CONCRETE -- just missing Papi and Dega as they sprint along the top of the wall -- they catch up to Clousiot and Maturette who have just stopped short...

The wall takes a sharp corner here, starts heading away from the river. *They have to jump.* Papi considers the long drop into uncertain darkness -- HEARS ALARMS STARTING TO SOUND -- he motions to the others to follow and jumps --

**EXT. SECURITY WALL - HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

Papi's POV as he smashes down through dense foliage, then lands hard on the muddy river bank. He hears the others crashing down around him --

Papi stands up, dazed from the fall -- it's so dark -- no moon -- he hears Dega moaning -- the slurping sound of the river -- guards yelling on the other side of the wall...

DEGA (O.S.)  
I hurt my ankle --

Papi follows the sound of Dega's voice, sees him lying in a rocky area -- gripping his ankle --

CLOUSIOT (O.S.)  
Papi --

Papi turns to see Maturette helping Clousiot to his feet across the way --

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)  
Where's the boat?

Papi tries to get Dega to his feet, Dega winces --

DEGA  
I think I sprained it.

Papi sets Dega back down -- turns and peers helplessly out at the darkened river...

PAPILLON

Shit.

He turns back and faces his three companions -- horror twisting their expressions...

Then a sound, Papi turns -- sees Jesus sitting in a little row boat -- he just lit a match -- holds it just long enough for Papi to fix his position, then drops it in the river --

Jesus brings the boat in closer to shore...

JESUS

I thought there were only going to be three of you.

Papi wades to the boat, climbs inside --

PAPILLON

There's four now.

JESUS

I can't carry four.

PAPILLON

(threatening)

Yes, you can.

Before Jesus can argue Clousiot and Maturette dump Dega into the boat, then almost capsize it climbing in themselves --

JESUS

Watch it you fools --

Jesus hands Clousiot and Papi paddles -- the three of them start rowing. Papi turns, sees the wall receding in the distance. He breathes out -- smiles madly...

#### **EXT. RIVER - SUNRISE**

Rain drizzles down, heavy fog wafting past -- Papi and Clousiot struggle to row while simultaneously smacking swarming mosquitos. Everyone looks completely exhausted. Maturette is nervously eyeing something in the water -- Dega leans over to see what it is...clocks gators cruising past. Dega struggles to move further inside the boat as --

Jesus steers them under some mangroves, slimy foliage hiding them as they bump the muddied shore --

JESUS

Your boat.

Jesus motions to a rope tied to a tree -- Papi looks, sees it leads to small sail boat camouflaged with banana leaves.

JESUS (CONT'D)

You're about twelve miles from the mouth of the river. Wait for night to depart; the manhunters will be looking for you.

Papi pulls out the other halves of the bills he gave Jesus -- Jesus grabs them out of Papi's hand. Papi, Clousiot and Maturette get Dega out of the boat --

Papi turns in time to see Jesus floating away -- he gives Papi a wave --

JESUS (CONT'D)

Enjoy your freedom.

**EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY**

Soaking wet from the rain, Papi, Clousiot and Maturette set Dega down -- prop him up against a tree. His face is white, sweat pouring as Maturette inspects his leg...

DEGA

Ow ow -- don't touch it -- I think it's broken.

MATURETTE

I think you're right.

PAPILLON

Broken!? That's not what you said before!

DEGA

Because you would have left me.

PAPILLON

You're damn right I would have.

Papi crouches down, looks at Dega's leg --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

It's probably not even broken --

Papi tries to move Dega's leg -- Dega screams out in pain. Papi stands up, struggling to contain his anger...



PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
 (to Maturette and  
 Clousiot)  
 Find some branches we can make a  
 splint with.

Papi trudges through the mud to where the boat is hidden...

He begins removing the banana leaves that cover it -- reaches into the sail boat, rifles through a supply box, pulls out a jug of water, uncaps it, smells it, scowls --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
 Water's spoiled.

He pulls out a compass...shakes his head --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
 Compass is shit --

Papi tosses the compass over his shoulder, steps into the boat -- CRACK -- his foot goes right through. It takes him a moment to register what just happened -- pulls his foot out, the boat filling with water --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
 That son of a bitch. Son of a  
 bitch! The god damn boat's rotten!

Dega, Clousiot and Maturette react with weary disappointment. Then Clousiot looks at Maturette, motions to Dega -- Dega notices...

DEGA  
 Yes, this means you're going to  
 have to carry me --

Papi isn't listening to them; peering out at the river, dread wrinkling his expression while --

CLOUSIOT  
 I gotta bad back, mec --

DEGA  
 If you were hurt -- I'd carry you --  
 no question.

Clousiot and Maturette look dubious...

DEGA (CONT'D)  
 I would! I've done brave things --

Papi shooshes them. They go quiet. Papi looks back out at the river...the slurping water, hissing insects... Maturette steps towards Papi, peers into the wafting fog...

MATURETTE

There's no one --

BANG -- a bullet pierces Maturette's throat. He spins around -- choking on his own blood -- collapses, dead --

Papi sees a small boat emerging from the fog -- IT'S THE THREE MANHUNTERS WHO CAUGHT PAPI THE LAST TIME --

They start leaping from their boat, racking rifles as Papi and Clousiot start trying to pull Dega up. Papi looks over, sees the Manhunters have them in their sights --

WHITE MANHUNTER

Go ahead -- try it. You're easier to carry dead.

The white manhunter -- whose name is HAUTIN -- walks up on Maturette's body, draws his machete -- and in a quick motion THWACK, lops off his head --

HAUTIN

We get paid the same either way.

Hautin picks up Maturette's head by the hair -- drops it into a sack. Papi, Clousiot and Dega watching on, their faces masks of numbed horror...

**EXT. MUDDY TRAIL - DAY**

Papi and Clousiot struggle to carry Dega as the Manhunters lead them through the jungle at gunpoint...

Hautin keeps looking at Papi -- recognizes him...

HAUTIN

Didn't we pick you up a couple years ago?

Papi says nothing.

HAUTIN (CONT'D)

Thank god for stupid men.

The Manhunters share a chuckle, then:

PAPILLON

How much you get paid to sell out your own kind?

Hautin scoffs --

HAUTIN

Not enough. You think it gets  
better when you're out? At least  
inside they feed and clothe --

Hautin stops, holds up his hand for the others to halt --  
Papi sees what Hautin is looking at -- a large bird hanging  
upside down in some kind of snare. Hautin pokes it with his  
rifle and it SCREECHES --

HAUTIN (CONT'D)

Looks like somebody left us dinner.

Hautin reaches for the swinging, screeching bird when --  
WHACK -- HIS ARM IS HACKED OFF AT THE ELBOW --

Now Hautin is SCREECHING, backing away from a thickset man  
with a bloody machete in one hand and a double barreled  
shotgun in the other. Tattooed on the man's face is a big  
blue cockroach. This is the MASKED BRETON.

The other two Manhunters raise their weapons -- BOOM -- the  
Breton blasts the Chinese manhunter. Papi grabs the black  
manhunter, wrestles his rifle away, knocks him to the ground.

The downed manhunter starts drawing a pistol holstered on his  
leg when BOOM -- the Breton blasts him with the shotgun --

Hautin takes off running into the swamp. The Masked Breton  
ignores him at first, pets the snared bird for a moment, then  
turns, pumps his shotgun and -- BOOM -- blasts Hautin in the  
back. Hautin belly flops into the swamp --

The Breton turns his attention back to Papi, Clousiot and  
Dega -- Papi tightens his grip on his rifle -- not sure  
what's coming next --

MASKED BRETON

You the ones who broke out last  
night? Heard there was four of  
you.

None of them answers...

MASKED BRETON (CONT'D)

Which one of you is Papillon?

Papi considers whether or not to answer when --

DEGA

I am. I'm Papillon.

Papi gives Dega a "what the hell are you doing" stare. The Breton fixes his eyes on Dega...Dega starts to squirm, transfixed by the Breton's tattooed face...

The Breton ignores Dega's claim and steps closer to Papi -- Clousiot and Dega tensing -- as the Breton wipes his bloody machete on his pants -- sheathes it -- holds out his hand --

MASKED BRETON

They call me the Masked Breton.

Papi looks into the Breton's eyes -- sees no apparent sign of deception...shakes his hand. The Masked Breton pulls out a sack, then sets to work removing the Hoccos from the snare.

MASKED BRETON (CONT'D)

This isn't some common rooster -- this is a hoccos. You can make a lot more trapping hoccos than men. Sell them to villagers to protect their chicken coops. Kills rats, snakes, spiders. Never runs away.

