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DEPARTMENT OF FILM PRODUCTION

Commune
A Feature-Length Screenplay

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ABSTRACT

Commune is a story of university politics, corporate monopolies, and a 'wannabe' communist revolutionary learning to live in a capitalist world. Manny Drogos is a college senior who runs a struggling socialist commune off campus. Isabella China is his tenure-less conservative economics professor looking to leave her position and climb the corporate ladder. When 50 acres of land are willed to the Berriesville College of Agriculture and Design, their priorities are pitted against each other. Manny and his 'comrades' lobby to use the land as a student-run co-op. Isabella facilitates a connection between BCAD and international farming conglomerate O'Donnell Produce in hopes of a future job offer. Their ideas are put to a school-wide vote and O'Donnell's power and resources become too much for Manny to defeat. O'Donnell moves in and takes over BCAD and the surrounding land, decimating small town farms in the process. Manny's commune dwindles to one member while Isabella learns the gruesome truth of corporate monopoly and greed. One late night, wandering with disillusionment, Manny and Isabella run into each other. They share a cigarette and, feeling vulnerable, share some truths about their experience with O'Donnell. They connect and agree to meet once again at the commune. There, Isabella tells Manny about a group of struggling local farmers who have been uprooted by O'Donnell. Manny and Isabella devise a plan to help these farmers using the commune's land. Manny is forced to make some compromises about his beliefs while Isabella must reexamine her plan for the future of her career. Manny and Isabella find common ground in learning to prioritize helping people who really need it. Commune examines the contradictions between personal ethics and individual success in a world where corporations have the final say.

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Commune

Zeke Winitzky

Made in Highland

Characters

Emmanuel (Manny) Drogos- A college senior and the leader of the commune. Focused, almost too much so. Short when angry.

Isabella Chinaea-A right-wing economics professor looking to get ahead.

River Shaw: Manny's classmate and friend. Hard-working and kind. Restarted the commune with Manny

Josh Sigel-The youngest commune member, soft-spoken and effeminate

Hayden Barlowe-Manny's good buddy. An anarchist with revolutionary dreams.

Tiffany Markel-A new commune member who puts up with no BS.

Samantha Markel-Another new commune member, Tiffany's twin, much quieter.

Shane O'Donnell-An executive for O'Donnell Produce, his family business. A rich kid with a god complex.

Robert Wyman-The University President, British and spineless.

Jenny Fiselman- Robert's thankless assistant, always at his side

Shamus O'Donnell-O'donnell's CEO, Shane's father.

FADE IN

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

A worm struggles to emerge from the dirt.

A group of COLLEGE STUDENTS undresses behind a bush, GIGGLING.

The group streaks nude across an empty field, CACKLING with laughter. Painted on their chests are big letters spelling out B-C-A-D.

They run past an old farmhouse with two big BERRIESVILLE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT flags on it.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

ETHEL SCHUMAKER (late 80s) stirs in her bed. The LAUGHTER can be heard through the window.

She shuffles over to the window holding a rosary. Upon seeing the nude coeds, she GASPS, clutches her chest, falls over, and dies.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A phone RINGS.

DEAN ROBERT WYMAN, a showy and greedy brit who serves as dean of BCAD, shoots up and answers it.

A voice SPEAKS FRANTICALLY on the other line.

DEAN WYMAN

Huh? What? Oh, oh my. I'll be right there.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Dean Wyman sits at the head of a long table rapping his fingers. His hair is a mess. He looks around the room.

Next to him is DR. ISABELLA CHINEA (late 30s), a savvy and motivated economics professor. She looks over a series of documents.

ISABELLA

I don't know about this Dean Wyman. I'm no lawyer but the language here is pretty clear.

Made in Highland

DEAN WYMAN
Council isn't here yet.

The door swings open. EUGENE MILLER and JOAN MCMILLAN, the school's legal council, walk in. They are both in casual clothes, looking exhausted.

EUGENE
This better be good Wyman.

Wyman bites his nails and nods at the folder. Isabella slides it across the table.

They pick it up slowly and start to read it.

DEAN WYMAN
Schumaker croaked. It was only a matter of time. Her will.

JOAN
Alright, we had a feeling she would leave us something big. I don't understand.

DEAN WYMAN
She left us her land. 10,000 acres.

EUGENE
Great. FÜcking awesome. This is a 4 AM conversation?

Wyman looks at Isabella.

ISABELLA
It isn't ours, really. At least not yet. Apparently, Mrs. Shumaker was a believer in the, well um, the spirit of the college community. The will states that the community must decide what to do with the land. Professors, grad students, undergrads, janitors...everyone gets a vote.

Joan and Eugene look closer at the sheet.

JOAN
You're kidding me.

EUGENE
I don't wanna know these kids are gonna propose.

Isabella looks at him.

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

A small wood-paneled room with a dirty blue carpet. Posters of Che Guevara, Thomas Sankara, and soviet-era propaganda everywhere. Plants grow on the windowsill.

EMMANUEL "MANNY" DROGOS Jr., (22) a wannabe socialist revolutionary, shoots up out of his bed. He has scratchy-looking military sheets and no pillow.

He reaches his bedside table and puts on a beret with a sickle and hammer.

MONTAGE

-Manny makes coffee the old-fashioned way. He pours it into a tin mug.

-He performs a series of calisthenics on his bedroom floor.

-He rubs an old picture on his wall that shows a group of 10-15 HIPPIES smiling in front of a house. On the bottom, it says FOUNDER: EMMANUEL DROGOS SR.

-He showers with a small bucket of warm water.

-He grabs a handful of dried leaves from a row of plants on his window.

-He crushes the leaves and rolls a cigarette. He lights it and poses with it to match the poster of Castro behind him.

-He reads theory on his floor while smoking.

-His watch BEEPS. He looks at it and smiles.

EXT. HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

A flagpole in the early morning sun.

SQUEAK as a red sickle and hammer flag is raised.

Manny looks up at it. He puts on a black beret and smiles. He turns to a small chicken coop behind him.

River and Hayden slump out of the large old farmhouse and towards him. Hayden yawns.

MANNY
(to both his friends and the
chickens)
Good morning comrades.

No response. Josh Samantha and Tiffany hurry outside. They are still in their pajamas.

MANNY (CONT'D)
Let's get to work.

INT. GARDEN SHED - EARLY MORNING

A wooden shed that has seen better days. Doors swing open. Some critters scurry out. The crew heads inside.

Manny and Hayden haul wheelbarrows of soil and mulch out.

Tiffany Samantha and River walk out with baskets of tools and rakes.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

The bell DINGS throughout the house. All the doors in the hallway swing open.

RIVER SHAW, a kindhearted and focused leader, runs out buttoning a large flannel.

Behind her, HAYDEN BARLOWE, a firey anarchist, who hops on one foot while putting on his other combat boot.

Behind them, TIFFANY and SAMANTHA MARKEL, twins. Samantha fixes her hair and Tiffany smokes a Juul and rubs her eyes.

Finally, JOSH SPEIGEL, the youngest of the group, tramples out of his room still in pajamas.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Manny stands on the porch waving them out.

MANNY
Let's go people! We got work to do!

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN/FIELD - DAY

A plot too big to be a garden but not big enough to be a farm. Neatly divided into long rows with 10-15 planter boxes on the sides.

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The group works dispersed throughout the field.

Manny walks down a dirt path between the plants. Hayden joins him holding a wooden crate.

HAYDEN

Manny!

MANNY

Hayden, my friend.

HAYDEN

These seem ready, it's a bit early
but...

Manny reaches into the crate and takes out a tomato. He feels it for ripeness.

MANNY

Yeah, these seem good. We can
store 'em.

HAYDEN

Did you see that thing I sent you?

MANNY

Yeah, I did. I think my phone is
being tracked by the CIA now, so
thanks for that.

HAYDEN

No, not that thing, the protest in
Atlanta.

MANNY

It's over break, man. You know
I'll be there with you, but I'm
not sure about everyone else.

HAYDEN

I thought we were all spending
break together. You said we were
going to start doing things as a
group.

MANNY

We will, we will, but the last
time we went to Atlanta, Josh got
tear-gassed. He wants to go home.
Don't you want to see your family?

Hayden looks away and shrugs.

HAYDEN
(quietly)
I'd rather be here.

Manny taps his arm.

MANNY
I'll look at the dates. Put those
inside.

Hayden walks off.

Manny stops at a row of taller crops and kneels. The river is on hands and knees with a small pitcher of water and a headlamp.

MANNY (CONT'D)
Hey.

River looks up, blinding Manny with the light.

MANNY (CONT'D)
Woahh.

RIVER
Sorry.

She turns off the light.

MANNY
Are we ready to plant?

RIVER
Well--check this out.

Manny kneels beside her. A tiny puddle is surrounded by rocks as if it were a pond.

RIVER (CONT'D)
I've been keeping track of this
for a week and look!

A FROG jumps into her hand.

MANNY
Woah...

RIVER
We could expand it into this back
corner!

MANNY
A whole pond?

RIVER

Yes! Because ponds add SO much biodiversity to the landscape and when it rains it'll help with flooding and they actually can store carbon so we--

MANNY

(apologetic)

River--"Private property therefore must also be abolished and in its place must be put COMMON USE of all means of production and distribution" Biodiversity is great but the farm has to be for food. The commune agreed on that.

RIVER

"What is ignored or downplayed in most proposals to remedy the environmental crisis is the most critical challenge of all: the need to transform the major social bases of environmental degradation." Marx's ecology. I can quote theory too.

Manny smiles.

MANNY

We're barely self-sufficient. Let's eat our own food for a month and see where we're at.

Manny's watch BEEPs. He stands.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Alright, everyone! That's time for today. Bring what you have in.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH - DAY

The crew walks up the steps with a few big baskets of fresh produce. They SLAM them down with a HUFF.

MANNY

Good work comrades.

River looks through the chicken coop for some eggs.

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SHANE O'DONNELL (same age as Isabella), a finance bro with an eye for opportunity, leans against the porch.

Manny turns to him.

MANNY (CONT'D)
Can I help you?

He takes off a pair of sunglasses.

SHANE
Are you Emmanuel Drogos Sr.?

River shoots Manny a look.

MANNY
No, that's my father.

SHANE
Is he around?

MANNY
No.

SHANE
I'd like to talk to you, then.
About this house, and the land you
have, is that OK?

Manny looks back to the commune members.

MANNY
Uhh...yeah, yeah sure. Can you
guys start to sort and store?

RIVER
Sure.

The other members head inside. Shane puts his hand out.

SHANE
Shane O'Donnell. I'm guessing
you're Emmanuel Jr.?

MANNY
Manny is fine.

They start to walk around the garden.

SHANE
So, tell me. Your dad owns the
deed to this place?

MANNY

It's um...It's a bit complicated but we're working on transferring the deed to my name.

SHANE

I'm talking to the right person then.

(beat)

I work for O'Donnell produce, don't know if you've heard of it, got the little green guy on the can.

MANNY

I know what it is.

SHANE

Oh, awesome. So, we're looking to expand our connections in this area, have a better relationship with agriculture down here. Grow by growing, ya know?

MANNY

Mhm...

SHANE

Has anyone talked to you about corporatizing? Or maybe even contract farming?

MANNY

No.

SHANE

Then allow me. It's a really great thing, we've found that bringing in corporate presence to family farms really helps to--

MANNY

I'm gonna stop you right there.

He stops walking and stands face-to-face with Shane.

MANNY (CONT'D)

I don't know what you know about this place, but you should quit while you're ahead. You leeching, greedy capitalist fucks have no business here. This town is fine without you. I know we sure as hell are.

Shane stands, somewhat surprised.

MANNY (CONT'D)
Now get the fuck off my property.

Shane puts his hands up.

SHANE
I'm going, I'm going.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Josh stands at the sink washing produce. He hands the veggies/ fruits to Tiffany and Samantha, who cut and prep them. They hand them to Hayden to sort and label. Assembly line.

River tends to house plants around the room.

Manny BURSTS in through the door.

MANNY
Capitalist fuckers!!

RIVER
Woahhh there speed racer.

JOSH
(excited)
Hi Manny!

Manny paces around the room.

MANNY
I can't believe this shit.

HAYDEN
What?

MANNY
That guy was from O'Donnell.

RIVER
Ugh. Awful. He probably smelled like pesticides.

TIFFANY
I think my Dad owns a bunch of stock in them.

MANNY
Well, we're not gonna help your dad make any money today.

Tiffany smiles at Samantha.

TIFFANY

That'll piss him off so much.

Samantha smirks.

MANNY

He was gonna offer us a contract,
can you fucking believe that.?

HAYDEN

Nahhh...

RIVER

That's rich.

JOSH

(walking up to Manny)

What is that? Do you need water?
Are you ok?

MANNY

Contract farming. What--no I'm
fine. Contact farming means they
own us. We'd be part of their
'growth network.' We do all the
work--planting, tending,
harvesting--and they take it. And
sell it. For-profit.

