

Exegesis and screenplay for a film entitled:

# **Shell Seekers**

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A thesis submitted to the Auckland University of Technology (AUT)  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Communication Studies (MCS)

**2011**

School of Communication Studies

David Hughes - primary supervisor

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## **Authorship certification**

“I hereby declare this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which, to a substantial extent, has been accepted to the qualification of any other degree, or diploma, of a university, of other institution of high learning, except where acknowledgement is made.”

Nicole Colmar  
August 4, 2011

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my tutor and mentor, David Hughes, for his enormous support through all those tumultuous years. Your keen observations, diplomatic and constructive communication, and encouragement has been invaluable.

Much gratitude is extended to Craig Sinclair and Jeff McMillan for their faith in me and my abilities.

## 1. Lost and found in translation

### **Abstract:**

Being Madeleine

This isn't my life. This is the "screenplay" (book) I wrote about my life.  
Janet Frame (and me)

Shell Seekers is a coming of age story of a young part ni-Vanuatu woman trying to reconcile her fragmented past. It is a past that is constructed through memory, fantasy and myth; from memories of an idyllic childhood in paradise, to the realities of educational aspirations in New Zealand, a return home permeated by local sweet/souring of Anglophile and Francophile colonial aftertastes, then as a young woman "in the belly of the beast" that is London, looking for a father and answers.

A romantic encounter proves to be an eye-opener for Madeleine, who finally discovers that her displaced homeward journey is inevitably circular, and what "home" has become is borne out of memory, love and desire; a place she, literally, cannot "return" to again.

Although many original works are often viewed as being semi-autobiographical, all the characters, including the central character of Madeleine Hughes are, in essence, fictions.

Shell Seekers, the first 'completed' draft, is an original concept.

## **Introduction:**

My move towards screenwriting as an art-based academic inquiry evolved from a personal compulsion to creatively and intellectually articulate an emergent position - of a juxtaposing and enunciation of a 'past' which latently permeates the present, and enabling forward transformation. As it has transpired this involved considerable energy and commitment on and off over the last four years, where some of the issues I sought to gain an appropriate perspective on, at times, emerged to "reassert" themselves. The construction of the written screenplay combined with the necessary "downtimes" of critical reflection - that which drives the writing process, was both immediate and highly relevant given the intrapersonal and cross cultural nature of the experience. It was through this continuous cycle of writing and reflecting that I came to scope the project into three practical phases.

Many of the surprises encountered within the reflective inquiry arose from the significant amount of personal "hidden data" that surfaced through the creative practice itself. This added an element of seeming randomness - of not being the writer and that the work was "writing itself". In some instances, these cut across the original concepts for the screenplay, which were of a more conservative or "classical Hollywood" style. Much of this came to an abrupt stop in the middle phase as I struggle to keep up with my characters, highlighting psychological realities of reflection in action with new emotively-loaded data. But having revealed itself in the process, this new data contributed to establishing an appropriate conceptual framework in the third phase of the project.

## 2. 'Hidden data' and the reflective writer

I was born into and spent my childhood in a well-off mixed-raced family in Vanuatu, formerly known as the New Hebrides, in the year the islands became independent from France and Britain. Since, I have lived my adolescence and adult life in New Zealand; I've also spent some time in Britain. It is from 25 years of this unique position that I have come to engage with the notion of independence.

While Donald Schon's (1983) notion of reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action is central to the construction of the first draft of the *Shell Seekers* screenplay, evolving on and off over the course of four years, the tension that exists between art making (in this case creative writing) and research activity remains valid, in particular when trying to articulate what new knowledge has been gained through the writing process.

The debates about the nature of research in the creative disciplines can be both complex and perplexing to a practitioner. Given the somewhat solitary activity of writing, I've found it difficult to identify the process as more than art making that purely develops my individual practice, as oppose to creative practice as an integral part of research which looks to advance the discipline as a whole, especially given the highly personal nature of the subject matter.

However, within the inquiry process exists what Barbara Bolt (2007) identifies as central to practice-led research; the double articulation that exists between theory and creative practice, where "theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time that practice is informed by theory" (Barrett & Bolt, 2007, p.29).

Wanting to avoid previous trappings of framing (explained more fully later on), I sought to adopt the most organic and natural approach in construction, both in the writing process and within the screenplay's narrative itself, taking great pains remain authentic and unforced.

Schon's method of reflection-in-action involved looking to my individual experiences, connecting feelings or mood, and translating this by verbal then written use. Within

this process, I would explore my leading themes, allowing for further responses and developments. A critical aspect of this process is the questioning of the assumptive nature of knowing-in-action (KIA), where the action indicates what is already known. And it is here that the writing process begins to feed the storytelling and vice versa. While it often appeared that the unique cultural and personal nature of my data can often be left unexplained, particularly when certain themes would be expanded upon, this “hidden data”, or what Schon calls “tacit knowledge”, is revealed within the narrative itself i.e. cultural practices, conduct, psychology, and language. It lent a predominant element of organic authenticity to the inquiry.

These can be linked with reflection-on-action, done after the encounter. Here I took advantage of informal jottings of thoughts, emotions, observations, along with weekly discussions with my tutor. This allowed time for exploration of various aspects of the script i.e. narrative, characters, tone etc... which grew as more and more “hidden” knowledge came to light. Later, these would be reframed into actual scenes; some of these would be fluid in nature, acting almost like a bridge between core ideas.