The Masked Breton shoves the squirming bird into a sack --

MASKED BRETON (CONT'D)

You have any money left -- or did you give it all to Jesus?

PAPILLON

You know that piece of shit?

MASKED BRETON

He keeps the manhunters well fed. You have any money or not?

Papi considers whether or not to answer when --

MASKED BRETON (CONT'D)

You know what -- fuck it -- I'll do it for nothing.

PAPILLON

Do what?

MASKED BRETON

Take you up river to Pigeon Island. The good news is I know some mecs there who have a boat they'll probably be willing to sell to you. That is if you have enough money.

Clousiot and Dega look at Papi, their eyes seem to be saying, ok, let's trust this guy...

**EXT. MARONI RIVER - NIGHT**

Papi, Dega and Clousiot ride in the Breton's boat, everyone paddling but Dega, as it glides down the winding river. Dega can't help but stare at the Breton's tattooed face...

MASKED BRETON

Something you want to ask me, mec?

DEGA

Pardon me, Mister Breton, but yes. You had mentioned the good news regarding this island. Is there any bad?

MASKED BRETON

Pigeon Island is a leper colony for convicts -- two hundred murdering thieves with rotting flesh. If they like you, they'll sell you a boat. If they don't, they'll kill you and take your money -- or worse -- infect you with their disease. Orderlies from the prison hospital drop supplies there once a week, but no guards ever go there.

DEGA

Seems like a smart a policy.

MASKED BRETON

Ha, life's a bitch, huh. One minute you're drinking with a fine lady -- then boom -- you wake up in the fucking jungle with a cockroach on your forehead...

DEGA

I hope you don't think me rude for asking this, but your face -- may I inquire why you...

MASKED BRETON

So mecs think I'm crazy -- don't fuck with me.

DEGA

Ah...a clever disguise.

MASKED BRETON

I can't go back to France. But I want to see you bastards succeed.

Papi, Dega and Clousiot are looking increasingly anxious --

**EXT. SHORELINE - PIGEON ISLAND - NIGHT**

Papi and Clousiot lay Dega down on the muddy shore as the Masked Breton starts pushing off in his boat --

PAPILLON

Thank you. I'll give France your regards.

The Breton smiles at Papillon's confidence...

MASKED BRETON

Fuck France.

Papi nods, seems to concur. The three of them watch the Masked Breton paddle off into the darkness...

Papi turns from the water...can make out some fire light flickering in the distance --

Papi hears Dega GASP -- looks over to see a skittish looking dog has just emerged from the brush...

DEGA

Do dogs carry leprosy?

Papi sighs. The dog starts BARKING at them -- Papi turns to see figures moving in front of that distant firelight now -- alerted by the barking. Dega and Clousiot are looking increasingly terrified...

PAPILLON

Stay here. I'll go make contact.

CLOUSIOT

You do that.

Papi moves into the brush, heading for the flickering light -- the dog following after, almost herding him --

**EXT. LEPER VILLAGE - PIGEON ISLAND - MOMENTS LATER**

Papi steps into a clearing. He sees a few straw huts across the way -- starts towards them *when he notices something burning in a trench* -- black smoke wafting up into the night.

Then he clocks a wooden cross -- all these tattered prisoner identification papers nailed to it...he walks up on the trench -- sees blackened bones inside. *They burn their dead.* Papi covers his mouth as black smoke wafts in his face...

He continues on, a clothesline blocking his path now -- all these stained clothes hanging, blowing in the wind. Papi carefully ducks under the clothes, terrified of contagion --

LEPER WOMAN (O.S.)

Who's there?

He turns to see a young woman washing clothes in a bucket. The dog rushes past him, goes to the woman and noses her. She peers around, but can't find Papi in the darkness...

Papi lights a cigarette to announce himself. The woman starts to turn -- presenting a beautiful profile. Papi starts slowly walking up on her...

LEPER WOMAN (CONT'D)

Approach gently, friend.

She turns some more -- *revealing half of her face has been eaten away*. Papi steadies himself, holds her stare...

LEPER WOMAN (CONT'D)

You here to rob us? You think we're too well off?

PAPILLON

I'm a friend of the Masked Breton. He told me you have a boat to sell.

She considers him for a moment...takes a step closer, detecting the disturbance in his eyes...

LEPER WOMAN

Do you want to fuck me?

Papi doesn't move, holds her stare...

PAPILLON

If I could cure you first...I'd love nothing more.

She frowns, looks him over for a moment, then motions for him to follow as she starts for the largest hut in the clearing.

#### **INT. HUT - PIGEON ISLAND - CONTINUOUS**

Papi's POV as the leper woman shows him into a darkened hut -- she doesn't follow him inside. The only light is a little oil lamp sitting on a table -- six shadowy figures stand just beyond the light's reach at the back of the hut...

VOICE

Have a seat.

Papi sits down at the illuminated table. They can see him, but he can't see them.

PAPILLON

I mean no disrespect. But when I negotiate with someone, I like to look them in the eye.

Then one of the men steps forward, sits down at the table across from Papillon.

TOUSSAINT

If you can -- please do...

Papi manages to swallow his shock as he takes in the sight of TOUSSAINT, 40 -- no eyelid on his left eye -- nose completely eaten away; just a silver dollar-sized hole in the middle of his face. He holds a fat cigar with the two fingers remaining on his bandaged hand.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)

I used to look a lot like you. Though I was a good deal handsomer. Look at what this disease has accomplished in just five years. Amazing isn't it? The strength with which it overcomes the body -- its dedication to death. I've really come to respect this affliction.

PAPILLON

I've more respect for the men who have the strength to live with it.

Toussaint smiles dubiously.

TOUSSAINT

Are you thirsty?

One of the men standing in the shadows comes forward, sets down a glass and a bottle of rum. Toussaint pours the rum --

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)

This is good rum -- I only bring it out when we have guests...so there's no shortage of it.

Papi watches as Toussaint picks up the glass, drains it with a long slow sip. Toussaint sets the glass down on the table -- pours some more -- slides it over to Papi...

Papi keeps his poker face on as he looks down at the glass...sees the rim has been smudged by Toussaint's lips...



Papi looks up at Toussaint, who's staring at him, waiting...

After a moment Papi picks up the glass, holds it up in salute -- downs it -- forces a smile...then:

PAPILLON

Mind if I have another? I've had a long journey.

Toussaint exchanges looks of amusement with the others -- then refills the glass --

TOUSSAINT

How did you know that I have dry leprosy -- that the glass isn't contagious?

PAPILLON

I didn't. But why would you offer it to me, unless that was the case?

Toussaint considers that answer for a moment, smiles...

TOUSSAINT

A man who knows how to trust in others, is himself a trustworthy man.

Papi nods, holds up the glass in salute, then drains it --

**EXT. BOTTOM OF RIVER - MORNING - HEAVY RAIN**

Papi dives under the water as rain pelts the surface -- Clousiot right behind him -- both beelining for...

A submerged SAIL BOAT sitting on the bottom of the river -- a solid looking sixteen-footer. The lepers have weighed it down with stones to keep it hidden...

Papi and Clousot start removing the stones and as they do the boat, slowly begins to rise to the surface --

**EXT. BANKS - PIGEON ISLAND - MORNING - HEAVY RAIN**

Rain pours down -- Papi and Clousiot carry Dega, wading out into the water, start loading him into their new sail boat --

DEGA

How much did you say?

PAPILLON

Four thousand --

DEGA

Three would have been more than  
fair --

PAPILLON

We've got plenty more. We're not  
going to haggle like a bunch of  
Armenians.

Annoyed, Papi purposely drops Dega a little too roughly into  
the boat. He then wades back to shore, where Toussaint  
stands waiting with a dozen or so others...

Toussaint motions to some trees lining the river. Papi sees  
there are men stationed in the branches, keeping a look out --

TOUSSAINT

If we spot any police boats -- I'll  
do what I can to detain them.

Papi hands Toussaint the four thousand francs --

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)

Will you have any left after this?

Papi considers for a brief moment -- his expression opaque...

PAPILLON

No. It's all we have -- exactly  
four thousand francs belonging to  
my friend.

Toussaint takes that in... nods, the others start whispering  
to one another. Toussaint motions to some crates that are  
stacked on the quay --

TOUSSAINT

Those supplies were just dropped  
off by the administration -- no one  
has touched them. Take as much as  
you can carry, with my blessing.