RIVER

If you're a small-time farmer it
can make sense. Consistent pay,
don't have to always find
customers--but the whole system is
just...blech. Raping the earth for
money.

MANNY

People used to know what this
place was man. No one in their
right mind would have offered that
in the 70s.

RIVER

In the 70s they had almost 100
members.

Manny shakes his head. Tiffany takes out a Juul and rips it.

MANNY

What the hell is that?

TIFFANY
...my Juul?

MANNY
Why do you have that? We have
tobacco upstairs that WE grew.

TIFFANY
It's so rough on the lungs man I
mean...

Manny takes it out of her hand and throws it in the full sink.

TIFFANY
What the fuck??!

RIVER
Manny!

MANNY
People! We are supposed to be
self-sufficient. Ok? That's the
whole point? Living free from the
chains of capitalism

Tiffany reaches into the water and grabs it.

TIFFANY
Ok, Che, these are still like 70
bucks!

Manny shakes his head.

MANNY
There's a school-wide meeting
tonight. I want you all there.

He exits.

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Stately. Wood paneled. The room buzzes with excited CHATTER.
Clumps of STUDENTS sit around the house. Some lean over chairs
and sit on floors.

A single podium. On either side of the stage are banners:

"BERRIESVILLE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND DESIGN"

Manny sits with Hayden and River facing the stage.

HAYDEN

I've never seen this many people
at a school-wide meeting.

RIVER

The news is here?

Some REPORTERS sit in the front room.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Isabella exits her office. She points to a question on a graded test. JOSH SIGEL, a wide-eyed and easily scared college kid, walks with her. Behind them are TIFFANY and SAMANTHA MARKEL, dimes-square-looking hipsters and friends of Josh.

ISABELLA

In a lot of these spots, you're
just overthinking. I'm not asking
anything here beyond the average
product on an input, find the
variables in the question and use
the formula.

She hands the test back. Josh, Tiffany, and Samantha nod,
slowly understanding,

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

You'll be alright.
(leaning in and whispering)
I drop your lowest quiz grade
anyways. I have office hours again
Thursday.

She waves to them as they part ways.

TIFFANY

Time to go hang out with fucking
Manny again...I can't believe he
broke my Juul.

SAMANTHA

I'm only doing this to piss dad
off. I don't know why Manny has to
be such a dick.

JOSH

He's so hot though.

Tiffany and Samantha stare at him. Josh shrugs.

Down the hallway, Isabella is greeted by Dean Wyman. He holds
his arms out wide and smiles.

Made in Highland

DEAN WYMAN
Dr. Chinaea.

ISABELLA
Dean Wyman.

She reaches into her side bag and hands him a manilla folder.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Your speech.

DEAN WYMAN
(reading over the speech)
Oh, thank you so very much for
your help on this. You know I've
just been SO busy. I appreciate
your stepping up.

ISABELLA
No problem, of course, and I was
hoping maybe we could speak about
my application, the tenure review
committee has had it for almost a
year now.

DEAN WYMAN
(not paying attention)
Oh yes, yes. Soon, soon. We should
talk over a drink or something.

He turns, still reading the paper, and walks towards the
auditorium. She rolls her eyes.

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Hayden looks around, eyes peeled.

HAYDEN
Hey, are we still all gonna go eat
together after this?

Manny is not paying attention.

HAYDEN
Manny?

MANNY
Where is everyone else?

RIVER
They're coming. Look.

Josh, Tiffany, and Samantha scoot past other STUDENTS toward
Manny.

SAMANTHA
 Hi, hi, excuse me, sorry
 (reaching them)
 Hi!

MANNY
 You're late. All of you.

Tiffany glares at him.

JOSH
 Sorry, Manny.

TIFFANY
 It hasn't even started yet.

APPLAUSE begins and the lights dim. They sit. Manny leans over to them.

Dean Wyman jogs out on stage. WEAK APPLAUSE. He smiles and waves like a presidential candidate.

In the crowd, Manny, River, and Hayden all give disgusted looks.

DEAN WYMAN
 Good evening everyone, wow, what a turnout. Thank you so much for coming.

The small noise dies down.

DEAN WYMAN (CONT'D)
 As some of you may know, last night we lost...we lost...oh, I said I wouldn't do this.
 (a moment to stop fake tears)

HAYDEN
 (whispered)
 Oh, what a phony.

DEAN WYMAN
 Last night, we lost a lifelong supporter of our institution and a dear dear friend of mine, Mrs. Ethel Shumaker. Those who knew Ethel know that she loved this College more than anyone. That is why it's no surprise that Ethel has willed her 10,000-acre piece of farmland to this institution to use at our discretion.

Manny looks up. The reporters scribble and CLICK photos. Dean Wyamn clicks a remote and a map appears on the projector screen behind him. A large area of land is highlighted.

River and Hayden lean into Manny.

RIVER
(whispered)
That borders right up against
the house.

DEAN WYMAN
Mrs. Schumaker believed most in
the spirit of the BCAD community,
and we want to honor her
commitment to this university. The
fate of this land will be decided
by an open vote amongst all
students, faculty, and university
staff. There will be an all-school
town hall meeting this Friday,
March 28th here in alumni hall. If
you wish to propose, you must sign
up in two days' time by 7:00 PM.
There will be an email. Thank you.

He exits. The reporters hop up in a flurry.

Manny exchanges a look with River and Hayden.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT.

Manny powers down a hallway. River on his left, Hayden on his right, and the other three members scampering behind.

RIVER
That is 10,000 acres of untouched
earth. Think of the life we can
bring to it.

HAYDEN
We'd be able to expand our entire
model. You want 100 members? We
need some more land. We could be
feeding so many people.

MANNY
I hear you, and I'm not saying no,
but I'm not willing to compromise
for the sake of school optics. We
do this as Marxists or not at all.

RIVER
We're gonna have to decide soon.

They look at each other.

Isabella and Dean Wyman turn a corner and come face to face with Manny and his group.

DEAN WYMAN

Ahh hello, there students! So glad to see you all at these meetings.

Manny ignores him.

MANNY

Dr. China.

ISABELLA

Mr. Drogos.

MANNY

Will you be the faculty advisor for the campus republicans this semester?

ISABELLA

Yes.

MANNY

Good. They need lots of help.

ISABELLA

Mmm. Well, I'm so glad you brought your pals to this meeting. Are they all from the co-op?

Manny turns to go, takes two steps, then turns back to her.

MANNY

It is an egalitarian anti-racist Marxist-aspiring self-sufficiency commune.

ISABELLA

Mhm.

Manny nods his head and walks away. His friends follow.

SAMANTHA

Why do you always give her such a hard time? She's a really good professor.

MANNY

She's a capitalist.

(MORE)

MANNY (CONT'D)

I've seen her working with Dean Wyman, plotting, planning, trying to strip power from students and turn this place into a profit machine. I bet she's behind this whole 'proposal' in the first place.

Samantha shrugs slightly.

HAYDEN

No question she's got her own plans for the land.

RIVER

Exactly. We need to counter.

MANNY

I don't want to play her game. Getting involved in all this beaurocracy is antithetical to our mission. There is work to do. Let's get some rest.

River and Hayden stare at him.

EXT. DIVE BAR AFTERNOON

A black BMW pulls off of a local highway into a small parking lot. Shane gets out.

He walks up to a sports bar, which is in between a nail salon and an insurance office in a small strip mall. He stops at the door for a second before entering.

INT. DIVE BAR - AFTERNOON

A local sports bar fully equipped with neon beer signs, outdated posters of high school football teams, a dartboard, and a big TRUMP flag behind the bar. A few PATRONS, older men in blue-collar clothing, sit at the bar. Otherwise, it's empty.

He spots Isabella sitting at a table. She chats with GENINE, the bartender.

She sees him and nods. He walks over.

ISABELLA

(To the waitress)

I'd tell him if he felt so strongly that she was his granddaughter, he should've been there on Christmas.

GENINE

I know, I know.

(to Shane)

What can I get for you?

SHANE

Can I just have some tonic water?

ISABELLA

I'll talk to ya Genine.

Shane gets to the table and sits down.

SHANE

Izzy!

ISABELLA

Ha-I...Haven't heard that in a while.

SHANE

Sorry, sorry, Dr. China.

She smiles.

ISABELLA

Isabella is fine.

Genine returns with a plastic bud light cup filled with seltzer. Shane looks down at it.

SHANE

Is this somewhere you come often or..?

ISABELLA

Oh come on, we've gotten drunk in a lot shadier places than this. What's with the tonic water anyways?

SHANE

I'm trying to stay clean for a while. I had some uhh issues in New York.

(MORE)

SHANE (CONT'D)

Fucked up a little bit, that's how I ended up below the mason Dixon line...for the time being.

He gives a weak fist bump.

ISABELLA

Wow wow wow. And so where are your overalls?

SHANE

Very funny.

ISABELLA

Chewing dip yet?

SHANE

Yeah, yeah. It's not Murray Hill but I can afford all the lard on this side of the Mississippi now.

ISABELLA

Listen to you.

He shrugs.

SHANE

After rehab...well...my da--the company and I felt it would be best to get out of the city for a while.

Isabella bites her lip.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Just need to swing a few things and I can be back in O&D where I belong.

ISABELLA

You need a big win, huh?

SHANE

Something like that.

ISABELLA

I think I got something for ya.

She reaches into her purse and takes out a small folded map. She puts it on the table.

SHANE

What is this?

ISABELLA

See all that yellow? That's all the College's now. Just willed to us.

SHANE

I heard about this...

ISABELLA

Granddaughter of the first-ever football coach or something. I don't know, some old lady with the Berriesville Bears logo burned into her brain.

SHANE

Land is good, we need land.

ISABELLA

It's more than just land, Shane. It's access.

He looks up at her.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

There are 18,000 students at BCAD, and they've all got Daddy's credit card for the first time. A whole new generation. I see what they eat, what they do. Peach energy drinks for breakfast, kale salad for lunch, microwave rice bowls for dinner. "Health food." There is untapped profit all over this campus.

SHANE

You're real bright Izzy.

ISABELLA

I know.

SHANE

Why are you here?

ISABELLA

I want to propose a corporate partnership. Next week, we have a town hall meeting to determine our plan for the new land. I'm not doing it without a legit co-sign though.

Shane pauses.

SHANE
Be my number 2.

ISABELLA
What?

SHANE
If I do this, and it happens, you leave your position and come work for me. And I want it in writing.

ISABELLA
I have to convince the board to even go with this plan, Shane. I'm not putting anything in writing, Slow down.

SHANE
You've been working there for how long, five years?

ISABELLA
Yes.

SHANE
And no tenure, huh?

No response.

SHANE (CONT'D)
You need a job next year. What are you waiting for?

She stares at him.

SHANE (CONT'D)
Climb the latter Iz, the view is great from up here.

He hands her back the map and stands to go. He throws a 20 on the table and walks out. Isabella looks down at it.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

A stately, wooden main room with rows of long tables. Huge glass windows light one side, large shelves of books on the other.

Manny sits with Hayden. Behind him is a massive picture of a 1970s politician.

A TOUR GROUP walks by the picture, led by a PEPPY TOUR GUIDE (19).

TOUR GUIDE

At BCAD we have quite a few influential and famous alumni, here is a memorial image of activist and 8-term senator Emmanuel J. Drogos Sr. Senator Drogos was a member of the class of 1971 and donated this library in 2016, three years before his untimely death...

She trails off as she continues the tour.

Manny and Hayden look up at River, who waters plants all around the library.

MANNY

Do you think she's ever missed a day?

HAYDEN

During breaks. That's when I do it.

MANNY

Really?

Hayden shrugs.

HAYDEN

Passes the time till you guys get back.

(a beat)

If we have 10,000 more acres, I'd probably work on those instead.

MANNY

We can barely keep the one acre we have going.

HAYDEN

More land would bring more people. We'd have professors, organizers, so much help.

MANNY

The commune has never used outside help. Even when my dad was here. They figured things out themselves. We can too.

He packs up his stuff and goes to leave.

MANNY (CONT'D)
I got class.

HAYDEN
I'll see ya.

he exits.

He comes back into frame and stares at the image. Beside it is a plaque. It reads "HIS WORK."

A second later, Dean Wyman comes bursting into the library. Isabella trails him, trying to keep up with his massive strides. DEAN WYMAN YELLS into a phone.

DEAN WYMAN
Well, it's not exactly easy to
fundraise when you have pictures
of commies on the goddamn walls.

He SMACKS the picture with an open hand. Manny's eyes follow them. His eyes narrow. He shakes his head and leaves.

DEAN WYMAN (CONT'D)
Come to the council meeting at 4
and bring a notepad.

Isabella looks up at him.

ISABELLA
O-ok. I can do that.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Manny hustles into the room and takes a seat between Hayden and River. It's a larger lecture hall with staircase seating.

MANNY
Did I miss anything?

RIVER
No, she was late too.