Over the years, a repertoire is built up of images, ideas, examples, notes and action (drafts) that I drew on to construct the screenplay. Schon (1983) explains this as:

*‘When a practitioner makes sense of a situation (s)he perceives to be unique, (s)he sees it as something already present in (her) repertoire. To see this site as that one is not to subsume the first under a familiar category or rule. It is, rather, to see the unfamiliar, unique situation as both similar to and different from the familiar one, without being able to say similar or different with respect to what. The familiar situation functions as a precedent, or a metaphor, or ... an exemplar for the unfamiliar one’ (Schon, 1983, p.138).*

Put simply; having engaged particular themes, despite not fully understanding it, I would put it into action by writing it. Looking at the theme, I am influenced by and use, my “hidden data”, my current repertoire, and new generated knowledge within the written and visual framing of film, under my supervisor’s guidance.

Bolt calls this cycle of hermeneutics “material productivity”, in acknowledgement of the relationship between artists and materials, in this case the relations between writing and processes. She said “in this conception, the materials (processes) are not just passive objects to be used instrumentally by the artist (writer), but rather, the materials and processes of production have their own intelligence that come into play in



interaction with the artist's creative intelligence" (Barrett & Bolt, 2007, p.30, brackets inserted by me). It is this notion of engagement that reveals the very tissue of the processes actively transformative nature.

More so it highlights the double articulation between theory and creative practice, where the initial complex and problematic question of articulating cultural diversity is reframed to negotiate the building of new understandings which informs the action of writing in the situation that is unfolding. Drawing on this cycle of hermeneutics, I will now trace some of the issues, concerns and themes arising from these documented reflections and the creative writing experience itself.

### 3. Framing the colonial Pacific

Between 20,000 and 30,000 islands lie in the area of the Pacific known as Oceania. Europeans spoke of this region as the world of the South Seas, of paradise, of the mysterious Terra Incognita Australis, the Antipodes, the Southern Land (Trewby, 2004).

It was into this world that some of the Pacific's earliest explorers Dutchman Abel Tasman, Spaniard Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, Louis-Antoine de Bougainville and Captain James Cook, sailed into during the 18th century. Having spent a month and a half in the islands of Vanuatu, in his journal, Cook named them "the New Hebrides" after the Westernmost Hebrides of Scotland (MacClancy, 1981).

Along with these early explorers travelled a variety of artists, writers and scientists. The region came to inspire much European literature, art and anthropological studies, from Paul Gauguin's writing and paintings to the writing of James Michener to anthropologist Margaret Mead's infamous research into coming of age in Samoa.

From these early travels, cultural stereotypes of the Pacific and its people began to develop and perpetuated in European discourse. In his famous study, *Orientalism* (1978), Palestinian intellect Edward Said discussed Western colonization of the non-Western through a process of textual representation which works to justify and reinforce the position that those colonised are politically and culturally "inferior" or "exotic Other" to the West. In turn, these representations "form a system of ascribed meanings, associations and images that become the accepted means of referring to Other in dominant discourse" (van Trigt, 2000, p.111). This practice also enforces the "Western concept of self", which continues today (Said, 1978).

The practice of Orientalist stereotypes is evident within the three groupings of Pacific people. The fairer Polynesians and Micronesians were often seen by the Europe to be "racially, morally and politically superior" to the darker Melanesians and Australian Aborigines (Douglas, 1999, p.65). Western literature of the late 19th and early 20th century often presented Polynesians as "gorgeous," "fertile" and "idyllic", while

Melanesians were shown as “decaying”, “hellish” and “backwards” (Kjellgren, 1993, p.99). In fact, by the 1860s after all the islands of the then New Hebrides had been visited, “Vanuatu had gained a popular reputation as a collection of fever-ridden islands inhabited by unfriendly cannibals” (MacClancy, 1981, p.38).

Meanwhile, the concept of the Polynesian “noble savage” began to circulate by the end of the 18th century (Smith, 2003, p.261), represented as “the inhabitant of a tropical paradise abundantly stocked with food and all things necessary for a pleasurable, languid existence” (Keown, 2007, p.19). Having been discovered by Europe in 1767, parallels were being drawn between the Tahitian culture and the classic Greek culture. French explorer Bougainville’s described the island as “La Nouvelle Cythere” - the new Cythera, based on the legendary home of Venus, goddess of love, gaining the reputation of a sexual paradise, with many early explorers’ journals talked of the willingness of Tahitian women to offer sexual favours to European males, particular common during trade negotiations (Keown, 2007).

The European discourse of Polynesian sexuality is typical of the imperial male fantasy of the perfect female; passive, receptive, intuitive, irrational, and in need of domination. This is played out in the Pacific romance narrative of French writer and painter Paul Gauguin and American author Herman Melville, both visited French Polynesia. In his book *Noa Noa*, Gauguin describes his sexual relationship with a 13-year old Tahitian girl, while Melville’s 1846 boys’ adventure novel *Typee* romantically boasted of the great physical beauty of the Marquesas females.