From Papi's expression we gather he's now highly conflicted --  
ashamed -- perhaps thinking of telling Toussaint the truth  
when Toussaint gives him a knowing smile --

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)

We don't need them -- usually sell  
them -- blow the money on leper  
whores or card games.

PAPILLON

I don't know how to thank you.

TOUSSAINT

Your cavale is ours.

(beat)

Now get moving -- you need to hurry if you want to make it to the mouth of the river before the current changes. Don't stop until you get to Curacao -- any place south of that will extradite you back to France.

Papi nods, loads one of the supply crates into the boat -- then pushes off and climbs inside --

Papillon, Clousiot and Dega set off down the river in the pouring rain. Papi looks back at the Toussaint and co. watching them go...

**EXT. NEW BOAT - MARONI RIVER - DAY**

Dega sits at the bow, manning the tiller while Papi and Clousiot adjust the sails. Dega peers nervously at the white caps awaiting them in the estuary and the ocean's endless horizon looming beyond...

PAPILLON

(to Clousiot)

Keep the nose pointing into the wind!

Clousiot struggles with the headsail -- Papi pushes him out of the way and does it himself --

Papi's POV -- as he keeps eyeing the French bank, the walls of the penitentiary --

DEGA

They're going to spot us.

PAPILLON

And they'll catch us too if you keep veering starboard --

The sea starts getting increasingly choppy as they enter the estuary -- the boat wobbling --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Both of you -- on the floor -- lay flat -- it'll stabilize the boat.

Clousiot and Dega do as they're told -- the boat starts to stabilize -- then BANG BANG -- shots are being fired from the French bank, bullets whizzing overhead --

Papi ducks down, grabs the tiller -- steering blind while bullets splinter the mast --

Lying on their stomachs, hands covering their heads -- the men exchange doomed glances as the hail of bullets continues.

And then, the gunshots begin to dissipate, getting quieter -- until finally there's only the roar of the ocean --

Papi straightens up -- can see the lighthouse that towers over the penitentiary starting to fade into the distance...

He turns, looks out at the vast, raging ocean waiting to swallow them up. Dega and Clousiot pop their heads up --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Hold the jibs tight --

The ocean lifts the boat up into the shimmering sunlight, then down into the waves' shadowed canyons --

Clousiot rushes to tie off one of the sails -- struggling to get the knot right -- Papi glares at him --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
You told me you were in the navy?!

CLOUSIOT  
Did I say that? I think you heard me wrong --

Papi angrily grabs the rope away -- ties the knot himself --

PAPILLON  
I ought to throw you over --

CLOUSIOT  
Come on, Papi --

Papi is rushing around the little boat like a madman -- desperately trying to keep it level --

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)  
What are you so upset about -- we made it! Hurrah! Hurrah!

Clousiot slaps Dega on the shoulder --

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)  
We made it!

Dega smiles tentatively, looking around at the immense ocean.

DEGA

Have we?

Clousiot digs into the crate of supplies, pulls out a bottle wrapped in brown paper -- unwraps it -- it's rum --

CLOUSIOT

Let's drink to our victory.

Papi angrily grabs the bottle away from Clousiot, gives him a hard look -- then as the vast open space begins to relax him, he chuckles, uncaps the rum, holds the bottle up to the sun --

PAPILLON

To Julot, Lariot, Maturette and all those poor bastards still in the bagné!

Papi takes a long slug -- then hands it back to Clousiot, who holds the bottle up --

CLOUSIOT

To Papillon!

Clousiot takes a slug, then hands it to Dega. Dega shakes his head, screws the cap back on the rum --

DEGA

I don't like rum.

(to Papi)

So, *Captain* -- how does one sail to Curacao?

PAPILLON

We keep land in sight, head north -- we'll get there.

DEGA

God willing.

CLOUSIOT

He's willing. We should thank him for watching over us.

PAPILLON

Thank him for what? I did all the work.

Clousiot grabs the bottle back from Dega -- Papi grabs it from Clousiot before he can take another swig, shoves it back into the supply box --

## PAPILLON (CONT'D)

I told you to keep ahold of those jibs.

**ANOTHER DAY**

The sun burns bright and hot in the afternoon sky...

Dripping with sweat, his shirt wrapped around his head, Papi leans over the edge of the boat, looks down into the opal blue water -- calm, smooth as glass...

Clousiot rolls a cigarette while humming to himself -- Dega wipes his glasses, watching as Papi opens a bag of rice, grabs a hand full -- then begins sifting it into the water --

Without taking his eyes off the water, Papi reaches in back of him -- his fingers find the machete -- he lifts it up, still eying the water as little fish begin nipping the rice --

THWACK -- Papi hacks at the fish -- then grabs them and throws them in the boat --

**ANOTHER DAY**

Papi, Clousiot and Dega -- all three slumped over, sleeping, their skin now lobster red -- lips cracked -- THUMP -- something hits the boat...

THUMP -- Papi's eyes open, he sits up -- getting his bearings when THUMP -- sees something in the water following alongside the boat --

Papi shoves Dega and Clousiot awake -- motions to the sea where several dolphins are following alongside the boat --

The three men watch as Dolphins charge their boat, then dive under, bursting forth on the other side --

DEGA

What are they so happy about?

CLOUSIOT

They're stupid animals.

PAPILLON

They think the same of us...

Papi sees big drops of rain starting to pelt the sea -- the dolphins start to veer away from the boat...

Papi's POV as he turns and sees an ugly black mass surging over the horizon...

Papi shakes his head, starts gathering up some loose rope -- starts tying Dega to the boat --

DEGA

What are you doing?

Papi motions to the coming storm -- Dega turns and sees what's coming -- his face drops...

Clousiot snaps to it -- works with Papi to roll the sails. The sun begins to disappear behind the rolling black, waves exploding with spray -- distant thunder rumbling --

### **MOMENTS LATER**

THEY'RE IN THE THICK OF A FULL ON HURRICANE NOW -- rain falling in blinding torrents -- Papi and Clousiot scramble to bail out water, rising beyond their ankles -- Dega white knuckles the tiller, SCREAMING --

### **NIGHT**

Silence. Stars shimmer in the night sky. The boat is half flooded -- their main mast splintered. Clousiot is bailing out the hull with a mug, Papi fixes up Dega's now ragged splint -- Dega gritting his teeth, eyes tearing...

DEGA

Will I lose it?

PAPILLON

There's still time. Hopefully the storm didn't take us too far out -- and when the sun comes up, we'll still be able to see land.

DEGA

And if we can't?

Papi doesn't answer, exchanges a look with Clousiot, then sits back, looks up at the sky...

PAPILLON

Why did you tell the Masked Breton you were me?

DEGA

I thought he meant to kill you -- I was trying my hand at bravery.

PAPILLON

Next time you're going to do that,  
warn me first.

DEGA

I was feeling desperate to prove my  
worth. After Maturette...

PAPILLON

I'm the one who decided to let him  
come along...

Dega and Clousiot see the guilt creasing Papi's expression...

CLOUSIOT

At least he died free.

Papi takes that in...

PAPILLON

All these guys dying, and nobody's  
ever going to know about it.

CLOUSIOT

You think they would care?

Papi shrugs, peers into the black horizon, considering...

DEGA

So what are your plans, gentlemen --  
now that we're liberated.

(to Clousiot)

I suppose you plan to terrorize the  
people of Curacao.

Clousiot shakes his head, looks down --

DEGA (CONT'D)

(to Papillon)

It would appear our friend's been  
rehabilitated.

CLOUSIOT

I guess I lied to you, mecs.

PAPILLON

We know -- you weren't in the Navy.

CLOUSIOT

Well that too -- yes...

(beat)

I wasn't sentenced for murder. I'm  
a relegate.

(MORE)



CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)  
 Never killed anybody in my life.  
 Just didn't want mecs thinking I  
 was weak...

PAPILLON  
 So what did you do?

Clousiot doesn't answer at first, looks embarrassed, then:

CLOUSIOT  
 Stole a bicycle. It was my third  
 offense, so... Twenty years.

Papi and Dega take that in, dumbfounded...

CLOUSIOT (CONT'D)  
 But I ain't fucking rehabilitated.  
 I'd do it again.

Clousiot chuckles -- Papi and Dega can't help but smile...

DEGA  
 (to Papi)  
 And you? Do you plan to return to  
 safe cracking?