MANNY
I don't know if I can deal with
this conservative bullshit today.

RIVER
Don't lose your cool again.
Whatever just happened at the
commune doesn't matter anymore.

MANNY
I won't.

RIVER
Have you thought about the
proposal?

Manny sighs.

MANNY
Yes, I've thought about it.

ISABELLA
Hello everyone!

Isabella sets up her stuff at a desk in front of the class. She looks down at the meeting notes and rolls her eyes, moving them to the side for a folder of EXAMS.

A test packet is handed back across a desk with a red 51% circled in the top right corner.

Another is handed with a red 32% circled.

ISABELLA
It seems as though many of us are
struggling with the differences
between Malthusian and Ricardian
Scarcity.

Another test is handed back, this time with a red 100% circled in the top right corner.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
(quieter)
Although, this is not true for all
of you.

Manny picks up the 100% test.

She walks toward the projector screen at the front of the classroom

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
A lot of you might have heard
about the huge plot of land BCAD
just got, very exciting,
especially for us! Our school is
facing some economic questions:
what is the best use of this land
and how much money should we be
putting into it?

She starts to pull out a pack of balloons, a hairdryer, and a small helium tank.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

What we're working with here are institutional policy and non-profit economics. Tuition payments help keep the school afloat, but for new developments like this, we need an extra influx of money. What do we call that outside of the classroom?

A FRESHMAN slowly raises her hand. Isabella points.

FRESHMAN

Fundraising?

ISABELLA

Exactly. Fundraising.

She puts a balloon over the hairdryer and turns it on.

Manny leans forward, interested.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Fundraising is an uphill battle. A select few alumni have an interest in donating and it can take years to get any significant capital.

The balloon slowly fills in an odd shape.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Donations to colleges are not a high priority for people, and if the economy wavers even a little bit...

The balloon POPS.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

It can render institutions helpless. Now, who can tell me about this week's reading in the Harvard business review?

A DIFFERENT STUDENT raises their hand and is called on.

STUDENT

Well..uhh. it was about umm partnerships between universities and corporations...I think?

Manny rolls his eyes.

MANNY
 (to Hayden, quietly)
 One of the most BS articles I've
 ever read.

RIVER
 (whisper-yelled)
 Manny, be respectful.

ISABELLA
 Exactly. See, universities and
 colleges can get their funding
 from another source: corporations.

The class nods.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
 Corporations can schools give huge
 sums of money for a few reasons.
 Let's say this company sells
 balloon animals.

She blows up a balloon with helium. It's quick and efficient.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
 They can give a university a
 massive donation to build a
 balloon animal research center.
 This is far quicker and more
 efficient than a crowd-sourced
 fundraising style.

She starts to fold it into a shape.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
 Now, the university gets a major
 new academic development while the
 corporation gets new product
 research, development, and even
 profit.

She holds up a perfect balloon dog. She walks and gives it to
 the freshman who answered.

FRESHMAN
 Awesome.

ISABELLA
 So I hope we are understanding why
 these corporate partnerships are
 so crucial to furthering research
 and development.

Manny slowly raises his hand.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Yes, Mr. Drogos?

The class all turns to him. Some people smile, and some quiet CHATTER starts. We're about to see a jousting match and they know it.

MANNY
Professor, you seem to be failing to recognize the conflict of interest here. Corporate university partnerships benefit only those two groups: corporations and universities. I know it seems crazy but there is actually a third group--students. Capitalist monopolies come into educational institutions and shift focus away from students, they turn research centers into profit makers.

ISABELLA
Still, research-based, non-corporate fundraising is slow and tedious.

MANNY
Great things were developed with centralized funding I mean the MRI? The internet for chrissake?!

ISABELLA
In the 50s and 60s sure, but that's not realistic anymore. Profit is a byproduct of these relationships, the main focus is discovery. More money means more research which in turn yields more scientific progress.

MANNY
(beginning to get frustrated)
We need to be focused on creating student-based, worker-owned, cooperative institutions. When corporations come in, we lose our agency. The focus of research will inevitably shift to profit, not development. The capitalist system has a bottom line it's not willing to part with.

ISABELLA
How are you so sure?

MANNY

(losing his cool)

Because it's obvious! They only want research that will make them more money of course! I mean these corporations are coming in, hijacking all academic thought and totally shifting the school's focus to developing more efficient, less human, profit-making technologies.

ISABELLA

So what's your alternative? Are you going to be making a proposal?

This catches Manny off guard. River looks up at him.

MANNY

I-I don't know yet.

ISABELLA

Well, when you think of an alternative solution, we can begin a real debate. Right now, it seems all you know for sure is that I'm wrong.

MANNY

No, but I--

ANOTHER STUDENT turns to him.

STUDENT

Dude, I'm already failing this class just take the L

MANNY

Yes...um..sorry. V-very well, continue.

Isabella turns towards the board and continues teaching. Manny sinks back in his chair.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A long, wooden corridor with high ceilings. Banners of the different colleges (Arts and Sciences, engineering, etc.) hang above.

DEAN WYMAN makes it around the corner before Isabella.

DEAN WYMAN

(hushed)

We can discuss more at the board meeting tonight.

He hangs up as Isabella comes around the corner, slightly flushed from the walk.

DEAN WYMAN

Come on, let's go.

ISABELLA

Dr. Wyamn I wanted to talk to you about--

DEAN WYMAN

Shh shh shh I think they've already started.

He pushes into

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A long table of ADMINISTRATORS, all white men except one older white woman, with an empty seat at the head. DEAN WYMAN heads for it.

Isabella stands for a second looking around. There are no seats at the table. Dean Wyman gestures to a small desk in the corner. He motions for her to take notes.

She sighs to herself but complies.

DEAN WYMAN

Sorry for the lateness everyone, I hope you already got started.

Eugene sits to the right of Dean Wyman.

EUGENE

Just barely Dean Wyman. We're discussing the town hall meeting.

DEAN WYMAN

Ahh yes, our little experiment in democracy. Have we heard any rumblings?

JOAN

I heard some bio professors talking about research. Not much else.

DEAN WYMAN

Hmm. I do hope we get some decent proposals, something profitable at least.

Isabella bites her lip, takes a deep breath, and leans towards the table.

ISABELLA

Actually, I wanted to say that I met with a friend of mine--

EUGENE

You know what we need? Some kind of corporate partnership.

JOAN

Now that's a good idea. Get a sponsor and some real money behind this.

ISABELLA

Yes! As I was saying, this friend works for O'Donnell produce and--

DEAN WYMAN

Dr. China make sure you're getting this, I'll want to look this over in the meeting notes. Eugene, what were you saying?

Eugene begins to talk but the sound fades out. Isabella writes notes with an angry stare.

EXT. BUS STOP - DUSK

A public bus rolls up. Only farmland can be seen.

River and Hayden walk off, then Manny a few feet behind. He has headphones in, his hair is disheveled.

INT. SMALL FOYER - NIGHT

Manny walks in and puts his keys on a handmade rack by the door. Everything is labeled with instructions (i.e. Hang up Keys! Wipe your shoes!).

He tries to wriggle his combat boots off without untying them. It does not work. He SIGHS and bends down to untie them.

He stretches his ankles and walks into

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Older and slightly dirty. Every surface is filled with a hodgepodge of mismatched cups, plates, bowls, and cutlery.

On one wall is a chalk calendar surrounded by political posters and flyers for local bands. There are houseplants everywhere.

He opens the fridge and leans in to find something. It is nearly empty, with only signs labeling 'gluten-free' or 'vegan' left. He purses his lips and shuts the door.

He moves to the calendar and looks it over. Each day has jobs listed with a name next to it. River shows up behind him.

RIVER
Some class, huh?

MANNY
Jesus, you scared me.

RIVER
So what's on the menu?

MANNY
What I--

He looks at today on the calendar and sees "DINNER: MANNY."

MANNY (CONT'D)
I am gonna uh figure something out. We gotta get some stuff tho.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Manny and River head out of the house and towards the rows of planters. Manny shines a flashlight.

RIVER
Ya know it doesn't matter how much people agree with you if you yell and curse all the time. It makes you look like a radical.

MANNY
I am a radical.

RIVER
Are we trying to get things done or stomp our feet and pout? I mean--

Something catches Manny's eye.

MANNY

What on earth...

The flashlight reflects off a metal surface. He shines the flashlight in a few other places, there is a giant fence cutting through all the planter boxes.

RIVER

Oh my gosh.

They take a few steps back to see the whole fence. There is a huge sign that says "PROPERTY OF BERRIESVILLE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND DESIGN."

Manny drops down onto all fours. He rustles through the parts of the planters that are on his side of the fence.

MANNY

No no no...

The fence has cut the irrigation pipes clean in two. The soil is basically mud.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Those mother fuckers!!!

River drops next to him.

RIVER

Half of these crops are unreachable! How are we supposed to get around this?

MANNY

And now there is definitely not enough food for everyone.

RIVER

What are we gonna do?

MANNY

I think we have some stuff in storage, not much though.

A worm struggles underneath the fence. He helps pull it through and back into the mud.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Manny sits on an old, brown couch. Next to him is Hayden. River sits beside them in a totally mismatched recliner. Josh, Tiffany, And Samantha sit on the ground. They all eat plain rice out of a bowl.

Made in Highland

River looks down at it and pouts.

TIFFANY
I'm hungry.

JOSH
Me too.

Manny looks down at his bowl. They're right. He looks at River, then gets up and walks out.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Manny hands cash to a PIZZA DELIVERY MAN. He turns to the group with a soft smile.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Manny sits alone at a table. He looks at the pizza boxes with his head in his hands.

On the table is his laptop playing a Mario Savio speech.

River walks in wearing sleeping clothes with her water bottle. She goes to fill it up but see's Manny.

She goes to him and puts her arm on his shoulder.

RIVER
Hey. What are you looking at?

MANNY
What do you think about this proposal?

RIVER
You know I think we should do it.

MANNY
It feels like we're betraying something. Fundraising, private property, fucking delivery dinner.

RIVER
Hey. The revolution wasn't won or lost on a box of pizza.
(MORE)

RIVER (CONT'D)

If we have a chance to grow, to help the earth, to help feed people who need it, I don't know why we're asking any more questions.

He smiles.

RIVER (CONT'D)

Try to get some rest.

She exits.

He looks at the screen and leans in. It is playing THIS SPEECH https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ES6tjnJ9_XU

He takes out a black leather notebook and begins to write.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Isabella sits in a small office she has desperately tried to make look decent. There is a modern-style ikea desk with only an inch on either side. She finishes up a microwave rice bowl and throws it in the trash.

She goes to throw the box out but stops to look at it for a second. It is an "O'Donnel" produce product. She trashes it and stands.

With some difficulty, she shimmies out of her desk.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Manny researches on his computer. He has a printed map next to him, which he is labeling.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Isabella walks into a grand gothic hallway carrying a briefcase. She hears some CHATTER down the way.

Far down the hallway, we see President Wyman holding a door open. Joan and Eugene, the board members from earlier, LAUGH with him as they walk in.

Wyman pretends not to see her and goes in. Isabella stands in the center of the hallway. She looks down at something in her hand.

INT. MODERN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Shane sits on a black leather couch. His minimalist apartment is still packed in moving boxes. His phone RINGS. He picks it up.

ISABELLA (O.S.)
Let's do it.

He smiles maliciously.

Music cue: "Which Side Are you On" by Pete Seeger

EXT. HOUSE - DAWN

A WORM inches its way across the dew-covered lawn. A BIRD swings low and snatches it up.

The bird flies by Manny's head. He looks, brow furrowed, at the wall from earlier.

INT. TIFFANYS BEDROOM - DAWN

Tiffany sleeps buried in a mound of quilts. The sun is not yet up. Serenity.

Suddenly, the door slammed open. Manny stands in the doorway. She shoots up, terrified.

INT. HALLWAY - DAWN

Manny runs from door to door, slamming them open. His hair is a mess. He hasn't slept a wink. He holds a speaker playing the USSR national anthem above his head.

MANNY
Let's go people! Up and at 'em!

He runs into

INT. HAYDEN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Hayden lies face down on the bed holding the pillow over his head. Manny jumps on the bed and begins shaking him.

MANNY
Let's go comrade let's go!

Hayden grunts and rolls over. He looks up at Manny, who looks totally insane.

HAYDEN

What?

MANNY

I have a plan.

Hayden looks over to the clock, it's 6:00 AM.

EXT. YARD - DAWN

The commune members slug out of the front door, looking exhausted.

Manny stands before them with his hands clasped behind his back.

MANNY

I hope you're all wearing sneakers.

JOSH

What?

MANNY

Let's go!

He turns around and starts running. He goes about 15 feet before turning back.

MANNY

I said let's GO!!!

His bellow jolts them from their sleepy haze.

MONTAGE

-The commune members running down the side of the highway in a single file line. Josh, Tiffany, and Samantha bring up the rear.