The notion of the Pacific romance narrative can be applied to the character of Teddy, Madeleine’s father. Similar to romance and travel adventure authors of the colonial period, such Melville and later Jack London and R.M. Ballantyne, Teddy displays what Ali Behdad (1996) calls a “belated” orientalist sensibility. Like the authors, Teddy has been partly spurred to the Pacific in pursuit of an authentic encounter with the “exotic Other”, and partly through his belief in the discourse on social Darwinism at the time, which said that Pacific people would soon become extinct due to contact with the West (Keown, 2007). While being aware and even critical of Western influence, Teddy, like London, also wants stake his claim on aspects of the Pacific before it was lost forever, and he does so with his sexual involvement with the “Pacific female

ideal”, ignoring consequences of his actions and its future implications which becomes Madeleine’s reality.

The same romance narrative is later echoed in Spike’s absolute fascination with Madeleine, the seemingly paradisiacal “Other” - common to English. He is also an avid reader of boys’ adventure and travel stories of the Pacific, reflected in a scene in which a 19-year old Madeleine, having just arrived in London and in the initial throes of romance, surveys Spike’s bookshelf which shared many of the same titles as her father’s Teddy. In both characters, I aimed to invoke these nostalgic images of the colonial lands positioned as female, submissive female, in the Western imagination. However, later I began to inflect their romantic longings with the tone of ambivalence, which also existed in popular paperbacks of the late 19th and into the 20th century; the awareness of the European impact. And this is mostly played out in both Teddy and Spike’s relationships with Madeleine, in that she is both “exotic Other” and yet displays characteristics of their Western “self”.

#### 4. Becoming Madeleine

Given the cultural particularities of Vanuatu, and to a greater extent Melanesia as a whole, much emphasis was initially placed in authentic mirror-like reflection of the region. My concerns were seeped in the preservation of the image of the idyllic childhood. While the themes of childhood, friendship, paradise began circulating through discussions with my supervisor, I also began recording my personal thoughts and recollections of my most significant childhood memories. The thought at the times was that this extracted the essence of the data through a purity of process, in which there is as little external influences as possible, particularly of Western framing. With this in mind, only the most primitive recollections were gathered to piece together the most organic sequence as possible, taking great care not to force anything into place. My creative intentions were to recover and gather together these “pure” fragmented childhood memories that I had carried with me over the years, irrelevant of its subjectivity and fallibility.

It was in this vein that the characters of Leah and Titus, Madeleine’s grandparents, became the most strongly developed. The grandparents, *Boubou*, lived their lives bound by *kastom* (custom). *Kastom* is central to the ni-Vanuatu way of life, with MacClancy (1981) describing the practice as “a whole way of life which dictates almost all of one’s actions and provides its own particular interpretation for almost everything that happens. It is complete unto itself” (MacClancy, 1981, p.20). In *kastom*, Western distinctions of society’s structural make-up, such as economics, medicine, politics, religion, cultural arts etc, are “woven together into an intricate and complex whole” (MacClancy, 1981, p.20). Understanding *Kastom* relies on restricted traditional knowledge, often associated with ritualistic ceremonies carried out by men. These ceremonies may be status changing, such as the male rite of passage ceremony, or protection against “evil spirits” to ensure women or gardens are fruitful. So for an old man like Titus the patriarchally inclined *kastom road* is ideal; he has “prestige, power and authority”; he could have more than one wife, did not have to work and has a place in the afterlife (MacClancy, 1981, p.35).

In direct contrast, the *kastom* road for women is not so pleasant. While young men had to struggle through years of bargaining to attain their status as old men, women did not even have this consolation, spending their time doing tedious household tasks. Most women spent their married life away from their family, known primarily as the wife and mother of a relation. Like the prized pigs, which women spend their lifetime caring for, “they are considered as part of a man’s wealth, their possession adding to his prestige” (MacClancy, 1981, p.35). Therefore it is not surprising that young women, like Madeleine, and young men, like Christoph, leave the islands given the opportunity.

This is the essence of Leah and Titus’ relationship to each other, to Vanuatu *kastom*, to Madeleine as well as between Nelly and Madeleine and traditional island life overall. Much of this was discussed weekly with my tutor, and the plot that developed from these initial writings revolved around a childhood friendship cut short by a family’s educational aspiration for their eight-year-old daughter, Madeleine. The theme of family dislocation evolved from this scenario, and was discussed as playing out against contrasting narratives between the girl that remained in the islands, Nelly, and Madeleine, who was to further her education in New Zealand. The narrative at this stage is classically inclined. Here classical goes by the definition of narration consisting of “an undisturbed stage, the disturbance, the struggle, and the elimination of the disturbance” (Bordwell, 2006, p.157).

## 5. Realising Madeleine

Several developments surfaced in the second phase construction, both within the narrative and externally, which led to a major departure from previous processes and themes. The previous reflective practice drew from my childhood experiences, simultaneously tapping into a particular cultural tacit knowledge. The engagement with these tools along with writing produced its own kind of narrative logic. However, in this phase this form of engaging with “hidden data” soon became redundant in the active present that began to unfold. But it was precisely through this form of knowing and the transformative potential of process that the “new” began to emerge.