Papi shakes his head --

PAPILLON  
 Think I'll find some other way to  
 get by. I want my papa to be able  
 to hold his head up for once. Not  
 going to write him until I can say  
 I'm a free man working a steady  
 job.  
 (beat)  
 I spent that two years in solitary  
 thinking back on things -- watching  
 the movie of my life. I didn't  
 really want to watch it, but what  
 the hell else was I going to do...  
 I'd be lying if I said I didn't  
 want to get the bastards who sent  
 me here, but I tell ya -- my family  
 -- living in the country... It was  
 an honest life. If I get the  
 chance, I want to live that way  
 again.

DEGA  
 Ah. That would not work for me I'm  
 afraid. My father used to beat me  
 worse than Santini...

Papi and Clousiot register some surprise...

DEGA (CONT'D)

I'm more encouraged by my present situation. My two new friends. And what a strange place to have found them...

PAPILLON

What about your wife?

DEGA

It's been almost a year since she last wrote. Of course there's only so much one can say...

CLOUSIOT

There will be plenty of women in Curacao.

(to Papi)

Did you have a girl in Montmarte?

PAPILLON

Yeah -- a real sweetheart. But I think she's better off without me...

DEGA

I'm a little worried how Clara will take to the fugitive lifestyle...

Papi looks like there's something he wants to say, but then, as he takes in the fragile hope in Dega's expression, he decides against it...

PAPILLON

She'll take to it just fine, Louis. Chicks love an adventure.

Dega nods vaguely. They go quiet.

We see the boat from a distance...

**EXT. UNKNOWN COAST - DAWN**

Papi's POV -- as he looks around at the horizon...no sign of land; nothing but water in every direction...

Papi mans the tiller, sunburned and exhausted -- keeps dipping a rag in the water, pressing it to his face --

Dega stares into the water, licking his cracked lips while Clousiot digs into the supply box -- finding nothing --

CLOUSIOT

Christ, I thought we had more --  
I'm so God damn --

PAPILLON

What did I tell you -- nobody's to  
say "I'm hungry." Nobody's to say,  
"I'm thirsty." And nobody's to  
say, "I wish I had a smoke."

Papi trails off -- sees Clousiot staring at something: a sea  
gull has landed on the gunwale beside Dega --

Clousiot reaches for the machete -- starts to creep towards  
the bird, awakening Dega from his sun stroked trance -- Dega  
instinctively swats at the gull -- it flies off --

CLOUSIOT

Should chop off a piece of you to  
make up for the meal you just cost  
us --

DEGA

Have you forgotten who's  
underwriting your liberation --

Papi raises his hand up --

PAPILLON

Quiet --

Papi's POV as he turns around, squinting into the distance --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

The gull had to come from some  
place...

Papi spots a faint black line on the horizon...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

There. Land. You see it?

DEGA

Curacao?

PAPILLON

I don't know.

DEGA

Well my leg can't wait any longer.

Papi squints into the distance, clocks sunlight reflecting  
off of distant boats cruising the shoreline...

PAPILLON

I don't think we should head in yet. Looks like a lot of boats. We can't afford to be seen.

DEGA

I can smell the gangrene -- I'm rotting -- I'm literally rotting!

PAPILLON

Saving your leg isn't going to be worth much if you're dead.

CLOUSIOT

Papi -- please. I need water.

Papi shakes his head, breathes out -- sees Dega and Clousiot's expectant glares getting increasingly insistent...

**EXT. JUNGLE COAST LINE - NIGHT**

Papi's POV as they begin skirting the coast -- the sea is rough, wind gusting -- lots of lights dotting the shoreline --

They hear a distant voice echoing -- someone speaking through a megaphone, BARKING INAUDIBLE DEMANDS --

They see a police boat shining a spotlight on the shoreline, appears to be searching for an escaped convict of their own.

PAPILLON

Shit.

CLOUSIOT

They can't be looking for us --

DEGA

We should turn around anyway --

PAPILLON

We turn around, they're going to notice --

DEGA

I thought the Curacaoans were friendly --

They see another police boat creeping up behind them. Papi clocks the flag the boat's flying -- his face drops...

PAPILLON

These aren't Curacaoans. We overshot -- they're Colombian.

The police boat's spotlight comes on -- Papi, Dega and Clousiot squint into its blinding glare as someone speaks through a megaphone. Note: italics indicate Spanish:

VOICE OVER MEGAPHONE

*Drop anchor and have your papers ready. We need to search your vessel.*

DEGA

What's he saying?

PAPILLON

Who cares --

Papi repositions the sail -- scrambling to evade as the police boat starts speeding towards them --

VOICE OVER MEGAPHONE

*Stop!*

Papi's POV -- as he looks back over his shoulder -- the police boat giving chase -- GUNSHOTS START RINGING OUT. A BULLET SLAMS INTO PAPI'S SHOULDER -- HE TOPPLES BACKWARDS OFF THE SIDE OF THE BOAT -- SPLASH --

**EXT. OCEAN - CONTINUOUS**

Papi's POV -- underwater spinning in the blackness, the moon rippling as he paddles to the surface --

Papi surfaces -- gasps for air -- looking around, trying to get his bearings. He sees the stern of his boat -- now about ten feet away --

CLOUSIOT (O.S.)

Where the hell is he --

DEGA (O.S.)

Papillon!

Papi sees the Colombian police boat motoring up alongside his friends. Papi keeps quiet, treading water -- conflicted -- touches his hand to his wounded shoulder, sees blood --

He spins himself around in the water, scanning -- spots the shoreline -- it's about fifty yards away...

Papi grits his teeth against the pain, starts silently swimming for shore -- he looks back over his shoulder, sees Dega and Clousiot being brought aboard the police boat.

**EXT. BEACH - COLOMBIAN COAST - NIGHT**

There's conflict in Papi's eyes as he stumbles on to the shore, gripping his wound, peering out at his friends...when he hears someone emerging from the brush --

Papi spins around, sees a Colombian policeman approaching, aiming a pistol at his head. Papi freezes, nowhere to go --

COLOMBIAN POLICEMAN  
(yelling to his comrades)  
*Over here --*

Suddenly someone runs up behind the policeman and headbutts him in the back of the head --

The policeman, dazed now, turns to fire on his attacker when Papi thinks fast and tackles the policeman --

Papi wrestles the gun away from the policeman, then pistol whips him unconscious. Papi then scrambles to his feet and takes in his wild-eyed eyed savior: a panting Colombian man whose hands are shackled behind his back -- looks to have escaped from custody. This is ANTONIO, 35.

Antonio starts frantically trying in vain to remove the hand cuff keys from the policeman's belt, but can't manage it with his hands behind his back -- then:

ANTONIO  
*If you get these off me, I can help you.*

Papi gets what he's proposing despite the language barrier -- the police boat's spotlight about to illuminate them as --

Papi yanks the handcuff keys off the unconscious policeman's belt. He unlocks Antonio's handcuffs just as the spotlight illuminates them --

Papi and Antonio sprint into the jungle -- the sound of police dogs barking, racing up the beach after them --

**EXT. COLOMBIAN JUNGLE - NIGHT**

Papi's POV as he struggles to keep up with Antonio -- who's now running in little leaps -- bounding through the jungle while his arms swing wildly -- a sort of skipping run which allows him to maintain a blistering pace --

**EXT. COCA FIELD - MORNING**

Papi stumbles across the wide expanse of a coca field -- watching as the unflagging Antonio gets further and further away. Papi stops, grabs his knees -- sucking air --

He checks behind him -- can hear the distant barking of the police dogs getting louder -- still hasn't lost them. Then he turns to see Antonio rushing to pick some coca leaves...

Antonio presents Papi with a handful of leaves -- then puts one in his own mouth to demonstrate; chews it -- gives Papi a smile, motions for him to do the same...

Papi pops a leaf into his mouth, chews it, doesn't look sure about the taste, but then as he grinds it between his teeth, a smile grows -- *he's suddenly infused with energy.*

Antonio then shows Papi how to do the skipping leap. Papi watches -- tries it himself. He's not bad.

Antonio starts running again and now Papi is keeping pace -- looks to actually be enjoying the exertion --

Papi is doing the skipping leap now -- his eyes wide and wild -- he lets out a laugh as they race across the vast field --

**EXT. JUNGLE/MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY**

Papi reaches into his pocket -- holds the two leaves he has left in his palm -- pops one into his mouth. Angle widens as he starts moving -- he's following Antonio up a narrow path now, trudging slowly uphill -- the chorus of animal sounds getting increasingly menacing...