-Manny stops and the line nearly bumps into him. He bends down and picks up a steak left in the dirt. They turn into the woods on the side of the highway.

-The commune members running between trees, over branches.

-They jump on a few rocks to get over a creek.

-The hustle upwards, climbing on some rocks and using batches to make the ascent.

EXT. MOUNTAINTOP - SUNRISE

They come hustling out of the woods to a clearing at the top of a small mountain. All are out of breath. Tiffany, Josh, and Samantha collapse onto rocks panting.

TIFFANY
(to Josh, quietly)
Too much Juul.

Manny stands triumphantly, looking out at the view. Hayden comes up to him and pats him on the back.

HAYDEN
Well, that'll certainly wake you
up.

He turns to him and nods.

MANNY
Look out here, guys.

He points to the view.

Tiffany, Josh, Samantha, and River stand and join Hayden and Manny.

They see a beautiful sprawling southern scene filled with forests and farms. Manny points to four huge factory-looking farms.

MANNY
Yesterday in class, Professor
China talked about corporate
university partnerships. It
sounded like she's thinking about
bringing one to BCAD. These
proposals are going to be major.

TIFFANY
I thought we weren't doing one.

MANNY
I know I said that, but, I've been
thinking. Marx says that "Men"--
or, people-- "make their own
history, but they do not make it
as they please; they do not make
it under self-selected
circumstances, but under
circumstances existing
already."

RIVER
 (seeing where he's going)
 We live in a capitalist world.

MANNY
 That we do. Look around. Every farm we can see from this point is owned by O'Donnell. And they bought two more plots last month. No farms for 75 miles are family owned or even local. Except us. One of these companies is going to take the land the school has, the one at the presentation, I guarantee it. And they won't stop there. We'll be fighting for our lives.

The group begins to nod.

Manny turns to them.

MANNY (CONT'D)
 The town hall meeting is in 2 days. We have to decide if we're proposing by tonight. I know it's last minute, but we can not go down without a fight. I know it's not a violent revolution, but, if there's a chance, we have to take it.

The group can feel the energy.

The group is silent for a second. River steps forward.

RIVER
 Will we do it ecologically?

MANNY
 Of course.

HAYDEN
 Will we do it together?

MANNY
 Of course.

HAYDEN
 Then I'm with you comrade.

He puts an arm around Manny.

HAYDEN (CONT'D)
 Are y'all?

Some shaking of the head.

HAYDEN (CONT'D)
Are you?!

JOSH
Yes!

TIFFANY
Fuck yes.

River smiles and nods.

MONTAGE

-Manny and the crew walk into the library. Mud cakes their shoes from the run.

-Shane sitting down in Isabella's classroom.

-Manny, Hayden, and River talk excitedly at a table covered in books.

-Isabella shows Shane a series of graphs. Shane smiles and nods.

-Dean Wyman wakes up in a huge bed, wearing matching silk pajamas and a sleep mask.

-Manny and Hayden writing on his legal pad fervently, River brings them coffees.

-Isabella putting the final touches on a PowerPoint.

-Dean Wyman gets into a brand new Mercedes and starts to drive.

-Tiffany Samantha and Josh standing in the seats of an auditorium with their arms folded. Manny stands on stage rehearsing with flashcards.

-Hayden and River stand in the wings looking over the yellow pad, nodding.

-Shane stands in a glass hallway talking on the phone using AirPods. He looks down at the map Isabella used in the bar.

-Dean Wyman walks with his briefcase through a hallway. He comes to an intersection with another hallway. Manny and the commune approach from one side, Isabella and Stand approach from the other. All three parties. Both groups nod to Dean Wyman, who nods back and continues down the hallway. Isabella and Manny's group walk by each other.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The commune group runs up to a posted list. It has the order of proposals.

MANNY

Aw, man...

CUT TO:

Isabella and Shane walk down the hallway in the other direction.

ISABELLA

I pulled some strings to make sure we're last in the order. Let's bring the house down.

Shane fist-bumps her.

CUT TO:

Back to the commune group.

TIFFANY

Second, to last isn't that bad. At least you're not buried in the middle.

MANNY

You're right, you're right.

He turns to them.

MANNY (CONT'D)

You guys should go sit. Good work today. Really.

They smile and nod. All turn to leave.

River hangs back, turns around, and runs to Manny. She hugs him around the neck. He stumbles a bit, realizes, then hugs her waist.

She pulls back.

RIVER

Good luck.

He looks at her with a soft smile. Nods.

She runs off.

CUT TO:

Made in Highland

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A podium in the middle of a hardwood stage with a BCAD seal on it. Behind it, is a small, pull-down projector screen. Behind that, a felt curtain.

DEAN WYMAN struts out on stage waving.

Every seat is taken. STUDENTS (18-24) sit in the back most rows, separated by subgroup--frat, engineer, tour guide, etc. Many crowd by the doors, peeking in.

PROFESSORS (30s-70s), dressed in business casual all texting on blackberries, sit in the front.

In the BALCONY(40s-80s), townies, mostly farmers and blue-collar workers.

DEAN WYMAN

Ahem, hello, h-hell...quiet down now people. Please, yes, up here, thank you.

(beginning 'speech')

Welcome, all. I would like to call this town hall meeting of the student/faculty body of the Berriesville College of Agriculture and Design to order, Madame Secretary?

ELLEN-MAY McNealy, an old and curmudgeonly secretary in wire-rim glasses and a camouflage baseball hat, sits with a pen and pad at a table to the side of the stage.

DEAN WYMAN (CONT'D)

Madame Secretary..?

ELLEN-MAY

Is that me?

DEAN WYMAN

Yes, you're my secretar--whatever. In session.

He takes a gavel and BANGS it.

DEAN WYMAN (CONT'D)

Let's begin.

Ellen-May looks down at the list of names. She adjusts her glasses.

ELLEN-MAY

Ok. The first people up are uhh...

(MORE)

ELLEN-MAY (CONT'D)
 John DeMatrio and the football
 team!

RUCKUS in the pews. A group of LARGE MEN shuffle and push past STUDENTS. They pile into the isle, nearly trampling over each other. They all wear jerseys over their clothes.

JOHN DEMATRIO, the handsome starting QB, walks out onto the stage. He lifts his arms triumphantly.

JOHN
 Ber-ries! Ber-ries! Ber-ries!

The crowd joins in the chant. The professors weakly, the students with some energy, the townies getting rowdy.

Hayden and River exchange looks, rolling their eyes but slightly nervous.

The team jumps onto the stage without using the stairs.

DEAN WYMAN
 Oh-oh my. I guess everyone is
 coming up.

They crowd the podium, John takes the mic. The rest GIGGLE out of breath.

JOHN
 H-hello everyone.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Manny paces in the wings. He looks over notecards in his hands, talking to himself.

Isabella sits on an unused speaker, watching Manny and holding in a sly smile.

ISABELLA
 (quietly)
 Feel ready?

MANNY
 What?!

ISABELLA
 Do you feel ready?

MANNY
 Of course, I do.

Made in Highland

ISABELLA
(hands up in defense)
Good!

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

John leans too close to the mic.

JOHN
(slowly, read)
In conclusion, we believe a new
football practice facility will
help the team in our upcoming
season, bring together the school
around our success, and make us
more money in ticket sales. Thank
you.

He looks out smiling. Some APPLAUSE. Wyman stands and walks to
the podium, clapping.

DEAN WYMAN
Very good, very good John. Now, we
can open the floor for questions
and comments.

A long silence. The crowd shifts awkwardly. Finally, Shane, who
sits behind the professors, hand slowly raises. Dean Wyman
gestures to him.

SHANE
How are you going to pay for it?

Dean Wyman looks at John. John stares blankly.

JOHN
Ummm, bake sales and car washes?

Shane nods.

ELLEN-MAY
NEXT!!

MONTAGE OF PROPSALS (//=hard cut to next one)

-A STONER reads from a rick and morty notebook.

STONER
Four schools in the state have
adopted marijuana education
programs with on-campus growth and
distribution//

-Ellen-May crosses off names on the list.

-Two FITNESS INSTRUCTORS in matching workout sets smile at the podium. One speaks while the other does burpees.

-A TOWNIE packs a lip full of chewing tobacco

FITNESS INSTRUCTORS
Studies show that required daily
fitness improves test scores and
focus. A new fitness center and
weight room can//

-Josh opens a piece of gum and pops it in his mouth.

-Ellen-May crosses off more names on the list.

-Three SCIENTISTS in lab coats huddle around the podium

SCIENTIST
(monotone)
The breed of soil in this
specific plot of land has a pH
balance that is highly unusual in
this region, furthermore//

-Tiffany smokes a Juul under her shirt.

-Ellen-May crosses off more names on the list. Only Manny and Isabella are left.

-Ellen-May wakes up suddenly from nodding off.

ELLEN-MAY
NEXT!

END MONTAGE

Manny peaks out from behind the curtain.

River spots him.

RIVER
Everyone, everyone it's time.

They all sit up and put their phones away.

HAYDEN
Bring it home, kid.

Manny walks out to the podium, smiling nervously.

He puts down his flashcards and straightens them.

MANNY

Hello all, good evening.

His friends lean forward. He clicks on the slideshow. On the projector is a title slide that reads:

"Community Co-Op and Garden"

MANNY (CONT'D)

My name is Manny Drogos and I am the founding member of the BCAD Communal Home and Farm.

The commune members WHOOP, but then quickly stop. Heads turn to them. It flusters Manny.

MANNY (CONT'D)

My comrades and I believe this plot of land is nothing short of a monumental opportunity for our college.

(switching notecards and slides. The new slide shows a map of the land with the commune house circled)

our house sits on the border of the plot land. For the past three years, we have been operating a completely self-sufficient garden from this location, which provides all community members with three free meals a day in exchange for their participation.

Many of the professors look up. Some CHAT POSITIVELY with their neighbors.

Manny sees this and hides a smile. He switches the slide to an image of the planter boxes.

River looks down at the speech in her lap. She mouths the words Manny is saying while nodding.

MANNY (CONT'D)

With our organizational model and leadership, we believe--we CAN make this possible for all students, employees, and faculty at BCAD.

(MORE)

MANNY (CONT'D)

Our numbers would require each student to work on the community farm for only 4 hours per week. BCAD could break ground, becoming the first institution with completely free dining.

The crowd MURMURS. They like this. Students CHAT, professors nod, townies exchange glances. Manny begins to ramp up.

HAYDEN

(whispered)
Fuck yes.

MANNY

My comrades and I believe in ideas some would consider radical, but I say they are not. This land is now private property, but we can make it communal property if we truly work hard.

River starts shaking her head.

RIVER

(to herself)
Wait what?

Manny begins shaking his fist like a preacher.

MANNY

With the right focus and planning, we can turn BCAD into a socialist university.

The crowd shifts. The professors shake their heads. The townies really don't like this.

RIVER

(quietly)
What are you doing?

MANNY

There is a future we can build, a better future, a more just future, a future free of inequality and suffering. A more equal, and a more just BCAD!

He raises his fist and PANTS. The crowd does not applaud at first.

Slowly, the commune members CLAP.

DEAN WYMAN
 Oookaaaay then. Thank you Mr.
 Drogos.

RIVER
 (to Hayden)
 He went off-script!

HAYDEN
 Did you disagree with him?

RIVER
 Feels like the crowd did!

Manny looks around, shaking himself from the daze. He slowly walks to the wings.

Isabella waits at the end of the wing. She smiles.

Manny walks by her.

ISABELLA
 You certainly were ready.

Manny stops, looks at her, but decides to keep walking.

River and Hayden exchange nervous glances in the crowd.

DEAN WYMAN
 And finally, our lovely Dr.
 China.

Isabella walks on stage. Many students CHEER. She smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. LIGHT BOOTH - NIGHT

Shane creeps into a lighting booth in the auditorium. HAROLD, an overweight nerd, runs the lights.

SHANE
 Are we all good?

HAROLD
 I don't know, are we?

Shane rolls his eyes and reaches into his pocket. He hands Harold a 50.

HAROLD
 Thank you.

CUT TO:

Made in Highland

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The lights cut. Suddenly, Isabella is illuminated by a spotlight.

ISABELLA
Ladies and gentlemen...who's
hungry?

DRAMATIC MUSIC begins playing through the speakers.

CUT TO:

INT. LIGHT BOOTH

Shane talks into a walkie.

SHANE
Go!

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM

The doors swing open. Two lines of O'DONNELL WORKERS, dressed in black, walk in single file. They all carry trays of O'Donnell products (fruits, veggies, rice bowls, etc.)

ISABELLA
My proposal for this land involves
free food and good jobs.

The workers start to pass out the goodies. Everyone clamors for them, smiling, The commune members watch in horror.

Manny comes to the back doors and watches inside.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
I propose that we use this land to
begin a new corporate partnership
with our university. This
partnership would provide all
students with low-cost O'Donnell
products, access to exclusive
flavors, and, perhaps best of all,
first priority for O'Donnell
internships and entry-level jobs.