Having focused primarily on a particular and personalised aspect of the narrative so far, the greater context of Vanuatu as a country remained visually hidden. A political sub-theme was floated and discussed following an insightful reading into the legendary figure of Jimmy Steven and his part in the Santo rebellion in the lead-up to the country’s independence from its Condominium rulers. The idea of a historical tapestry was appealing on a number of levels; it would heighten the unique cultural tensions; inform character motivations, particularly Madeleine’s father Teddy and grandfather Titus; add another layer to the “cultural wallpaper” being built into the screenplay.

However, translating this sub-theme onto paper proved more difficult than anticipated. Whereas previously I had been relying on tacit knowing to provide direction to the “hidden data” of stored memories, this new theme was beyond the realm of memories. For the first time I began casting out to external influences, reading a number of political, sociological and even artefact studies of the Melanesia. The move became frustrating; the “emotional” capacity of previous writings could not be placed in this new theme. As a result what I wrote during this period appeared forced, and lacking in authenticity.

Subsequently, my family’s implosion as a result of my parents’ tumultuous separation brought the screenplay to a near stand-still in this period. Having previously drawn data from cultural tacit knowledge, I was made aware of the full impact of its emotional

capacity during this period; all my senses became overloaded, causing erratic fluctuations and indecisions in my thought processes in regards to my work. Control over the work began to slip, in what screenwriting expert Christopher Vogler (2007) describes as stories being alive and conscious, and responding to human emotions. Notes and writing records at the time reveal a tone of negativity throughout the narrative, where themes of anger, destruction and lurid sexual perversion surfaced. Characters began to assume a life of their own; with Madeleine ending up disenfranchised every which way - from family, culture and herself - hence descent into drug abuses in London.

However, herein lies the major turning point both within the narrative and its handling, as well as in theoretical understanding. In his examination of the particular form of knowledge that arises from creative processes and materials, Martin Heidegger (1966) argues that we don't arrive at theoretical understanding of the world through just contemplative knowledge but rather it's through handling of creative materials and processes. Within this involvement of materials, processes, tools and ideas the new can be seen to emerge. Bolt argues that the motion of the new "is not just the representation of an already formed idea, nor is it achieved through conscious attempts to be original" (Bolt, 2007, p.30). Furthermore, Bolt goes on to suggest in the quest for the new within arts-based research can be misguided resulting "self-conscious attempts at transgression in the belief that this somehow will produce the new" (Bolt, 2007, p.31). But the new cannot be consciously sought, considering that by definition the new cannot be known in advance.



## 6. Disciplining Madeleine

*Passionate research... directed by the secret hope of discovering beyond the misery of today, beyond self-contempt, resignation and abjuration, some very beautiful and splendid era whose existence rehabilitates us both in regard to ourselves and in regard to others.*

Frantz Fanon

In the aftermath, I became conscious of the fact that I was having creative difficulty in employing appropriate visual modes of representation in reconstruction of emotional depth within complex cultural framework. I recognised that it is within the postcolonial postmodern contexts, woven from diverse and complex cultural threads, that the visual negotiations within the screenplay's narrative must emerged. There was a need for a conceptual framework in developing the screenplay in terms of retelling the "story" by re-siting it, and the possible structure that this could have. My attention was drawn to the work of cultural theorist Stuart Hall - in which he opens the identity dialogue by questioning "positions of enunciation" (Hall, 1997, p.222) in relation to an emerging "Third Cinema" of the Caribbean. The main characteristic of this trend are the new post-colonial subjects at the centre of these films. In emphasizing the necessarily circular journeys of displaced post-colonial identities, Hall forced my confrontation of critical points of deep differences that explains "what we really are"; or rather - since history has intervened, "what we have become" (Hall, 1997, p.225).

Within this framework began the critical point of departure from essence or purity concepts of old. I began to reconstruct Madeleine's identity dialogue as living with and through, not despite of difference but by hybridism. And so the theme of the "Diaspora experience" evolved, in which "Diaspora identities are those [that] are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference" (Hall, 1997, p.235).

This new complexity proved difficult to represent cinematically as it could not be presented as a simple, binary opposition - past/present, them/us - nor could I continue to place it in the linear structure of beginning, middle and end. What had organically evolved upon identity deconstruction and reconstruction is the choice to visually visit

the different places, times, but in relation to the same homeward-bound journeys, when identity boundaries are re-sited.

In order to convey these fluid and shape-shifting elements of the Diaspora back-story, I dispensed with the need to offer a visual representation of events by breaking with the cinematic convention of a linear narrative, instead loosening the structure to allow for a the new form to emerge. The resulting form encapsulates childhood memories overlapping with current action until the lines blur, mirroring Madeleine's internal journey. This was done by placing, rewriting and tweaking scenes into an emotionally-led circular narrative. The complex structure revealed a triangular tension of presences described by Hall as *Presence Africaine*, *Presence Europeenne* and *Presence Americaine* (Hall, 1997, p.230-235). The African identity is considered the site of the repressed, played out in Madeleine and Nelly's idyllic childhood that is colonial New Hebrides; the Africa that dominant discourse has frozen into "some timeless zone of the primitive, unchanging past" (Hall, 1997, p.231). Then there's the site of the colonialist in the complex dialogue of the European identity, revealed best in Madeleine's inner compulsion to believe and play along as the "Other" in Britain. Lastly the "New World" of New Zealand is known as the American identity, a site or catalyst for Madeleine's cultural confrontation.