Papi's POV as he starts noticing ominous fetishes dangling from the branches -- fashioned from animal and human bones. Antonio stops, crosses himself -- motions to the fetishes --

ANTONIO

*Death awaits us here. We should go around.*

Papi considers as Antonio keeps insistently pointing in the opposite direction. Papi shakes his head --

PAPILLON

*No, we should keep going this way -- maybe they'll be afraid to follow us.*

Antonio gives Papi a pitying look -- then slaps him on the shoulder --

ANTONIO  
*Good bye, my friend --*

Papi stands there for a moment, watching as Antonio heads off in the other direction -- disappearing into the jungle...

Alone now, Papi looks like he's not sure he made the right decision. He continues down the seemingly haunted trail -- now getting narrower, darker -- his eyes darting when --

Papi hears a dog barking in the near distance -- Antonio screaming -- *sounds like the dog is mauling him. Then a single gunshot...*

Papi takes off running -- he veers off of the trail -- charges into the bush, smashing through the greenery -- until he suddenly loses his footing, stuck in something now --

He looks down, HE'S SINKING IN QUICKSAND. He hears something running towards him, but he can't get free --

A police dog explodes from the jungle -- barking in Papi's face as three Colombian policeman emerge behind it. The policemen watch as Papi continues to sink into the quicksand; doesn't look like they have any plans to help him.

Papi claws at branches -- ripping plants from the earth, trying to find something that will hold -- the amused policemen watching on, then --

The policemen's expressions change -- one of them puts his hand to the back of his neck -- looks at his fingers, blood. Another looks down at his leg, there's a dart sticking out of it -- more darts silently shooting through the air --

A dart hits Papi in the shoulder, another sticks in his neck.

Papi watches as one of the policemen passes out from the dart's toxin -- falls face first into the quicksand. The other two collapse soon after -- the dog too...

Papi starts to lose consciousness, submerged to his shoulders now -- the sand swallowing him up...

Papi's distorted POV -- he looks up to see three GUJIRO INDIAN WARRIORS approaching with blow guns -- naked but for loin cloths, faces smeared with chalky white.

They lower their blow guns and peer down at him. They seem to be marveling at the butterfly tattoo on his chest WHEN EVERYTHING GOES BLACK...



**INT. LALI'S HUT - DAY**

Papi's hazy POV as he wakes up -- he's lying on the sodden floor of a small hut made of brick red earth, staring up at the palm leaf ceiling, something fluttering around up there --

We're reminded of the vampire bats flying around the barrack's ceiling...then as Papi's vision focuses, we see these are not bats, but BLUE MORPHUS BUTTERFLIES...

Papi hears soft voices conferring in whispers. He turns his head, sees two Gujiro Indian girls kneeling on either side of him. Both are naked and beautiful, braided hair down to their hips. This is LALI and her younger sister ZORAIMA. Papi looks like he's died and gone to heaven.

The sisters are cleaning the bullet wound on his shoulder, dabbing it with sea weed --

Lali leans in, her face almost touching Papi's -- gives him a little bite on the corner of his mouth --

Zoraima caresses her finger over Papi's tattoos, making its way down his stomach towards his crotch -- when a tall man enters the hut and peers down at Papi curiously...

Only five teeth remain in the imposing man's sunken mouth. This is the SORCERER. Lali and Zoraima make possessive gestures towards Papi. Note: italics denote Gujiro dialect:

LALI

*He is ours -- a gift from the  
jungle.*

Papi's POV -- he notices the butterfly is among the symbols ornamenting the Sorcerer's scant clothing, looks to have spiritual significance to them. The Sorcerer leans in to inspect Papi's tattoo, admiring it --

The Sorcerer starts pantomiming something to Papi, pointing at Papi's tattoo -- then at himself. Papi nods along, agreeing, though to what he's not exactly sure. He forces a smile as the Sorcerer's face lights up with excitement --

**INT. SORCERER'S HUT - GUIJIRO VILLAGE - NIGHT**

A twirling mirror hanging from a string -- Papi's hand gently stops it, holds it still, we see his face reflected -- all anxious concentration --

Papi puts a coca leaf in his mouth, chewing as he angles the mirror so it reflects his butterfly tattoo, referencing it...

Papi pricks the Sorcerer's chest with three needles he's tied together, affixed to the end of a stick -- while constantly referencing the mirror. He's a good two thirds of the way done with the tattoo -- but the quality of the work is obscured by a mess of blood and blue India ink --

Angle widens -- the Sorcerer is lying still as a statue, ramrod straight on the table, a cigar in his mouth -- smokes it from the embers side -- his eyes boring into Papi...

Angle widens to reveal the hut is packed with increasingly impatient observers, Lali and Zoraima among them -- as are warriors with bow and arrows, as well as some sawed off shotguns, ready to dispatch Papi should he fuck this up.

Papi's hand slips -- his hand freezes -- strained eyes going wide as he rushes to correct his mistake --

One of the warriors leans in to take a closer look, senses Papi screwed something up --

PAPILLON

Give me some room here, will ya --

The Sorcerer motions for the warriors to back up... Papi sets down his stick-pin tool, starts dabbing at the Sorcerer's chest with a cloth -- picks up a razor -- deepens some of the lines -- dabs it again, sets down the razor...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Alright. You can look now.

The Sorcerer sits up. Papi angles the mirror so the Sorcerer can inspect the tattoo on his chest. It's almost identical to Papi's -- only the colors are much more brilliant --

The Sorcerer stares into the mirror, evaluating Papi's work while Papi crawls out of his skin waiting for a verdict...

The Warriors draw back their bows, one of them racks his shotgun -- Lali and Zoraima look worried --

Then suddenly the Sorcerer breaks out in a wide smile -- hugs Papi tight -- the whole place breaks into celebration -- as the Sorcerer excitedly walks around showing off the tattoo.

Papi looks like he's ready to pass out. The Sorcerer grabs him, puts a leather pouch in his hand --

SORCERER

*For you. For good work.*

Papi accepts the pouch -- the Sorcerer motions for Papi to open it. He does -- sees two dozen pearls inside --

PAPILLON  
No, this is too much.

The Sorcerer's expression darkens --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
Thank you. It's very generous --

Lali and Zoraima wrap their arms around him -- pressing their bodies up against him...

**INT. LALI'S HUT - GUIJIRO VILLAGE - DAY**

Papi lies naked in the hammock with Lali and Zoraima -- they're sleeping, he's awake, thinking -- an anxiousness building in his expression...

He starts trying to climb out of the hammock without waking the girls -- but it's swinging and tipping --

The girls wake up -- see him trying to escape -- they put their hands on him, ease him back down --

They both get up, he watches them -- the sun coming in through the windows framing their bodies as they slip on their loin cloths -- hypnotizing him --

Lali makes an eating gesture -- then gives him a questioning look. Papi smiles, nods.

PAPILLON  
Yeah, I'm starving -- thank you.

They nod, eager to please -- exit to get him some food...

Papi gets up, gets his pants on --

**EXT. LALI'S HUT - GUIJIRO VILLAGE - DAY**

Papi emerges from the hut -- surprised to see the Sorcerer standing there waiting for him, flanked by two warriors...

Papi tenses -- gives the Sorcerer a respectful nod...

The Sorcerer motions around at the village, then at Papi; seems to be asking Papi if he means to stay...

Papi considers...from his expression we gather the idea of remaining here is one that appeals to his soul, yet...

PAPILLON

You're very kind. But I can't stay.

The Sorcerer cocks his head, doesn't understand. Papi squats down -- starts drawing in the dirt with his finger --

Stick figures pointing accusingly -- another stick figure being driven away --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

They exiled me from my home -- from France.

Then he draws a crude Eiffel Tower in the dirt --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

This place is paradise. But I need to build something I can call my own...

The Sorcerer nods, seems to understand. He gestures towards Lali and Zoraima's hut --

SORCERER

*You should go now -- before Lali and Zoraima return. They will kill you before they let you leave them.*

Papi nods, holds his hand up in farewell. The Sorcerer and his warriors respond with their own farewell gesture; hiding their face with their left arm while extending their right...

They remain like that as Papi takes a last look at this refuge from civilization, and starts off...

#### **EXT. BRIDGE OVER RIVER - NIGHT**

A moonlit road, a now clean shaven Papi dressed in peasant clothes trudges towards us -- the sound of car engines, voices -- he stops...