The crowd ERUPTS. Dean WYMAN stands and claps. He nods to Isabella.

CUT TO:

Made in Highland

INT. LIGHT BOOTH

Shane smiles and leans back, crossing his arms.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

Manny watches the chaos from outside.

MANNY
(to himself)
Corporate partnership.
Motherfucker.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM

The commune members look all around them. They are the only ones not on their feet.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

O'Donnell trucks rumble over a hill.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Manny meanders down an empty quad with a book in his hand. He's been out all night.

On the other side of the Quad is Isabella. She walks with a pep in her step (and new diamond earrings.)

They cross each other. Isabella Doesn't notice. Manny stops walking and watches Isabella's back.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

River stands in the middle of a crowded dining hall looking down at her phone. All students wear team gear for BCAD.

She has sent many texts but received no response.

WORKERS wheel in an O'DONNELL PRODUCE vending machine with fruity energy drinks.

Hayden approaches her holding a huge, GMO-ridden apple.

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HAYDEN
Have you heard from him?

River takes a big inhale.

RIVER
No. Um, not yet. What is that?

Hayden holds up the apple. It has an O'Donnell produce sticker on it.

RIVER (CONT'D)
Jesus. What do you think...

They look at each other for a second. Hayden tilts his head, takes a deep breath, and takes a bite.

HAYDEN
Oh my god.

RIVER
Is it good?

HAYDEN
It tastes like candy.

RIVER
Oh, fuck it.

She takes it from him and takes a big bite.

RIVER
It's not even good.

They walk towards the exit. She takes another bite.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Manny's wandering has taken him back to the commune house. He drags his feet along the grass, spaced out.

He comes to the fence from earlier, except now it is 20 feet high and made of hard plastic. On it is a sign:

"COMING SOON: O'DONNELL FARMS - SHANE O'DONNELL I CAMPUS"

Manny shakes his head and almost laughs.

He turns around and disappears for a second, then returns with a bundle of tomatoes. He starts to throw them at the sign. They look tiny compared to the giant fence.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

TWO STUDENTS, one with a campus Republicans t-shirt, set up a table with posters and flyers. Isabella helps them organize.

STUDENT
so uhh... you pay us just to sit here?

ISABELLA
No, you gotta talk to people. Tell them about the internships and--

Josh, Tiffany, and Samantha walk down the hallway. Isabella turns and sees them

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
(to the employees)
Here, watch this.
(calling out)
Tiffany, Josh, Samantha!

They turn.

JOSH
Hey!

SAMANTHA
Hey professor.

ISABELLA
So funny, I was just thinking of you guys.

TIFFANY
Really?!

She hands them all flyers.

ISABELLA
They're opening up applications for a lot of these summer internships, ok? And I really think you guys would be great for them. You guys have serious promise.

They all smile wide.

JOSH
R-really?

ISABELLA
Yes really!

JOSH
Wow, I mean..thank you, professor!

ISABELLA
Of course. See you at the game!!

She winks.

They continue down the hall. Behind them, we see Isabella turn to the employees with her arms crossed in triumph.

SAMANTHA
That's so cool! I heard they pay a ton for those summer internships.

TIFFANY
I'm definitely gonna apply.

JOSH
Shh guys. Don't let Manny see these flyers.

Tiffany rolls her eyes.

TIFFANY
I'll do what I want. If I get a good opportunity for my career, I'm taking it.

JOSH
Yeah...

They keep walking.

Back to Isabella. Her watch DINGS.

ISABELLA
oop. Alright. You think you guys got this?

STUDENT
Umm, I think so.

ISABELLA
Good.

She straightens out her blazer and takes a DEEP BREATH.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Wish me luck, guys.

INT. GRAND HALLWAY - DAY

Shane stands with a crowd of EXECUTIVES, all yes men wearing BCAD gear. Dean Wyman pushes his way closest to Shane, smiling and nodding like a toddler. The LAUGH and slap each other's chests.

TOMMY, an executive and Shane's drinking buddy, slaps him on the chest.

TOMMY

This better be as good as that
Bama game last year.

SHANE

It will be, douchebag.

He slaps him back.

Isabella enters from down the hall carrying a large manilla folder. She sees the crowd of large well dressed men and takes a deep breath. She straightens her hair in the window reflection and walks towards them.

ISABELLA

(peeking over the crowd)
Shane! Hey!

Shane spots her and jogs towards her, arms open.

SHANE

Izzy!!

He grabs her and brings her in for a hug. She makes a surprised face as she's buried into his chest.

ISABELLA

I-Isabella, please.

He pulls away.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Who are all these guys...are we
not having a meeting? I brought
lots of plans and estimate--

SHANE

Oh, no we are! These guys are from
the city, they're gonna help get
things running down here. But come
on, You think they're all gonna
come down here and not get to a
game??

He turns to the crowd.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Let's go!

They CHEER.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

A row of black Mercedes town cars lines the front of campus. TOWNIES stand around looking at them.

The crew of executives walks out looking like a bachelor party. As they approach the cars, the townies disperse.

Shane ushers them into cars.

SHANE

1, 2, 3...here we go!

INT. TOWN CAR - DAY

Isabella crawls into the back of the town car, followed by Shane, Dean Wyman, and Tommy.

DEAN WYMAN

Tailgate lot 43, my good sir.

SHANE

Wyman, do you get to meet the players?

Dean Wyman's face lights up. The two start to talk.

Tommy connects an iPhone to a cord and starts playing 2000s rap music. Isabella starts to smile a bit.

Tommy starts pouring glasses of scotch for everyone. Shane takes one and Isabella gives him a look.

Tommy offers one to Isabella. She shrugs, puts down her folders, and takes them.

TOMMY

Who are you?

Isabella extends a hand.

ISABELLA

Dr. Isabella Chinaea, nice to meet you.

Tommy takes her hand and doesn't let go.

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TOMMY

Call me Tommy. What do you do here?

Isabella tries to pull her hand away but he doesn't let up.

ISABELLA

I teach economics but I'll actually be helping Shane with product development and also long-term--

TOMMY

You ever seen a Rolex before?

He pulls up his jacket to reveal a semi-real-looking Rolex. Isabella snatches her hand back.

ISABELLA

I have, yeah.

She looks at Shane for support but he's too busy laughing with Wyman.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Hadyen and River walk in.

Posters and markers are sprawled across the kitchen table. Manny is making signs that say things like "POWER TO THE PEOPLE" and "DOWN WITH CORPORATE GREED". He looks up.

MANNY

Good, you're here.

He gets up and walks to Hayden and River. He hands them both clipboards with packets stapled to them.

MANNY (CONT'D)

We have a lot to do. Hayden, I need you to alert the masses. Town is probably crawling with people right now and we can get lots of turnout. River, you'll be with me. Josh, Tiff, and Sam can finish the posters. We need to get water, gas masks, and knee pads. We need to be prepared for anything.

Hayden and River exchange looks. Manny turns around and heads back to the table. They follow.

RIVER

S-slow down, Manny. We haven't even seen you since last night. What do you need all this for?

Manny looks up at them.

MANNY

The protest. Do you think I'm gonna let those capitalist leeches onto my campus without a fight? No way. The football game is a perfect place to get eyes and ears.

Tiffany, Samantha, and Josh walk in wearing BCAD gear.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Great. Everyone is here.

He points at them while walking to the cabinets.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Keep working on these signs while we get everything else together.

TIFFANY

What? What signs?

MANNY

We're having a protest. Let's move.

Manny shuffles through drawers.

TIFFANY

You didn't even ask us!

JOSH

What are we protesting?

SAMANTHA

What about the game?

He pops his head back out.

MANNY

The game..we're doing it at the game!!

(MORE)

MANNY (CONT'D)

Guys--a Massive corporation is about to take over this school and you guys just want to let it happen?

RIVER

Manny, it was an open vote. Who are we protesting, everyone but us?

HAYDEN

I think she's right man.

MANNY

What?

TIFFANY

Look, I don't want to jeopardize anything for my future.

She takes out the flyer from Isabella and looks over it.

Manny squints and power walks over to her.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

A lot of these internships are gonna check social media and--

Manny snatches the paper out of her hands.

MANNY

What the hell is this?

SAMANTHA

Jesus.

She snatches it back.

TIFFANY

Ok, grabby. They're internship postings for O'Donnell. Dr. Chinae gave them to us. You know all BCAD students get priority, right?

MANNY

And you're not seriously considering taking them, are you?

TIFFANY

Uhh yeah. I am considering it.

She walks past him towards the sink. She takes out her water bottle from her backpack. Manny follows.

MANNY

What on.. what about our mission statement, what about the cause!?

HAYDEN

Guy, let's all take it easy here.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

The cause..pshh. I'm paying allll my own bills, Manny. Including tuition. I have to get a real job this summer, I don't have some giant house my Dad bought.

She starts filling the bottle.

MANNY

A real job! I thought you'd all be here this summer! We need to harvest in June and replant in August, I was gonna repair the shed!

Tiffany makes a face and turns to her friends while screwing back on the cap.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Is there something I don't know?

SAMANTHA

I'm with Tiff wherever we end up.

JOSH

I uh well I had been meaning to tell you that I'll be away this summer...

Manny walks to him and gets real close.

MANNY

Away?

JOSH

(smiling)

I'm going to Costa Rica to build wells for the poor.

HAYDEN

Pfffff.

MANNY

You know what.

He snatches Tiffany's water and starts pouring it on the ground.

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MANNY (CONT'D)
Our resources are for our
comrades, who actually WORK for
them.

RIVER
Manny!

TIFFANY
You dick!

She grabs the water bottle back from him and turns towards the door.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Tiffany bursts through the door with Samantha and Josh. Manny comes out after her.

MANNY
Oh, so that's it? You're done, you
quit?

She turns to him and gets right in his face.

TIFFANY
Yes, I do.

MANNY
I guess we know how much you
really believe in what you say you
stand for.

TIFFANY
I believe in everything I say I
stand for, what I don't believe in
is you. Douchebag.

She turns back and exits. Tiffany and Josh follow.

MANNY
Where are you going?!

Manny stands for a second watching, then turns back into the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

River and Hayden whisper to each other.

Manny comes bursting in.

MANNY

Let's go. We can work with what we have so far.

He starts to gather the posters and eye goggles.

RIVER

You still want to do this?

Manny looks up at her.

MANNY

Yes. I do. Are you gonna help?

Hayden and River look at each other.

RIVER

(unsure)
I guess...

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

DRUNK STUDENTS pile into their seats.

Thousands of FANS scream in the stands. A MARCHING BAND plays on the sideline. Fireworks SHOOT into the sky.

A QUARTERBACK lines up under center.

QUARTERBACK

HIKE!

INT. SPECTATORS BOX - DAY

Shane and the executives SCREAM over the edge of the box.

Dean Wyman claps his hands. Isabella smiles nervously behind them, holding her drink and her folder.

SHANE

Let's go bears baby!!!!

A big banner that says "O'DONNELL PRODUCE" hangs in the back of the suite. Elaborate trays of food and alcohol are laid out on long white tables. Isabella looks around.

ISABELLA

Oh boy...

She takes a deep breath and walks towards the crowd.

She shoves through a few executives and takes a seat next to Shane.

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ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Shane...Shane!!

SHANE
(still watching the race)
Huh? Yeah?

Isabella opens her folder.

ISABELLA
So I was thinking, we should probably start talking about crop selection, right? Planning out our timeline for the year.

SHANE
Uh-uh, yeah...

Isabella tries to get him to make eye contact with her. She takes out a document from her folder.

A RECIEVER catches a big pass. The crowd CHEERS.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM- DAY

TAILGATERS and LATE FANS pile into the stadium.

Manny screams into a megaphone.

MANNY
OPEN YOUR EYES, PEOPLE! O'DONNELL HAS ROBBED THIS CAMPUS OF WHAT MAKES IT GREAT--INDEPENDENCE. LOOK DOWN AT YOUR FOOD..(he drones on)

Hayden and River stand beside him holding signs.

Manny turns to Hayden.

MANNY (CONT'D)
Where is everyone? Hayden, did you put it in your forums like I asked?

HAYDEN
Yeah man, I did.

MANNY
And..?

HAYDEN
Don't think they're coming.

Manny rolls his eyes.

MANNY

I thought you wanted to do things together.

INT. SPECTATORS BOX - DAY

ISABELLA

I talked with some friends and professors in the college of agriculture. They highlighted some crops that should boom in our area if we focus--

SHANE

What??

Isabella leans closer to him.

ISABELLA

(yelling over the crowd)

We should start planning our crop yields..what are we planting first? We have to start within the month to line up with the season.

A RUNNING BACK runs through a gap and gets tackled at the one-yard line.

An executive leans to Shane and whispers something.

SHANE

I know bro!!

ISABELLA

Are we going to talk about any of this?

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

Manny still yells, River and Hayden have dropped their signs lower.

JOSEPH, a frat kid, runs by drinking an O'Donnell energy drink.