## 7. Conclusion

Colonial and post-colonial theory coupled with practice of critical reflection and collaboration offers a range of ways to negotiate the creative writing process. This Masters study has introduced me to a vast array of ideas and alternative methods of collecting cultural “data”, including those known and unknown. The experience has also exposed my own as-of-yet-unknown cultural conflicts and ambiguities.

I have also gained enormous insights into articulating my creative writing practice as research. However, Schon (1983) points out a particularly important gap that continues to exist between creative practice and academic research:

*Integrating thought with action effectively has plagued philosophers, frustrated social scientists, and eluded professional practitioners for years. It is one of the prevalent and least understood problems of our age.*

Argyris and Schon

In trying to articulate what new knowledge has been gained through the creative writing process, I would tend to agree with Bolt in that “it is art as a mode of revealing and as a material productivity, not just the artwork (screenplay) that constitutes creative arts research” (Bolt, 2007, p.34). It is through articulation of what has emerged through the process of ideas, reflection and collaboration with my supervisor that new knowledge is revealed. In embracing academic research I believe it has enriched the first draft of the Shell Seekers screenplay, as well as the creative writing process.

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## Glossary

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Kastom            | Vanuatu's way of life   |
| Man ples          | Ni-Vanuatu from the same place.   |
| Man kastom        | Those ni-Vanuatu who live by tradition knowledge of kastom (custom). They tend to be of the older generations.            |
| Man skul          | Those ni-Vanuatu who are educated, can refer to the younger generations.  |
| Ni-Vanuatu/ni-Van | A Vanuatu citizen, local  |
| Boubou            | Grandparents  |
| Namele leaves     | Leaves from a local plant which can be placed, by the appropriate person, on land or premises to warn others to keep out. |
| Vemarana          | Morning Star, custom name of a lady who wakes up early.   |
| Namabe            | Eatable nut   |
| Big man           | A ni-Vanuatu man of high status   |
| Nakato            | Hermit crab   |
| Nagriamel         | Movement formed by Jimi Steven in Santo, Vanuatu as resistance to settlers' clearing of virgin bush territory.            |
| Eracore           | Vanuatu's capital Port Vila   |
| Niugini           | Papua New Guinea  |
| Fanafo            | Area in south-east Santo  |
| La plage          | The beach or beachside  |
| Kalabus           | Jail or prison  |
| Vatare-solamol    | Madeleine's island name   |

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**CAST**

Madeleine Hughes

|             |               |             |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Leah        | grandmother   | Vanuatu     |
| Titus       | grandfather   | -           |
| Teddy       | father        | -           |
| Spike       | boyfriend     | London      |
| Christoph   | first love    | Vanuatu     |
| Nelly       | friend        | -           |
| Tapi        | cousin        | -           |
| Christie    | cousin        | -           |
| Yvette      | family friend | -           |
| Mrs White   | teacher       | New Zealand |
| Miss Bailey | teacher       | -           |
| Wazza       | friend        | London      |
| Stu         | friend        | -           |
| Sophie      | friend        | -           |
| Penny       | friend        | -           |
| Jimi Steven | rebel         | Vanuatu     |
| Norris      | English expat | -           |
| Didier      | French expat  | -           |

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**SUPPORTING**

Office staff  
Airport staff  
Party animals

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**EXTRAS**

Santo friends  
Santo market crowd  
New Zealand classmates  
London pub crowd

## Shell Seekers

FADE UP

6. EXT                      LONDON: STREET (1990)                      EARLY MORNING

It's winter and streets of London are icy - an inebriated group approach a small hidden door.

Upon reaching it SPIKE [29] bangs on the door.

They wait, joking amongst themselves; talking a mile a minute as the drugs charge through their veins.

The door swings open; a big black Jamaican PA [30+] appears in a mustard suit. Behind the man's large and imposing frame, the heat and a beat spill onto the street.

The man narrows his eyes, taking in the group, until he catches Spike's eye in recognition. They slap hands in greeting.

PA

[Jamaican]  
Yo Spike man. You're out 'n' about this morning?

SPIKE

[Cockney]  
You could say, you could say... this here is Angel [Madeleine], you know Miss Penny of course, n' the boys... [nods towards WAZZA (29) AND STU (32)].

Stu tips his head in greeting at the Jamaican man.

WAZZA

[cockney]  
Evening' Pa

MADELEINE [23] and PENNY [23], arms linked, beam at him, greeting him in unison.

MADELEINE/PENNY  
[in unison].  
Hi.

They laugh at this.

Pa does a comical curtsy in their direction. He straightens up, grabbing each girls' hand and lightly brushing his lips against it.

PA  
Ladies - come in, come in...

The girls do a mock curtsy back, giggle before trotting in, stumbling a little but unaware or beyond care as the edges begin to blur.

PENNY  
[cockney]  
Why thank you kind Sir...

Spike is the last to enter.

SPIKE  
[to Pa]  
Be out soon eh... [to Pa]

Pa points up the towards a set of stairs concealed to the side. Spike looks and nods. Enters the club.