Papi's POV -- he's at the foot of a two lane bridge -- there's a long line of cars stopped. Papi pauses, then after a moment he starts across, skirting cars, buses -- the sounds of livestock, radios, babies crying --

Papi's about halfway across the bridge now -- he sees something up ahead -- flashing lights -- *a police checkpoint set up at the end of the bridge...*

Papi immediately does an about face -- starts back the way he came, picking up the pace when he suddenly stops short...sees a policeman a few car lengths ahead, randomly checking cargo.

Papi looks back at the check point -- then back at the policeman, who's now rummaging through someone's trunk --

Papi considers anxiously -- steps to the guard rail -- peers over the side...the river is a good fifty feet below...

Looks like Papi's considering jumping, when he sees a police boat pass under the bridge, spotlight shining upwards --

Papi steps back moments before the spotlight illuminates him -- he turns to see that roving policeman has finished checking the car trunk -- walking straight at him now --

Papi ducks around the side of a stopped bus, drops down on his stomach, crawls underneath --

Papi's POV under the bus, the policeman's feet moving past --

Then Papi hears the bus' gears shifting, his face drops. As the bus starts to move forward Papi, grabs hold of the underside -- the heels of his feet dragging now as the bus slowly advances a few feet...then stops --

Papi lets go -- drops on his back, looks over, sees someone clad in a black robe moving past --

NUN (O.S.)

For the poor children of Santa  
Marta --

Papi considers, the bus starts to move again -- he lets it pass over him. Once it's clear he springs to his feet...sees the voice belongs to a young IRISH NUN going from car to car soliciting donations --

SPANISH NUN (O.S.)

(to the Irish Nun)  
Come on, sister --

Papi turns, clocks a wagon drawn by two horses, a young SPANISH NUN sitting beside the driver --

The Irish Nun starts for the wagon when CLANG -- she looks down, sees a pearl has been dropped inside her collection cup -- Papi standing there, imploring her with his eyes...

PAPILLON

I have no papers. I'm just trying  
to get home.

The Irish nun just stares back at him, conflicted. Papi glances over, sees an advancing policeman in someone's rearview mirror -- just moments from sighting him --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

Please -- *it's my life.*

Finally the Irish Nun motions for Papi to follow her -- he keeps his head down -- sees the policeman is now ordering a couple with two small children to get out of their car. He slams the mother down on the hood as the children scream --

The Irish nun leads him to the wagon. The Spanish Nun gives Papi the evil eye. The Irish Nun motions to her that's it's alright -- ushers Papi to the rear of the wagon --

Papi climbs inside the back, sees three little girls inside. They stare mutely at him as the wagon starts to move --

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

*Have your identity cards ready.*

Papi's POV as he peers through the flaps of canvas that cover the back of the wagon...he clocks a man being forced into the back of a police van -- another policeman walks right past his eye line -- stopping the wagon. Papi listens:

IRISH NUN (O.S.)

(to the policeman)

Do not detain us, we're transporting sick children to the convent --

Papi can see the policeman looking up at the Irish Nun -- looks like he's about to check the wagon's cargo anyway when another policeman walks over, shakes his head at him, gives him a shaming look -- motions the wagon through --

Papi peers out the back of the wagon, watching the police checkpoint recede...relief swelling in his eyes...

#### **EXT. CONVENT - NIGHT**

The horse drawn wagon pulls up in front of the convent. Papi climbs down from the carriage, helps the little girls out of the back. He sees the Irish and the Spanish Nun conferring in hushed whispers. He walks up on them, overhears:

SPANISH NUN

We have to wake mother superior --

PAPILLON

No, that's not necessary -- I'll just go. You've done enough --

IRISH NUN

It's alright. She can help you.

Papi considers -- looks up at a stone facade featuring a headless Saint -- Saint Denis -- holding his own severed head in his hands. Papi peers back at the road -- looks like he's thinking of taking off...

IRISH NUN (CONT'D)

You needn't worry. You're safe here.

Papi breathes out, fatigue creasing his expression as he looks into the Irish Nun's benevolent face...

**INT. KITCHEN - CONVENT - NIGHT**

Papi's POV -- as the Irish Nun serves him coffee and a steaming plate of meat and boiled potatoes...

PAPILLON

Thank you.

Papi starts to wolf the food down as the angle widens -- revealing MOTHER SUPERIOR sitting across the table, holding the pouch full of pearls. Despite the fact she's been woken from a dead sleep -- she regards Papi's ragged countenance with some sympathy...

MOTHER SUPERIOR

What were you convicted of in France?

PAPILLON

*Wrongly* convicted, Mother. Murder.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

And how did that happen?

PAPILLON

I brought it on myself -- living the way I did. But I swear I'm no killer.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

What are you then?

PAPILLON

I used to be a safecracker.

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
 (re: pearls)  
 Is that how you procured these?

PAPILLON  
 No. They were a gift from the  
 Guijiro Indians.

She takes that in, looks a bit dubious...

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
 I've never known savages to give  
 gifts.

PAPILLON  
 Maybe God was working through them.

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
 Are you a believer?

PAPILLON  
 I didn't use to be -- but I'm  
 starting to come around...

She gives Papi a long look...

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
 And if I were to use these to feed  
 the hungry -- what are you asking  
 for in return?

PAPILLON  
 Safe passage to Curacao.  
 (beat)  
 I just want the chance to become an  
 honest citizen. To live like other  
 men.

She considers, then after a moment:

MOTHER SUPERIOR  
 You can stay the night. But you  
 aren't to leave your room under any  
 circumstances. Come morning, I  
 will arrange transport for you.

**INT. GUEST ROOM - THE CONVENT - NIGHT**

The Irish Nun shows Papi into his room. He looks around at  
 the bed, the clean sheets, a window with a view...



IRISH NUN

We'll have breakfast for you in the morning. And I put some clean clothes on the night stand for you.

PAPILLON

Thank you.

She gives him a nod, exits. Papi walks to the window, looks out at a distant twinkling city, the harbor... He breathes out, close to tears -- finally safe...

**INT. GUEST ROOM - THE CONVENT - MORNING**

Papi's POV as he wakes up to morning sunlight shining in through the windows -- a large crucifix looming on the wall. The sound of footsteps outside -- a light knock at the door --

PAPILLON

Yes?

MOTHER SUPERIOR (O.S.)

Your breakfast is ready. Get dressed and we'll talk.

Papi gets out of bed, starts getting his clothes on --

**INT. HALLWAY - THE CONVENT - MOMENTS LATER**

Papi walks out to see the Mother Superior standing in the hallway, wearing a strange expression --

FOUR COLOMBIAN POLICEMEN suddenly grab hold of Papi -- an officer stands off to the side with his pistol drawn. Papi struggles -- they wrench his arms behind his back, slam his face into the wall -- start dragging him past the Mother Superior who's watching on, destitute of emotion --

MOTHER SUPERIOR

If you are not truly repentant -- and I suspect you are not -- you will have made amends by feeding half the poor of Santa Marta. But if you're truly sorry for what you've done, then you have nothing to fear -- God will watch over you.

The Officer motions to the four policemen -- they pin Papi up against the wall -- preparing to do something to him...

OFFICER

*Mother, you should avert your eyes.*

The Mother Superior nods, gives Papi one last cold glance, then turns her back and walks away --

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
*Give me your rifle --*

One of the policemen hands his rifle to the Officer -- he grabs Papi's face -- stares into his eyes --

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
*No more running.*

The Officer swings the rifle stock down -- CRACK -- breaks the instep of Papi's foot. Papi SCREAMS as the officer takes another swing -- CRACK -- breaks the other foot --

#### **EXT. COLOMBIAN PRISON - DAY**

An aging fortress looms over a rocky coastline -- surrounded by high barbed wire fences...

Several prisoners peer out of tiny barred windows -- Dega and Clousiot among them. Both men look like hell, but their eyes are coming alive -- can't believe what they're seeing --

Dega's POV -- staring down at Papi as he's pulled out of the back of a police van -- he collapses, feet broken, can't walk -- the guards drag him by the arms up stone stairs --

Dega and Clousiot yell down to Papi -- their eyes wide --

	DEGA		CLOUSIOT
Papi!	Papi look up here!	Papi!	

Papi looks up, catches a glimpse of Dega -- their eyes meet for a brief moment before Papi is dragged inside --

#### **INT. DUNGEON - COLOMBIAN PRISON - DAY**

Two Guards carry Papi down stone steps -- his broken feet purple and swollen. They reach the bottom of the stairs -- a dank subterranean passageway honeycombed with barred cells --

They let Papi drop -- he yells out, gripping his feet when they grab his arms and start dragging him down the narrow stone corridor. Papi peers at his fellow inmates as he goes -- most are just shapes huddled in dark corners, the sound of ocean waves audible outside the barred windows --

They arrive at an empty cell -- drop Papi inside --

## COLOMBIAN GUARD

*This is home until France comes to  
collect you.*

The door slams, Papi on the floor, wincing, sucking air, gripping his hobbled feet. He takes in his surroundings...