JOSEPH

(quietly)

Give it a rest dude...

Manny's head snaps towards him. He puts down the megaphone.

MANNY

What'd you say to me?

Joseph turns back around.

JOSEPH

Man come on. You've been screaming for two hours, nobody wants to hear that shit. It's game day!

MANNY

Yes, they do. This is the voice of the people! They know that this game doesn't matter as much as this. You might not be so aware.

JOSEPH

The people are tired of hearing your whiney ass voice.

MANNY

Oh yeah, bro?

RIVER

Bro?

INT. SPECTATORS BOX - DAY

The quarterback runs in the touchdown himself. Shane and the executives jump up and SCREAM.

SHANE

Atta boy!!!

ISABELLA

Shane!!

He does not look at her.

SHANE

Izzy, if you need anything, make one of them do it, ok? Don't bug me.

He points to TWO WAITRESSES, both Latina, then turns to high-five an executive.

She looks at them, then down at her folder. She starts to get up but Shane grabs her arm and pulls her back.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Also, next time, you should bring some of your girlfriends.

Isabella snatches her arm back.

SHANE (CONT'D)

What? So you have someone to talk to you!? Don't give me that.

Isabella shakes her head and leaves the box. Shane doesn't notice.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

Manny is closer to Joseph. The crowd ERUPTS from inside.

JOSEPH

Oh man, you made me miss it! Fuck you, dude.

MANNY

Fuck you!

JOSEPH

Shut the fuck up pussy.

Manny drops his sign and walks towards him. He shoves him.

MANNY

Oh yeah?

RIVER

Manny!

HAYDEN

Bro bro bro...

The frat guy shoves him back.

MANNY

You don't want this man.

JOSEPH

Oh yeah?

Manny lunges at him, Joseph lunges back. Manny swings first and slightly connects, Joseph sends a Jab back and makes Manny's nose shoot blood. Manny tries to tackle him to the ground.

Hayden rolls his eyes and jumps in, grabbing Manny's back, trying to pull him off.

INT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

Isabella stomps down the steps, bumping shoulders with FANS, who give her annoyed looks. She doesn't notice.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

Manny and Joseph still wrestle.

HAYDEN
Yo..yo...YO COME ON.

He finally wrestles Manny free. He puts himself between Manny and Joseph with both hands up.

HAYDEN (CONT'D)
We good...we good?... Ok, we're good.

Joseph brushes himself off and nods to Hayden that he's done. He starts to walk away.

JOSEPH
I better not see you around sig chi bro.

Manny pulls away from Hayden and wipes his nose.

RIVER
Ok, we have got to get home.

Manny whips around towards her.

MANNY
What? We can't leave! Not after that! We gotta show our strength.

RIVER
We need to get you out of here.

HAYDEN
Yeah, let's go home.

MANNY
Listen River you can't be afraid to use violence as a tool of the proletariat.

RIVER
That was NOT a tool of the proletariat.

MANNY
You obviously haven't read Lenin.

HAYDEN
Let's take it easy guys...

RIVER
I have read Lenin Manny, what is
going on with you?

She takes out a small baggy of leaves.

RIVER
Here, these should help with the
bleeding.

MANNY
You obviously don't know anything
about our mission. What are you--
stop!

He shoves her arms away, making her stumble a bit. She looks up
at him, appalled.

RIVER
Ya know what, fuck this...

She turns and stomps away. Manny takes a few steps away.

MANNY
River wait I didn't mean to--

She does not turn back.

Hayden looks between them, torn.

HAYDEN
Come on man...

He runs after River.

MANNY (CONT'D)
You too? Come on Hayden--

They are both gone. He stands alone at the stadium bleeding.
The wind blows the three signs across the sidewalk.

Isabella bursts out of the stadium. They lock eyes for a
moment, alone yet together.

Isabella breaks contact and leaves. A huge CHEER comes from
inside.

Manny SIGHS.

CUT TO:

Made in Highland

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

STUDENTS and FANS, still in game day gear, walk and LAUGH down the street. The stadium lights shine in the background. Many are drunk.

River finally stops running, Hayden catches up.

HAYDEN
(out of breath)
Where are you gonna go?

River turns around. She is crying a little.

RIVER
I think I need to go home for a few days.

HAYDEN
Like home home?

RIVER
Yeah..

Hayden looks down, then back up.

HAYDEN
Ok. Yeah.

She shakes her head, fighting back more tears. Then leaves.

Hayden stands alone.

EXT. PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Manny sits alone on his porch alone, drinking a beer. He watches the CROWD of people walk by.

CRASH.

Part of the shed roof caves in.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

A SLEAZY LANDLORD lets Hayden into a horrible-looking apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - NIGHT

River looks out the window as a bus pulls out of the station.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

The commune house, but closed down. Windows boarded up, moss growing on the sides.

EMMANUEL SR.

Wowza, this is surreal.

EMMANUEL DROGOS SR., Manny's father, stands with his hands on his hips in front of the house. Behind him, a YOUNG MANNY, a YOUNH HAYDEN, and a YOUNG RIVER.

Emmanuel Jr. holds the photo of the first commune members (from Manny's room) in his hands.

EMMANUEL SR. (CONT'D)

I talked to the other founding members last night. They resent the idea of owning land in the first place, so, you kids really want to do this?

Young River steps forward.

YOUNG RIVER

Yes sir.

Emmanuel Sr. faces her. Young Manny stands behind her, somewhat terrified.

EMMANUEL SR.

This isn't like other school clubs, ok? You have to be totally committed at all times. You'll plant and harvest, of course, cook all your own meals. But it's more than that too. When things break, you need to fix them, when storms destroy crops, you need to have backup plans, when--

YOUNG RIVER

"The changing of society and the world rests upon us and we are the driving force in this change. We, Communists, change society and the world, and at the same time ourselves."

Emmanuel Sr.'s eyebrows raise.

YOUNG RIVER (CONT'D)
 "How to be a Good Communist", Liu
 Shaoqi.

EMMANUEL SR.
 (to young Manny)
 I like this one.
 (back to River)
 Most importantly, you need to
 find good comrades. My son has
 made a good first choice.

He extends a hand to Young River, she takes it.

EMMANUEL SR.
 Good luck.

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Isabella sits at the bar (from her first scene with Shane)
 playing with the lime at the bottom of a plastic cup. The
 manilla folder lies open beside her.

The place is BUZZING with FANS and LOCALS. The jukebox plays
 classic rock. Pool balls are broken. GENINE wipes down the bar.

GENINE
 He looked sleazy when you brought
 him here the first time.

ISABELLA
 You're just saying that cause he
 drove a Mercedes.

GENINE
 No, I'm not. He had a sour look on
 his face and his shoes were fake
 leather.

ISABELLA
 How do you know that?

GENINE
 Trust me, I know fake leather.

ISABELLA
 Yeah...

She finishes off the last bit of tequila in her cup and slams
 down the glass.

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GENINE

I think you need to go down and talk to him. You want another?

ISABELLA

No. And it's not that simple. I have to schedule a time that works for him and--

GENINE

No no no. You'll only get treated how you let yourself get treated. A man won't stop treating you bad cause one day he wakes up feeling guilty. You gotta walk out on him for a few nights, let him feel how cold that bed gets all alone.

Isabella thinks about this.

GENINE (CONT'D)

You think you become a big-time executive at O'Donnel by apologizing first?

GUS

Fuck O'Donnell.

GUS, a drunk farmer, slumps two seats down from Isabella. She turns to him.

ISABELLA

What makes you say that?

GUS

(drunkenly)

Fuckers shut down the whole thing...prices kept moving...I couldn't...

His words become incoherent. Isabella turns to Genine, who shakes her head.

GENINE

A lot of these local farms aren't surviving this takeover. They corporatized a few years back, O'Donnel kept paying them less and less until they couldn't afford to keep running and had to sell to em for cheap. Gus is only the latest.

She points to a table in the back. FOUR FARMERS drink in silence.

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GENINE (CONT'D)

They've been in here every night
for a month.

Isabella looks back at them, then to her folder. She starts to
pack it up.

ISABELLA

Maybe you're right Genine. Maybe
you're right.

Genine shrugs.

GENINE

Maybe.

Isabella throws some cash on the bar and turns to exit.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Isabella gets off a public bus and walks inside.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Isabella comes to a hotel room door and KNOCKS.

Shane comes to the door in a bathrobe, slightly tipsy.

SHANE

Izzy!

ISABELLA

Isabella. My name is Isabella.
Please refer to me as such.

Shane opens the door for her.

SHANE

Ok, jeez.

Isabella takes a step in

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is a mess. Shane's semi-unpacked bag is open on the
bed, clothes are everywhere.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Sit if you can find somewhere.

ISABELLA

I'm fine here.

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Shane plops down on the edge of the bed.

SHANE

What can I do you for at this hour?

ISABELLA

Look, I...Today wasn't awesome, for me. I'm new to all this but, I just don't see how all of this is going to happen.

SHANE

What are you talking about?

Isabella opens her folder.

ISABELLA

All day I was trying to show you this research, these plans. In a month we have to start planting on that land, do we have a plan at all? How are we gonna make this all happen?

Shane stands.

SHANE

You're overthinking this. Executives don't get involved in all of that.

ISABELLA

All these executives all of a sudden, I don't even understand what they do. Who the hell is Tommy?

She spots a small pile of cocaine on the bedside table.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, that's who he is.

SHANE

You don't know what you're talking about.

ISABELLA

These are good ideas, I know they are. We can work with local farmers to help them and our business.

SHANE

OUR business?

Made in Highland

ISABELLA

You said I was going to be your number two.

SHANE

We put nothing in writing.

Isabella is taken aback.

SHANE (CONT'D)

That was your idea.

He takes a step towards her.

SHANE (CONT'D)

You're too smart to think this is that complicated. Next week, we bring in all our machines. The land has been mapped out already. It doesn't matter what grows here, that's why we have scientists. They spray the ground with whatever the hell we need and something will grow. And we will sell it. In May, a million fucking immigrants are gonna head south looking for work and you know what? We can pay em whatever we want.

She stares at him. He takes another step closer, putting his hand on her waist and looking down at it.

SHANE (CONT'D)

So how are you gonna make yourself useful, to the company of course?

Isabella smacks his hand away. She stares at him for a second before turning around and slamming the door.

Shane wanders to the bed and collapses.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Manny walks, looking at the buildings. Cars WHIZZ by him. He sees Shane's hotel.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Isabella storms out. She walks to the sidewalk, then stops.

She looks up to keep the tears from falling. A DEEP BREATH. She's ok.

She walks towards

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

She plops down on a bench and takes out a pack of cigarettes.

20 feet away, Manny approaches. He squints and realizes it's her. She blows smoke into the air.

He pauses, thinks, then approaches her.

MANNY

You smoke?

Isabella jumps.

ISABELLA

You scared me, Manny.

She starts to put out the cigarette.

MANNY

It's fine, I won't tell anyone.

He sits down beside her and takes out an Altoids tin filled with hand-rolled cigarettes. He lights one.

ISABELLA

Do you roll them yourself?

MANNY

And grow the tobacco.

ISABELLA

Of course.

MANNY

You have friends here for the game?

ISABELLA

What?

MANNY

The hotel.

ISABELLA

Oh, right, um, no. Shane is there.

MANNY

Shane?

Isabella SIGHS and takes another drag.

ISABELLA
Shane O'Donnell.

Manny nods.

MANNY
Of course.

They sit for a beat, staring out at the road.

ISABELLA
Where are your friends?

MANNY
They're comrad--I don't know where they are.

ISABELLA
Manny, you are...impressive. I mean you believe what you believe. Even if you're all alone in that belief, it's your belief.

MANNY
Yeah well...what good is a communist all alone?

She LAUGHS quietly.

ISABELLA
I've been alone for a long time. Being alone isn't so bad.

MANNY
Do you really think so?

ISABELLA
Well, it's certainly easier to focus. You can keep your own goals in mind. Other people...complicate things.

MANNY
That's a lonely way to think.

ISABELLA
Yes. Yes, it is.

She takes a long drag and blows the smoke upwards.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
I'll admit though, I envy the community you create.
(she laughs)
(MORE)

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Liberals are much nicer to
each other.

Manny chuckles.

MANNY
I promise we aren't. It only
appears that way.

ISABELLA
Still, you are your friends sit
down for dinner together every
day, no?

Manny looks down. That one hurts.

MANNY
You can join us if you'd like.

She turns to him.

MANNY (CONT'D)
I'm not sure how many comrades
will be there but...if you'd like
to see what it's like. You can.

She looks at him and almost smiles.

ISABELLA
Be careful, I might just take you
up on that.

He stands and takes another cigarette from the Altoids tin.

MANNY
Try these. They're much better.

She looks at it for a second, then takes it.

MANNY (CONT'D)
We have guests on Saturday nights.

He walks off.

She leans back and looks down at the cigarette.