7. INT. CLUB EARLY MORNING

The club rooms are small, dark and steamy. Throbbing base sends vibration through the walls and floor. Bodies twist, grind and flirt on the dance floor, in the darken corners.

The group burst onto the scene. The chemicals in their system coming on as the deep vibration of the music sets in.

Penny tugs at Madeleine's hand, pulling her onto the dance floor. Strobe light effects: Penny, Madeleine, SOPHIE [21] and Wazza dancing, quickly become drenched in sweat.

Spike's figure leans against a wall talking to a figure; he catches Madeleine's eyes briefly, then her vision blurs.

8. EXT ESPIRITU SANTO: BEACH (1980) DAWN

[Language: Tutuba's island tongue]

LEAH [50+] looks from the beach to the edge of the exposed coral encrusted reef, where two figures, a man TITUS [50+] and a boy TAPI [15], stand next to a typical, wooden island canoe that is pulled up on the dried up rocks.

It's dawn. The pair checks their equipment before they head into deeper waters.



Leah walks out on the dried rocks towards the pair. She holds her mother-hubbard dress off the rocks and paddles with one hand, in the other she carries a bundle of net.

The island is quiet and beautiful in the early morning.

Titus and Tapi can be heard murmuring every so often. As Leah approaches, Titus' eyes flicker up from his task. He follows her movement.

Tapi continues to untangle the twisted fishing net.

TAPI

Boubou [grandfather] the boat is ready.

Titus nods ever so slightly, his eyes follow Leah closer. He takes out his tobacco stick and begins to roll a cigarette as she arrives at the edge of the dry reef.

She reaches them and stops to take in the sunrise. They are all silent, the sound of the ocean all around.

Seconds later the moment passes. Titus finishes rolling his cigarette and strikes a match to light it. He drags on the cigarette.

LEAH

There's been word from the mainland [beat]  
Madeleine will be arriving the day after  
tomorrow.

A small smile creeps onto Titus's lips, clamped around the cigarette.

TITUS

So the little white woman returns

He puffs thoughtfully at the cigarette.

TITUS

We must kill a pig - the larger one, [beat]  
Let Louis know which one.

TAPI

And shall we save some sardines from the catch?  
[beat] She loves those!

Titus smiles, and shakes his head.

TITUS

Remember how much she loved *namabe* [hot nut].  
She wouldn't sleep or eat anything else until  
she had one waaa, waaa [imitates crying] the  
little madam!

LEAH

Well, she won't be so little now.

TITUS

Eh? You've seen the pictures? She smaller than when she left. She needs some proper food.

They both ponder over this, Leah counting the years with her fingers.

LEAH

She will still be five years older...

TAPI

She's 13! She's two years younger than me.

He says this proudly.

Titus whistles in amazement reading Tapi's enthusiasm he glances at Leah with a wistful smile. Mutters.

TITUS

But will she have remembered her mother tongue?

Tapi shakes his head.

TAPI

I can teach her again and she can teach me English.

Leah tusks, tusks with disapproval at the suggestion.

LEAH

Oh la la, no, no, no, no - there won't be any English on this island. If she insists I will only answer back in Tutuvan!

She stamps her feet with this last statement.

Titus and Tapi exchange knowing smiles at Leah putting her foot down. Tapi decides to tease his grandmother.

TAPI

But Boubou [grandmother], if she says she doesn't understand then you say - *'what's wrong with the bouzy?'*

Leah smiles and attempts the broken English.

LEAH

Hey - *'what's wrong with the bouzy?'*

Tapi cracks up, Titus chuckles.

TITUS

Oh, no, you two have bastardize the white man's language - you'll end up swearing at them!

They laugh.

The cigarette has gone out and Titus puts it away in his box of matches for later.

With a flick of his head he indicates to Tapi it was time to go.

TITUS

Tell Moses that we'll be needing his boat the day after tomorrow then.

Leah nods, and hands him the net.

LEAH

Alle [alright then]. Her father wants you to go to the mainland tomorrow, said there's papers about the land in Aore that you need to sign...

Titus drops the net in the canoe, his expression one of distaste, his voice low and angry.

TITUS

Sign papers I can't read? This is not our *kastom*. The only way to deal with land is through *kastom*.

Leah nods in silent agreement.

The subject dismissed, Titus and Tapi lift the canoe and walk it to deeper waters, setting it down. Tapi jumps, then Titus, using wooden oars they push off.

9. INT NEW CALEDONIA: AIRPORT (1980) DAY

AUDIO: First bar of a tune - upbeat and dreamy.

MADELEINE [13] is lying stretched out on a row of seats, a pair of headphones on her head and white Ray Ban Wayfarers on. She's dressed in typical early 1980s fashion; oversized-t with large black and white graphics and tiny neon lycra shorts on her slender hips.

CU: Madeleine's closed eyelids.

CU: Her fingertips tapping

Audio bridge: Second bar of a tune.

CU: Dreamy smile on Madeleine's full lips [closed].

A French voice begins to announce flight details over the intercom.

INTERCOM VOICE [V/O]

Air Caledonie flight 707 to Port Vila, Vanuatu  
Is now ready to board. Travellers please make  
your way to gate three.

CU: Madeleine's eyes flutter open.