Sees what appear to be water lines on the walls -- sea weed, shells...his face drops as he realizes...

**EXT. COLOMBIAN PRISON - NIGHT**

Night falls, the moon is full - the tide rising closer to the prison...moving in on the basement windows...

## CONVICT (O.S.)

It's coming! It's coming!

**INT. DUNGEON - COLOMBIAN PRISON - CONTINUOUS**

Papi sits on the floor, across from the window, where sea water is starting to pour over the ledge, splashing down on the floor in time with the ocean waves...

The water starts to pool around him -- quickly rising. He looks back at that old water line on the wall, it's at least a foot over his head.

He struggles to stand up, but the pain is too much. He considers -- eyes crazed -- struggling to think as he listens to mens' screams intermingle with the roar of the ocean --

He takes off his shirt, reaches up as high as he can -- ties the arms to the bars -- uses a sailor's knot, fashioning his shirt into a harness -- the water up to his mouth now --

He grabs the bars, grits his teeth, pulls his body up, manages to sit himself in the harness -- which just manages to keep his head above water...

He looks across the way -- sees a man, gripping the bars of his cell, too weak to keep his head above water any longer, choking, hands slipping --

Then Papi hears something splashing behind him -- he turns -- a rat the size of a cat splashes past --

**MORNING**

Morning light shines through the tiny slat of a window. Papi sits on the puddled stone floor, the ocean water has left behind it an unholy slime, centipedes and tiny crabs scurrying under his feet.

He sees the man in the cell across from him is now a water logged corpse, crabs feasting on his eyes...

The cell door opens -- standing with the Colombian guard is are two French officers in white uniforms.

FRENCH OFFICER

What sort of animals would treat a Frenchman this way?

**INT. THE HOLD - TRANSPORT SHIP - DAY**

Papi stares out the porthole as they head down the calm, muddy waters of the Maroni -- the familiar sights of his escape -- but now in crushing reverse. His expression is broken, a mask of defeat -- but as we move into his eyes, we see there's still the tiniest glimmer of hope...

**EXT. COURTYARD - SOLITARY - DAY**

SUPER: *Five years later* -- a battered steel door as a guard unlocks it -- drags it open -- the hinges squealing --

Two guards stand on either side of what's left of Papillon -- helping him -- hunched and shuffling -- into the light...

Papi's POV -- blasting whiteness -- then the glare recedes a bit -- the guards staring at him...it's apparent from their expressions that Papi doesn't look good...

Close on his face -- ravaged, almost unrecognizable; some teeth missing, can barely open his eyes. He tries to speak, his voice a scratched whisper:

PAPILLON

My companions?

GUARD

One was taken out early -- and the other...

Papi hears another door being opened across the way...

Someone is being brought out on a stretcher -- recognition starts to bloom in Papi's squinting eyes -- he starts shuffling across the courtyard -- a guard motions to his cohorts to set down the stretcher for a moment...

Papi's face goes rigid with emotion --

Papi's POV -- the man's ashen, skull-like face...then as Papi gets closer we see...it's an almost unrecognizable Clousiot. His mouth is moving -- he's trying to say something -- motions for Papi to come closer...

Papi leans in closer, Clousiot's glassy stare inches away...

CLOUSIOT  
I'm free, Papi.

Papi stands there in a shocked daze as the guards pick up the stretcher and carry it off...

#### **EXT. ROCKY SHORE - DAY**

A bell sounds from a tower -- its purpose finally revealed to Papi, who's standing somberly on the shoreline with some other cons, watching...

Three guards paddle a small boat out into the surf -- a long, narrow crate rests in the bow... Angle widens to reveal shark fins following alongside it --

Papi's horrified face as he realizes...*it's a dinner bell...*

Two guards tip the crate over the edge of the boat -- another opens a trap door -- Clousiot's corpse, wrapped in white flour sacks slides from the crate into the water --

The sharks converge in a frenzy -- fighting for the choicest pieces -- Clousiot's body is hoisted into the air like some bloody marionette.

Something seems to crack in Papi's visage as he watches...

#### **INT. CABLE CAR - DAY**

Papi's POV -- staring out the dirty window of a cable car as it carries passengers over the 600 foot wide channel between Royale and the smallest and northernmost of the three Iles du Salut -- Devil's island.

Papi is flanked by two guards and the new warden -- WARDEN DUTAIN, 40s. Dutain is healthy looking, yet uncorrupted -- in other words he's relatively new to the islands.

CHIEF WARDEN DUTAIN  
 My predecessor lost his position  
 due to your cavales, so I'm not  
 taking any chances.

Papi stares out at the small island, which is more exposed to  
 the wind and the waves than the other two --

CHIEF WARDEN DUTAIN (CONT'D)  
 Devil's Island is forever. Even  
 for men with wings.

**INT. DEVIL'S ISLAND - DAY**

Papi steps off the cable car, peers out at the island -- the  
 wind blows hard -- the sound of waves smashing against rock  
 is ever present. Some little houses with tin roofs, live  
 stock, very few actual convicts -- a surreal feeling to it...

Papi hears the door of the cable car closing -- he turns to  
 see it starting back the way it came, the Warden staring out  
 at him through the dirty glass...

Papi turns back to the island. He doesn't see a single  
 guard. A con with a long white beard shambles by. A couple  
 other cons stand across the way -- staring like zombies...

Papi starts to walk, peering around in a daze -- he hears a  
 whacking sound, turns...sees someone he recognizes...

He can't believe it -- it's Dega -- looking half mad as he  
 beats a huge eel with a stick. Papi smiles -- an expression  
 that hasn't crossed his worn face in five years...

PAPILLON  
 Dega!

Dega doesn't answer -- lost in his work -- can't hear over  
 the ocean waves. He starts muttering to himself as Papi  
 makes his way over to him --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
 Dega --

Dega doesn't turn to look, keeps on, undeterred --

DEGA  
 I caught it -- it's mine.

PAPILLON  
 Dega, it's me.

Dega starts beating the eel again when Papi grabs his arm -- Dega swings around -- raises the stick at Papi -- then freezes, recognition slowly animating his sunburned face -- until finally he smiles and throws his arms around Papi --

After a moment they break off the embrace, taking in the sorry sight of each other until:

DEGA  
Are you hungry?

**INT. TIN ROOF HOUSE - DAY**

WHACK -- Papi watches Dega chop up the eel with the machete --

DEGA  
You ever had eel soup? Don't think it's poisonous. Though maybe that would be better...

Papi spots a pack of cigarettes. He picks it up -- regarding it like some curious object -- hasn't smoked in five years.

DEGA (CONT'D)  
I tried to get the warden to let you and Clousiot out early, but he didn't listen -- was very intent on you dying...

PAPILLON  
Yeah, well...I didn't.

DEGA  
I begged them to give Clousiot a proper burial...

Papi nods, his expression darkening. He lights up a cigarette, takes a deep inhale...

PAPILLON  
I guess we're the last one's left.

Dega pauses cutting the eel, glances guiltily over at his old friend -- really looks at him for the first time...Papi's broken visage, his cloudy gaze...the spark seemingly extinguished from his eyes... Disturbed now, Dega returns to his work, forces a smile --

DEGA  
Thanks to you, Barrot's wife had to turn to whoring to support them... I was her first customer.

Dega gives Papi a funny look -- they share a weak chuckle that quickly peters out into silence...

PAPILLON  
What about Clara?

DEGA  
Oh, she's doing very well. Happily married to my lawyer.

Papi gives Dega a look of condolence...

DEGA (CONT'D)  
It's much easier actually. When no one's waiting for you.

Papi considers that...both men observing the pain peeking through their respective masks...

DEGA (CONT'D)  
Have you heard about the war?

Papi shakes his head -- he hasn't heard -- but the concept is so abstract to him, it barely elicits a reaction...

DEGA (CONT'D)  
The Germans are marching through Paris.

PAPILLON  
Oh?

DEGA  
Maybe they'll take over the penitentiary. I'm sure they'll have a more humane policy regarding prisoners...

Dega trails off...looks like he has something more pressing to say, but is having trouble getting it out -- then finally:

DEGA (CONT'D)  
I know I don't deserve to be alive, when so many better men have died. But it's really *your* fault -- if you hadn't kept saving my life...