MONTAGE

-The next morning, the sun rises over the commune house and
campus.

-Manny sits on the porch reading theory and watching the
sunrise. He gets up and straightens his beret.

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- Isabella walks into the economics building.
- Manny swings the shed doors open.
- Isabella walks into her tiny office.
- Manny takes the debris from the roof out of the shed piece by piece.
- Isabella looking at a document denying her tenure.
- Manny throwing the debris into a trash can.
- Isabella packing up her things into cardboard boxes.
- Manny lifting two big bags of mulch onto his shoulder and walking out of the shed. He struggles a little.
- Isabella grading a stack of final papers looking exhausted.
- Manny, covered in dirt, shapes small holes for new plants. He sits back and wipes his brow. He's only 10% of the way through all the rows.
- Isabella slamming a stack of final papers onto Dean Wyman's desk. He looks up from his work as she walks out.
- Manny placing seeds in the row. The sun is lower.
- Isabella walking out of campus by Shane. He turns as she goes by but she does not acknowledge him.

EXT. PORCH - SUNSET

Manny trudges up the steps. He's sweaty and covered in dirt.
He plops down on the top step and takes off his beret.

ISABELLA

Hi.

He looks up. Isabella stands in front of the house with a cake dish.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I brought dessert.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Water rushes out of an old faucet. Manny washes out produce in the sink.

Isabella sits at the table, scanning the room. Her cake is in front of her on the table.

MANNY

Sorry, this should only be a few more minutes.

He moves to the oven and opens it. A quiche is baking.

ISABELLA

Don't worry about it.

MANNY

To be honest, I did not think you would come.

Isabella laughs.

ISABELLA

Me neither. But, I don't know, I was compelled to see how this all works.

A timer DINGS. Manny puts on oven mitts and takes out the quiche.

MANNY

Well...

He puts the quiche on the stove to cool, then walks over to the giant whiteboard.

MANNY (CONT'D)

We work the field all together three or four times a week. That's when we do bigger jobs like planting or harvesting. Everything else, chores, cooking, watering plants, is split up into a weekly rotation.

ISABELLA

So where are they?

Manny stays looking at the board.

MANNY

They're out of town this weekend.

ISABELLA
All of them.

MANNY
(short)
Yes.

ISABELLA
(quiet)
Ok.

MANNY
Let's eat.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Manny and Isabella sit face to face at a small hand-made table. The room is neat but grimy. Large posters of Ché Guevara and Vladimir Lenin hang on either wall.

Isabella takes a bite and closes her eyes.

ISABELLA
Home cooking.

MANNY
I saw today, actually, that
O'Donnell sells a quiche. A pre-
made one.

ISABELLA
It's not as good as this.

MANNY
I believe that. Maybe you can give
them some tips.

Isabella shifts.

ISABELLA
I'm not--I won't be working with
O'Donnell going forward.

Manny looks up at her.

MANNY
Why?

Isabella thinks for a beat.

ISABELLA

We decided--I'm going in a different direction, for now.

Manny nods.

MANNY

So you'll just keep teaching?

ISABELLA

No, actually, not that either.

MANNY

Hm.

An awkward beat.

MANNY

Unemployment is a problem created by capitalism.

Isabella laughs.

ISABELLA

Maybe.

(she thinks)

I really thought O'Donnell would help me with that. Tenure was not looking like a promising option. Shane was down here buying up land and I saw an opportunity.

MANNY

They tried to buy this place.

ISABELLA

And you said no.

MANNY

Of course.

Isabella sits back and crosses her arms in thought.

ISABELLA

Ideology is a crazy thing. I thought a job at O'Donnell would be...everything I needed. It was a 'smart move'. Something that would make people say 'wow! that's a good gig.' You don't get caught up in that though. You have this creed, this way of life, it keeps you on one path.

Manny looks down, thinking.

MANNY

It can be...alienating.

ISABELLA

What can be?

MANNY

Staying on one path.

ISABELLA

Yeah.

MANNY

My friends aren't out of town.

Isabella looks at him. She knew this.

MANNY (CONT'D)

I don't know. Maybe the path got too hard for them. Maybe, eventually, everyone has to switch paths.

(he thinks)

We didn't sell. O'Donnell came to our front door with a hefty offer and we didn't sell. And I don't know if that matters. I'll graduate in May and after that, who knows what's gonna happen.

ISABELLA

Do you have a plan? After graduation?

MANNY

My dad always pushed law school, then D.C. But I don't know yet.

ISABELLA

Would you want to work on the hill?

MANNY

Lord no. I don't know if they'd like me too much anyways. I always gave my dad a hard time for being...I don't know...part of the establishment.

ISABELLA

I saw these farmers, yesterday, at a bar I go to. They're real farmers. Old school guys. At least they were.

(MORE)

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
 O'Donnell killed those local farms. They all ended up selling for cheap. Point is, I think the establishment will get you no matter how hard you try.

MANNY
 I'd love to talk to those guys. I can't even imagine...a whole life on your own terms and then one day, Shane fuckin' O'Donnell.

ISABELLA
 (smiling)
 I could use a drink.

MANNY
 We should go.

ISABELLA
 We can't do that.

MANNY
 Yes, we can. You're not even gonna be my professor anymore.

ISABELLA
 It's not really your crowd.

MANNY
 I can handle that.

ISABELLA
 Can you?

Manny hesitates a second, then

MANNY
 Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

More crowded than the last we saw it. COUNTRY MUSIC from a jukebox. A trump flag behind the bar.

FARMERS sit at a table crushing beers.

Isabella walks in with Manny following. She nods to Genine.

Manny looks around. This is not his scene.

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They push through the crowd towards the bar. Manny gets some strange looks. He takes off his beret and smooths his hair forward.

ISABELLA

Hey!

Genine turns and smiles. Isabella leans in.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I'll do a tequila sunrise.

She turns to Manny.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

What do you drink?

MANNY

Uhhh I like a vodka wit--You know what, beer is fine.

Isabella nods.

ISABELLA

(yelling over the crowd)

Genine!

GENINE

Yeah?

Isabella looks back to the table of farmers.

ISABELLA

How are they going to react if we go sit with them?

GENINE

You want to sit with them?

Isabella nods.

GENINE (CONT'D)

If you buy 'em a round I'm sure they'll be a lot friendlier.

Isabella looks back at Manny.

MANNY

It's a good idea.

He reaches into his pocket and takes out a wallet. He opens it. There is a single, old dollar bill and a Communist Party of America membership card.

MANNY (CONT'D)

But uh...

ISABELLA

It's fine. Don't worry about it.

Isabella hands her card to Genine.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Keep it open. Send a round of millers over.

Isabella turns from the bar, Manny follows. They head back towards the farmers' table.

MANNY

Sorry I haven't bought clothes or groceries in like three years.

ISABELLA

It's fine, really.

They arrive at the table. HANK, a local corn farmer, sits at the head. ANDY, a bean farmer, and PHIL, a potato farmer, sit on either side. OTHER FARMERS fill the other seats. They drink in silence.

ISABELLA

Hello Gentlemen!

Andy looks up slightly, no one else moves.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

How are we today.?

No answer.

Manny pulls up two chairs. They take a seat.

A WAITER arrives with a tray of beers. The farmers look up at this. Isabella smiles awkwardly.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

This round is on us.

She takes his seat. The waitress starts passing out beers.

The men sip in silence. Isabella and Manny sit, waiting for something to happen. Nothing does.

Isabella leans forward.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

So, I hear you men are farmers.

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HANK
Used to be.

Nods from the other farmers.

ISABELLA
When did you stop farming?

Manny's eyes move slightly toward Isabella.

HANK
Must've been...two thousand and...
ten.

ANDY
It was 11.

HANK
I thought it was 10.

ANDY
11 is when the contracts were up.
10 was the leaf rust.

PHIL
It's the leaf rust that did it.

Nods from the other farmers.

ISABELLA
Leaf rust?

MANNY
It's a crop disease. A bad one. It
can live season to season.

Hank looks at Manny. He sees a small sickle and hammer pin on his t-shirt.

HANK
What's your pin?

Manny looks down and realized.

MANNY
Uhh...it's an organization.

HANK
Looks communist.

MANNY
It is.

Hank does not answer.

ANDY
A lot of good Americans died
fighting people like you.

Isabella smiles and tries to break the tension.

ISABELLA
So--I'm interested--what made you
want to stop farming?

HANK
Are you people here from fuckin'
O'Donnells?

ISABELLA
No no no--

HANK
I don't like fuckin O'Donnells.

ISABELLA
We are not here from O'Donnells.
We're here on our own accord. I
work at the college.

HANK
Hm.

Hanks sips his beer and looks away.

ANDY
We stopped farming when we had to
sell the land.

MANNY
Did you sell to O'Donnell?

Andy just looks at him.

MANNY (CONT'D)
T-they tried to buy my land this
year.

Hank looks back at him.

HANK
YOU have land?

MANNY
It was my father's.

ISABELLA

I think Manny wants to know if they approached you in the same way.

PHIL

Approached?

MANNY

Someone from O'Donnell came to my front door one day, showed me a big number, and hoped I'd bite. I didn't.

The other farmers look at him with a mix of envy and awe.

Hank almost laughs.

ANDY

That's not exactly how it went. Wasn't so fast.

ISABELLA

When did it start?

Andy thinks.

ANDY

'07, I think.

PHIL

No, it was 2008.

ANDY

Right, right. They bought Tommy's farm on park road.

PHIL

I thought it was on smith road.

ANDY

Nope. Had to be park.

PHIL

No becau--

HANK

You're both wrong. It was before that. It was '01 when they bought the seed distributor. It was all over once they had the seeds.

Phil and Andy nod.

ISABELLA

The seeds. They started with seeds. I think I knew that. Did they raise the prices when they bought it?

Hank shakes his head.

HANK

Nope. They just sold less of 'em.

MANNY

Less seeds?

HANK

Less variety. Used to be you could grow 10, 15 different types of corn seed 'round here. After '01, it was nothing but dent corn.

ISABELLA

That's what changed everything?

HANK

Sure.

ANDY

The seeds they sold were the cheapest wholesale, but they don't grow good 'round here. You had to buy their chemicals, their fertilizers, their tools, just to get any sort of yield. Got mighty expensive year after year.

PHIL

Then the contracts came and you weren't selling to buyers. You just got a lump sum and were expected a yield.

MANNY

Corpratizing.

HANK

That's right.

PHIL

Contracts kept getting smaller, nothing we could do. One year, couldn't make the yield. Had to sell to 'em.

ANDY

At least before then, you could walk out every morning and work something that was yours.

They nod and sip. Manny and Isabella look at them.

ISABELLA

Wow. I didn't know any of that.
(she shakes her head)
Yeah. Wow, I--Yeah.

Manny leans forwards.

MANNY

So all you need is land?

HANK

What?

MANNY

To farm again. If you could get some land, you could do it.

HANK

I don't have the money for new land, did you not understand--

MANNY

No, I understand. I have a house on Garsdale road. There is a small plot of land ready to be replanted. I graduate in May and I can't--I can not--sell it to O'Donnell. Can't we figure something out here?

HANK

I don't know.

MANNY

Just come by and see it.

ISABELLA

It's bigger than you think. And it's well organized.

Manny looks at her. She shrugs.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

That's the truth.

Hank looks at Andy and Phil.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMUNE - NIGHT

Manny leads Isabella and the group of farmers down the rows of crops and planter boxes. They look around, judging and assessing the layout of the farm.

MANNY

So here is the bigger stuff. A little bit of corn and some bamboo, actually. In the boxes is smaller things. Beans, veggies, herbs. We have some internal irrigation and a solid set of tools in the shed.

(he stops walking)

It's not much, I know, but it works well.

Hank nods and looks around slightly. he points at a box.

HANK

You shouldn't put your onions so close to your beans. They won't play nice.

MANNY

Ok. Yeah. That's good to know. So what do you think?

HANK

What am I supposed to think? It's a garden. It's nice. Don't see how we can do much here.

MANNY

I thought, maybe, you all could use the land for your own crops and--

HANK

I ain't interested in being no sharecropper.

MANNY

And I'm not interested in making any profit off of you. It's a...team thing. You all work here, together. We pool resources we--

HANK

And I definitely ain't interested
in being no damn communist.

Manny stares at him, panting.

Isabella steps forward.

ISABELLA

There might be something we can
work out here.

(pointing to hank)

Hank, it's definitely small,
and you'd probably have to work
together more than you're used to,
but this is land and it's free to
use. That's a damn good
opportunity if you ask me.

Hank looks at Andy and Phil.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Manny, I think some policies
around here are going to have to
change.

Manny turns his head at her.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Just hear me out. The area is
divided up pretty neatly. Let's
say 75% of this will go to Hank
and all the rest of them. You'll
divide it up based on need, and
the other 25% can remain communal
until you graduate. Hank, y'all
can plant whatever you want in
your area, Give a small part to
Manny and his... comrades, then
the rest of the yield is yours to
sell.