She cocks her head, and listens. In one fluid motion she stands, swings the bag over her shoulder, pushes her headphones off and perches sunglasses on her head.

She's tall for her age, her movements sweeping and graceful.

She strides towards the check-in, a bounce in her steps. She's the first one up.

Her smile widens as she approaches the counter. The GIRL [20+] and GUY [20+] behind the counter, both half-castes like her, return her infectious smile. The girl checks her passport.

AIRPORT GUY

[French]  
Going home?

Madeleine nods happily, suddenly shy.

The girl returns her passport.

AIRPORT GIRL

Voila Mademoiselle. Bon voyage.

She hands the passport back to a bouncing Madeleine. Both boy and girl smile, sharing in her excitement.

AIRPORT GUY

Well, happy return home.

Madeleine's smile widens, revealing perfect, straight white teeth.

Audio: Third and fourth bar from tune.

She nods, pops her headphones on and with a flash of her perfect teeth, she opens the glass door and strides in her long legs towards the plane, her mop of curls bouncing along with her.

Madeleine's face all lit up as she bounces along.

10. INT SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN: PASSENGER JET DAY

Madeleine presses up against the window.

Her POV: The sun shining, clouds and infinite water.

Then she is outside the plane racing through the clouds then along the Pacific Ocean.

**Dissolve**

11. EXT NEW HEBRIDES: OCEAN (1975)  
DAY

[Language: Bislama/Pigeon- English]

MADELEINE [8] peers past her reflection into the brilliant blue of the lagoon.

Madeleine and her best friend NELLY [11], TAPI [10] and CHRISTOPH [12] are fishing in a canoe on the outer edge of a tropical lagoon. Beyond, the white-sanded beach glistens in the distance.

Tapi emerges from the depth of the water and pulls the peering Madeleine in. She and Nelly squeal in surprise.

Christoph follows suit.

The two boys begin to swim towards the shore.

CHRISTOPH  
Eeeeh, Nelly can't swim! Nelly can't swim!  
Alle we'll see you back on the shore.

Nelly face clouds over. She sits more firmly into the canoe and crosses her arms.

Madeleine swims back to her and pulls herself into the boat.

MADELEINE  
Alle Nelly, let's get them.

Nelly face breaks into a smile. They grab an oar each and start paddling.

Canoe moving through the crystal blue lagoon.

NELLY  
Go on swim, swim. You both better be fast or you'll be sorry 'cause feeding time for the sharks!

Canoe nearing the white-sand beach.

MADELEINE  
Eeeeh, you're both just jealous 'cause Nelly's caught the most fish!

12. EXT VANUATU: VILLAGE BEACH DAY

Audio: Slight Wind rustling the leaves on the trees.

Tapi and Christoph reach the shore.

A small plane appears suddenly flying low as it prepares to land on the mainland of Santo ahead.

Tapi and Christoph, dripping wet, look up startled.

CHRISTOPH  
*Pigeon blo white man! Bigfulla pigeon blong white man!* [white man's big bird]. Don't move, don't move or it might see you!

The boys freeze, staring after the disappearing plane.

CHRISTOPH

Look it's brought the hurricane along with it!

He points to the darkening sky trailing the plane's path from behind the island.

The wind picks up suddenly, rustling the palm leaves, giving the boys goose pimples.

Tapi swings back to the lone canoe in the lagoon, his expression one of worry.

TAPI

What about them?

Both boys stare after his gaze.

Finally Christoph breaks the silence.

CHRISTOPH

Come on Tapi, they can get themselves back

Tapi reluctantly follows Christoph back towards the village.

13. INT PASSENGER JET: (1980) DAY

Madeleine has her headphones on, staring out of the window of the plane.

POV: The land is dense green laced with pure white sandy beaches and crystal clear blue lagoons; a lone canoe sits in the blue.

Audio bridge: Radio news bulletin - unrest in the island of Espiritu Santo. The news is repeated in Bislama, French and English.

14. EXT VANUATU: ISLAND VILLAGE (1975)  
AFTERNOON

Audio bridge: Radio news bulletin of talks of the nation move towards independence. Repeated in Bislama, French and English.

[Language: Tutuba's island tongue]

A TITUS [45+] is listening to an old fashion radio and smoking a hand-rolled cigarette.

LEAH [45+] is frying yam pancakes on the open fire with a dirt-streaked toddler.

Somebody whistles from the bush surrounding the house.

BEN [27] arrives in the little clearing carrying a child with another trailing him.

The children begin playing with the kittens lounging in the shade of a large tamarind tree.

Ben props himself on a fallen and nods towards the kettle sitting on the fire.

BEN

Is there any tea there for me Mama?

LEAH

Grab a clean cup from the bench.

Ben turns to his daughter CHRISTIE [5] playing with the kittens.

BEN

Christie grab me a cup?

He sits down on the log and looks around.

BEN

Where's Madeleine and Nelly?

LEAH

They're fishing...

Christie brings her father a cup but directs her to take it to her grandmother to pour tea.

The girl does this then slowly balances the hot liquid back over to her father.

He takes it and has a sip.

BEN

Any sugar Ma?

She shakes her head.

LEAH

No.

Titus turns up the bulletin about Hurricane Betsy passing through the Solomons, heading towards Vanuatu. There is a lull in conversation as they all listen.