PAPILLON  
Sorry about that. But a deal's a deal.

Dega starts to break down, almost cries...



DEGA

I have no more money, Papi.

Papi takes that in, then after a moment he almost laughs --

PAPILLON

There's no one left to bribe,  
Louis.

Dega smiles. Papi breathes out...

**EXT. ROCKY SHORE ON DEVIL'S ISLAND - DUSK**

CHUNK -- Papi chops a coconut in two -- picks up one of the halves, holds it up to a baby piglet who drinks from it...

Papillon works alongside Dega, CHANG, 30s -- a Chinese pirate and a little guy named SARDINE, 20s. Papi pauses for a moment, wipes his forehead -- angle widens to reveal they're standing near the edge of a cliff where the high plateau drops off and becomes a vertical wall of jagged rock that's tirelessly attacked by the breaking waves...

CHANG

Don't even think about it. The  
ocean hates this island. See the  
way it beats on the rocks --

Papi doesn't answer, keeps watching the waves --

SARDINE

If they catch you, it's the  
guillotine now. Wartime  
sentencing.

Papi sits down on the shore, keeps eyeing those waves. Dega, Chang and Sardine start back for camp...

**EXT. ROCKY SHORE ON DEVIL'S ISLAND - NIGHT**

The moon looms large in the night sky. Papi stands on the rocky shore, tying off a sack of coconuts...

He walks to the edge of the cliff, counting under his breath as he watches the waves come in -- waits for a moment -- then drops the big sack full of coconuts...

The sack free falls through the night air, then SMACK -- lands with a splash. Papi watches as a monster wave breaks over the floating sack -- pushes it through a horse shoe-shaped rock formation, about to sling shot it back into the ocean -- *when the surf reverses and sucks it back in.*

Papi looks crestfallen, but keeps watching...

**INT. HUT - DEVIL'S ISLAND - NIGHT**

Close on Dega's sleeping face -- Papi shakes him awake.  
Papi's expression is manic -- flush with adrenaline --

PAPILLON

The waves -- they're not all the  
same, Dega!

Papi's voice wakes up Chang, sleeping across the way --

CHANG

Shut up --

Papi continues, undeterred --

PAPILLON

I counted them -- there's a  
pattern. Every seventh wave is a  
monster -- has the power to clear  
the rocks. It can be done, Dega!  
All the other cavales were too well  
planned. The one that works will  
be the stupidest. Two sacks of  
coconuts and let the wind take me  
to Curacao!

**EXT. ROCKY SHORE - DEVIL'S ISLAND - DAY**

Dega, Chang and Sardine watch on in disbelief...

Papi finishes sewing up the mouth of a big sack of coconuts --  
Chang inspects it -- fixes the stitching --

CHANG

This is madman cavale --

Dega walks to the edge of the cliff, peers down at the waves  
exploding against the jagged rock, the target area is small.

Dega turns to see Papi counting off the waves --

PAPILLON

That's six -- now, see --

The seventh wave comes in -- much bigger -- it breaks against  
the rocks, its spray reaching all they way up to their faces.

Dega pulls Papi aside, sees this strange glow in his  
expression -- crazed purpose in his eyes...

DEGA

You're going to kill yourself.

Papi gives Dega a strange smile, looks around at the sky -- the waiting ocean...

PAPILLON

I don't want to survive anymore. I want to live... We can make another raft -- you can come with me.

Dega looks like he wishes he was crazy enough to say yes --

DEGA

Goodbye, Papi.

Papi gives Dega a hearty hug -- slapping his back...

PAPILLON

Thank you, Louis...

Then he nods to Chang and Sardine, both of whom regard him like a man who is about to die...

Papi picks up his coconut sack raft, walks to the edge -- staring down at the breaking waves, counting...

The sixth wave begins to recede, the seventh beginning to swell in the distance...

Papi drops the sack...it SPLASHES DOWN right on target...

His expression euphoric, Papi takes a last look over his shoulder at Dega. Dega instinctively rushes forward as Papi leaps off the edge --

Papi's POV as he plummets towards the water's platinum glare -- SPLASH -- he rockets down into the depths --

They watch from above, Papi isn't surfacing -- all they can see is the coconut raft -- the big wave approaching --

Papi bursts to the surface -- grabs on to the floating sack, CATCHES THAT MONSTER WAVE AND SLINGSHOTS OUT TO SEA --

Papi yells out -- holds his fist up in the air -- can see Dega, Chang and Sardine staring down at him in disbelief --

Back to Dega as he watches Papi float out into the ocean -- his sad expression slowly giving way to a look of profound satisfaction. Then, as Papi recedes into the distance, Dega starts to laugh...

**EXT. OCEAN - CONTINUOUS**

From above we see Papi, a dot amidst the endless blue -- we move down on him as he peers up at the sky and yells to the heavens --

PAPILLON

You won't regret this, you son of a bitch!

CUT TO:

**EXT. LANDING STRIP - NICE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY**

Super -- **1969** -- over an aged Papi, now 62 years old, wearing an overcoat and a fedora hat -- carrying a suitcase, making his way down the passenger stairs of a DC-9 -- VENEZUELA AIRLINES --

His feet touch down on French soil for the first time in almost forty years. He looks down at his feet -- goes still for a moment -- wonder in his eyes -- other passengers shuffling past --

**EXT. BOULEVARD DE CLICHY - DAY**

Papi makes his way down the Boulevard, carrying his suitcase. He looks a little taken aback by how much the people and the various establishments lining the boulevard have changed -- the psychedelic colors, the short skirts --

Then something stops him -- he sees someone he recognizes -- starts to follow him...

*It's Dega.* Papi veers towards him -- when the man turns to face him -- it's not Dega... Papi's expression darkens, the realization sinking in as he watches the man walk off...

There are no more familiar faces. The world has been marching on, despite his absence...

**EXT. THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE DE LA SEINE - DAY**

Papi walks up on The Palais De Justice De La Seine. He stands at the entrance, sets the suitcase down...for a moment we're reminded of his revenge fantasy and wonder if this suitcase is packed with dynamite...

After a moment he picks it up, gives the courthouse one last look and walks off...

**EXT. CAFE - PARIS - DAY**

Book publisher JEAN-PIERRE CASTELNAU, 40s, sits in an outdoor cafe, sipping an espresso, the sound of a man playing an accordion across the way. Jean-Pierre sees Papi walking up on him -- stands up excitedly -- offers his hand --

JEAN-PIERRE CASTELNAU  
You must be Papillon --

Papi nods, his expression guarded as he sets his suitcase down -- shakes Jean-Pierre's hand --

JEAN-PIERRE CASTELNAU (CONT'D)  
Please sit --

Papi sits. Jean-Pierre motions to the waiter --

JEAN-PIERRE CASTELNAU (CONT'D)  
(to Papi)  
What would you like?

Papi doesn't answer, taking in his surroundings --

JEAN-PIERRE CASTELNAU (CONT'D)  
Bring him an espresso.  
(to Papi)  
I checked on the statute of limitations -- you could still be arrested -- I'm surprised you risked coming back.

PAPILLON  
I won't be here long. My home's in Venezuela now.

Papi picks up his suitcase, sets it on the table -- undoes the latches --

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
My father told me I'd give up on the idea of punishment and revenge...

Papi opens the suitcase, revealing it's full of thirteen spiral bound school notebooks.

PAPILLON (CONT'D)  
After fourteen years in the bagne, I finally agreed with him...

Jean-Pierre picks up one of the notebooks -- on its cover is the original title: THE ROAD TO RUIN...

PAPILLON (CONT'D)

My wife convinced me to write it down while I was still young enough to remember. My father was a school teacher -- so I can spell alright...

JEAN-PIERRE CASTELNAU

If these are anything like the few fragments you sent me...then perhaps *this* will be your revenge.

Papi shakes his head, his eyes flush with memories and an indomitable lust for life...

PAPILLON

Nah... It's for the one's who gave me the chance to live again.

CUT TO:

TITLES OVER BLACK: *Henri Charrier's memoir, "Papillon" was published in 1969 and became an international best seller.*

CUT TO:

THE ISLANDS OF SALVATION MODERN DAY TOURIST ATTRACTION; THE VINE COVERED RUINS THAT ONCE HOUSED SO MANY TORTURED SOULS...

*SUPER -- 80,000 prisoners were condemned to the penal colony in French Guiana between 1852-1953, most of whom would never return to France.*

**THE END**