Hank and Manny stare at each other. Isabella looks between
them.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

So...?

MANNY

I think...that could potentially
work. It will take some getting
used to but, I don't see what else
we can do.

Hank stares at Manny.

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ANDY
Hell, I'll do it.

Hank looks right at him.

ANDY (CONT'D)
I haven't gotten my hands dirty in
ten years.

PHIL
15, I think.

ANDY
I'm in.

HANK
Well alright.

Isabella leans in, almost surprised.

ISABELLA
So we might...have a deal here?

Manny walks forward, stops at hank, and extends a hand.

Hank shakes it.

Isabella claps.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Holy shit I can't believe it.

Manny turns around and walks toward the house.

He stops at Isabella and puts a hand on her shoulder. He thinks
for a second, then turns back to the group.

MANNY
Can we all be here tomorrow at 5
pm?

Hank nods. Manny nods back.

He turns back and keeps walking.

ISABELLA
Where are you going?

MANNY
I gotta see about something.

He walks off.

Hanks kneels and rubs his hand over the dirt.

INT. GREENHOUSE - NIGHT

Manny walks in from a side door. Huge plants grow everywhere.

He stops at a window and checks his reflection. He fixes his hair and stands up straight.

River sees him checking himself

RIVER

Hi...

Manny whips around.

MANNY

Hi.

Silence. Manny takes a few steps closer.

MANNY

I umm...I'm not sure what I'm supposed to say.

RIVER

I can think of something.

Manny shifts.

RIVER

How did you know I was working here?

MANNY

I--I followed you once after class. Like 30 feet behind you. It's a research position, right?

RIVER

Yeah.

Hayden stands and comes to the door. Manny looks at the ground.

MANNY

I wanted to tell you...the commune is doing some new things. Allowing other people to use the land, working with some local farmers.

RIVER

Well, that's great Manny, I'm really happy for you.

She turns around to walk away.

MANNY

Hold on...I really--am sorry. I'm sorry for the football game and for...a lot of what led up to that and...

RIVER

Thank you.

MANNY

This whole thing doesn't work without you guys.

RIVER

I know.

MANNY

Tomorrow, everything is going to change. The whole setup of the commune is going to be different and commune probably won't even be the right word anymore and--I can't do it without you.

RIVER

So it won't be communist?

MANNY

I don't--No. I don't think it will be.

RIVER

What about...everything we worked for? All those hours of debating theory and...

MANNY

This is going to help people. Good people who need it. That's all I know right now.

River and Hayden look at each other.

MANNY (CONT'D)

I haven't touched your room. The house is...so quiet. And I miss you.

River brings him in for a hug.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Where's Hayden?

CUT TO:

Made in Highland

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Manny follows River down a shady apartment hallway.

MANNY
He's staying here?

RIVER
Unfortunately.

River knocks on the door. Hayden opens it.

He grabs them both into a big hug.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

FACULTY and PROFESSORS sit dispersed throughout the seats. None are paying full attention.

An ADMINISTRATOR drones on about formatting on stage.

Isabella sits in the back. She checks her watch: 4:32 pm.

Out the door, she sees Shane holding a suitcase and talking to Dean Wyman.

She gets up.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Shane shakes Dean Wyman's hand. Wyman exits.

He takes a small pill bottle out of his jacket and slips a pill into his mouth.

Isabella walks up to him.

ISABELLA
Hey.

He turns, looking guilty.

SHANE
H-hey!

She nods to the suitcase.

ISABELLA
Going somewhere?

SHANE
Yes! Yeah, yes. Transferred back
to New York.

ISABELLA
Really?

SHANE
Yup.

ISABELLA
Well, that's...that's great.

SHANE
I'm happy about it.

ISABELLA
Good.

SHANE
If you're ever in the city, you
let me know, ok?

ISABELLA
Yeah...maybe.

Shane checks his watch.

SHANE
Sorry, I gotta--

ISABELLA
Go ahead.

He walks off. She watches him.

EXT. COMMUNE - DAY

River between a clipboard and the planter boxes. She chews on a pencil.

RIVER
(to herself)
If we put him here...

MANNY
River!

Manny runs from the steps toward her. Hank and the other farmers follow.

River extends a hand.

RIVER
You must be Hank.

Hanks shakes and nods.

Made in Highland

RIVER (CONT'D)

So, I'm trying to get things organized here. Manny tells me you grow corn, so we'll put you here. There's mostly loam soil and it's in the sunlight so it should be good.

Hank makes an impressed face.

HANK

That is correct, young lady.

RIVER

Great.

She takes out a notecard and writes 'HANK' in big letters on it. She bends down and sticks it to the box.

Beside the name card is the pond, slightly bigger now. A frog jumps out. River smiles.

RIVER

Ok, next...

The other farmers follow her. Manny hangs back and heads towards the house.

Isabella approaches the steps holding a packet of papers.

MANNY

Dr. Chinaea.

She smiles.

ISABELLA

This seems to be going rather smoothly, I hate to say I'm surprised but...

Manny looks at River.

RIVER

River has a way with these things.

Isabella hands him the packet of papers.

ISABELLA

Your final paper for 436. I don't agree with a word of it but from a rhetorical standpoint, it's very, very impressive.

He takes it.

MANNY

Thank you.

ISABELLA

Manny...you could do some impressive things in Washington.

MANNY

Come on...

ISABELLA

I'm not saying drop everything and work for the DNC but...there are some NGOs, some nonprofits...you could be a valuable resource to a lot of people.

Manny looks in the distance at River, then at the house.

MANNY

I need to make it to graduation.

He starts to walk inside.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Stick around, we could use your help.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Manny walks in smiling.

Hayden sits at a table with Josh and OTHER FRESHMAN reading.

HAYDEN

Manny!

MANNY

What's up, everyone?

HAYDEN

Just teaching the good book my friend.

He lifts the book. It's the Communist Manifesto.

MANNY

Love it.

Manny walks into

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

He stops at the picture of his dad and the original commune members. Next to it, he hangs a picture of the new commune members: him, River, Hayde, Josh, Hank, Phil, Andy, and Isabella.

He smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

Dean Wyman stands at a podium in a gown. He reads from a list of names.

DEAN WYMAN
Emmanuel Drogos Jr.

Manny hops up from his seat and walks towards the podium.

In the crowd, Hank, Andy, and Phil HOOT and HOLLER, drawing most of the attention to themselves.

Hayden and River grab him into hugs after he leaves the stage.

In the doorway, Isabella watches smiling.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Manny loads a final box into the trunk of a crappy sedan. He SLAMS the trunk.

He walks around to the front of the car. River leans against the hood on her phone.

MANNY
Ready?

RIVER
As I'll ever be.

ISABELLA
Hello there comrade.

Manny turns around. Isabella stands with a small gift box. He sees her and laughs.

MANNY
Thanks for coming.

Made in Highland

ISABELLA

Of course.

She hands him the gift box. He looks up at her for a beat before opening it. It's a small bag of seeds and some dirt in a Tupperware. Manny smiles.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Make good use of it. Don't forget where you came from.

Manny nods at her.

MANNY

Hold on.

He puts the box down and runs into the car. He reemerges with a portfolio filled with paper. He hands it to her.

MANNY (CONT'D)

My senior thesis. You won't agree with it.

ISABELLA

I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - SUNSET

Manny walks out onto the balcony with a small potted plant. The skyline: Washington D.C.

River leans out the window. He kisses her.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMUNE HOUSE - DAY

Isabella stands on the familiar porch, sipping her coffee. HANK pokes his head out.

HANK

They're here.

She smiles and turns back in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A room full of FARMERS sitting on couches, chairs, and the floor around the room. They CHAT nervously.

Made in Highland

Isabella enters.

ISABELLA

Hello everyone, welcome to the
Family Farm Project. We're here to
help families like you make their
farms profitable without
corporatizing or downsizing. We're
here to help you.

THE END

REFLECTION PAPER

I started working on my thesis in the fall of 2021. It had been about thirteen months since the onset of the pandemic and the effects were still overwhelming. I was masking at work and in classes, washing my hands as soon as I walked in the door, and checking the news profusely. The pandemic had been going on for over a year and no clear end was in sight. Still, I had been in the Pandemic long enough to begin analyzing it. I was different, and the world I saw was different too. I consider myself, among other things, an optimist, but my optimism was continually being proven wrong. I think the pandemic marked an end to a certain innocence within myself and the world. Perhaps this was just my getting older, but it seemed to me that the pandemic gave way to a certain overt selfishness from people in power. What emerged during the pandemic was a clear power structure in which massive corporations control most resources and narratives. The more time I spent in lockdown, the more I realized how much control corporations have over our lives. Amazon has any product I could ever want; Apple and Meta control nearly all my personal data and communication; big pharmaceutical companies like Novartis or Bayer have sole access to certain life-saving medications. It has become essentially impossible to live free from corporations in some way. I began working on my thesis with this as my backdrop. I wanted to write a story that reflected this reality and the experience I had with the ever-corporatizing world around me.

I began with the universality of corporate sales. Corporations do not discriminate. I was interested in the idea that, no matter what your individual beliefs are, corporations could market and sell to you. While the right and the left were screaming at each other in the streets of Washington D.C., massive corporations were making money off both sides. The labels we use to define our political and ethical identities are ultimately unimportant to those in power, yet they

feel so important to our own self-determination. I wanted to create characters who, like me, deeply valued their own beliefs and politics. One character would be a far-right conservative and the other would be a leftist/communist. The initial concept of the script was to bring these two characters together through their experience with a massive corporation. I wanted to show that, even though they began in vastly different places, the corporations will use them all the same.

The first year of working on this script was dedicated to the structure. “Commune” is my first feature-length script and much of this process was about learning how to beat out and understand something of this length. Dr. Hagopian and I knew this story was going to have two very prominent characters, possibly even two protagonists. I worked to balance their two storylines and bring the characters together naturally. Dr. Hagopian had me write out two character arcs side by side and determine when the characters would interact. The plot changed many times and I found myself constantly revising and trimming the story in order to keep it focused. For example, in the first iteration of the script Isabella had two undocumented immigrant cousins working for O’Donnell. I found it impossible to keep track of this third storyline and decided that these characters were not essential to the overall story. Dr. Hagopian helped me talk out many of these issues and determine what was essential to say what I was trying to say. I became more aware of the character arcs that Manny and Isabella go through and made sure they were the focus of the script.

Once I determined the structure of the script, it was easier to gain momentum while writing. The more I wrote, the more I felt I understood who these characters are. I began with Manny. Manny is a character I strongly identify with, and I channeled much of my own experiences and frustrations into his story. I am unashamed of my views and can have a quick temper when tested. A big part of my own maturation process was learning to listen to people

whom I disagree with and keep my mouth shut when necessary. Manny goes through a similar experience. I have always had some tension with authority figures in my life and I often took out my frustrations on high school teachers who did not deserve it. I wanted to take down ‘the man’ and at 15, teachers seemed like ‘the man.’ I modeled Manny’s opinion about Isabella after my own experience with teachers I disagreed with. Manny learns, however, that Isabella is as much a victim of the system as he is, possibly even more so. Because of this, I wanted Isabella’s character to be smart, kind, and sympathetic. I knew initially that the story would not work if Isabella was an evil, selfish, stereotypical right-wing thinker. She is simply someone trying to achieve their own vision of success and personal satisfaction. While Manny sees success as self-sufficiency and communal living, Isabella sees success as personal achievement and career growth. Neither truly wants to bring the other down. Every scene in the outline forced them into something new and I had to ask myself “What would they do in this situation?”. When they finally interact as equals, outside of Shanes’ hotel, I had to be very careful to make their vulnerability real and meaningful. I wanted the audience to believe that they had reached a point where they could truly set aside their differences. Once these larger scenes and arcs were figured out, I could explore the smaller nuances of each character. For instance, in Act III, when Manny goes to the bar with Isabella, he has no money in his wallet. As I was writing this scene, it occurred to me that, because Manny is a self-sufficient communist, he had to need to carry cash. These small details added up throughout my writing until I felt like I had a complete picture of the characters.

It took me about a year and a half to finish the first draft, but once I was done, I had a very clear idea of what the script was trying to say. The structure was complete, and the two main characters felt real. I was able to spend the last few months giving the script depth and

texture. I tried to make the side character more three-dimensional so that every character had some kind of arc. I reinforced the world in which the story takes place—a small liberal arts college in Georgia. I even did extra research on the economics of corporate farming and independent farming so the script would feel more real. This part of the writing was probably the most fun. I was able to explore my creativity and find ways to make each character and location unique to the story.

Writing this script taught me how to approach telling a story. I had never written anything of this length and a big part of the process was understanding what points come when. I had to learn about establishing conflicts early, building to a climax, and keeping the momentum focused on the ending. There were moments when I felt I would never finish the script, but with Dr. Hagopian's help, I kept my story focused and meaningful to me. I feel more prepared to enter a career in screenwriting because of my work on this script.