RADIO [V/O]

Stay with Radio Vanuatu for the latest updates on Betsy. Now for our public notices - the first one is from Alfred from Tanna...

Titus turns down the radio after the bulletin.

TITUS

I saw Tura and Karl pull up in Moses' boat.

Ben nods.

BEN

Yeah, they've been in town today, something about getting money for Bokissa.

Titus snorts.

TITUS

They'll sell their grandchildren down the road soon.

LEAH

Well, what are they doing with all that money is what I want to know - not one of Karl's children go to school.

BEN

Pastor Willie has approached Moses about fixing the church.

Titus snorts again.

TITUS

And I suppose all your hard earned money is also going towards that church.

Ben shrugs.

BEN

Well, they did pay for all my schooling... I guess I have to give back somehow.

Silence. Ben feeds the end of the tea to the child in his arm.

BEN

There's also been word from the mainland, about Madeleine's father.

Christie comes over to Ben and demands some of the tea.

BEN

They say he has enough money to return her to the mainland by the end of the yam season. [beat] They have found enough money to send her to school [beat] in New Zealand...

Titus and Leah catch each other's eye of moments at the news, as Christie and her sibling fight over the tea.

TITUS

That's a lot of money.



Ben is distracted with breaking up the children's fight to register Titus' comment.

Titus clears his throat and stands.

The children settle down, and Ben looks up at his father, who picks up his bag and machete and leaves the clearing, heading towards the gardens.

He lops off a flower head on his way out.

Ben and Leah glance at each other knowingly.

15. EXT VANUATU BEACH (1975) AFTERNOON

Language: Bislama

MADELEINE [8] and NELLY [11] race onto the beach, with Madeleine out in front.

MADELEINE  
I win! I win!

NELLY  
Yeah, well, that's because I let you win!

Madeleine suddenly grinds to a halt in the sand, with Nelly almost colliding into her.

MADELEINE  
Nelly, look! *Nakato!* [Hermit crabs]

The sand is moving with the rustling of busy migration; tiny moving shells of the hermit crab.

Seeing this, Nelly lets out a whoop, letting go of a handful of seeds she had forgotten she had been carrying straight into the air.

NB: Locals call the small seeds '*helicopta*' because of its resemblance to the flying machine when thrown into the air. It's a favourite plaything amongst local children.

Nelly then grabs Madeleine and begins to sing and dance in glee.

NELLY [singing]  
We will be eating lotsa fish tonight, lotsa sweet, sweet fish tonight...

The paper-thin seeds float softly back down; turning into small, darting spirits curling, twirling in the evening sunset onto the laughing girls, and busy crawling creatures.

The girls grab each at the sight of the shiny creatures floating around them.

They look at each other in amazement.

NELLY

[whisper]  
Faeries...

Madeleine turns her shiny eyes towards Nelly's, holding her breath and nodding so as not to disturb the creatures that floats around the pair.

16. EXT VILLAGE BEACH DUSK

Audio bridge: Slight Wind rustling the leaves on the trees

Madeleine and Nelly play knuckle bones with pieces of coral on the soft white sand.

Their game is fast and nimble, their little voices expressing joy and defeat following every round.

At the end of the third round, Nelly becomes bored.

NELLY

Hey let's look for hermit crabs for bait.

She begins to dart around the beach, searching. Madeleine remains seated, singing softly to herself.

NELLY

Help me look Madeleine.

Madeleine glances up then joins Nelly to look for the small creatures.

A female voice [Nelly's mother ALICE (27)] calls out.

ALICE

Nelly, come and hold your sister while I cook.

The girls stop and look up, then resume their activity.

NELLY

I've found three - how many have you got?

Madeleine makes a face.

MADELEINE

Nothing. But I have these.

Cupped in her dress is an assortment of pretty shells.

NELLY

But you can't catch fish with shells

MADELEINE

But they're pretty look.

Nelly is delighted as Madeleine picks one out to puts on her finger as a ring.

MADELEINE

Let's look for some more for our house

As soon as they resumed their activity Alice's angry voice calls out.

ALICE

Nelly if you make me come down there with a stick, I will beat you until you piss on your leg! [Direct translation of Vanuatu expression]

Nelly rolls her eyes as she reluctantly turns to go.

NELLY

I'm coming!

17. INT NEW ZEALAND CLASSROOM (early 1976) DAY

'Madeleine's first day at school'

A typical Year Four class of about 20 girls sit quietly facing the blackboard.

The teacher MRS WHITE [40+] enters with the demure, wide-eyed Madeleine [8].

MRS WHITE

Attention class! I would like to introduce Madeleine, who has just arrived in New Zealand from a tropical island!

Madeleine notices that she looks different to them, her hair especially. Madeleine is sure everyone is staring at her hair.

MRS WHITE

Now, let's give Madeleine a warm welcome class!

The whole class stare at Madeleine in fascination.

CLASS

Hello Madeleine... [in unison]

Mrs White beams at the class then Madeleine, her painted pink lips cracking at the sides.

MRS WHITE

Now, Madeleine will need a buddy to help her get to know her way around - any volunteers?

The whole class, clearly programmed, put up their hands. Mrs White acts surprised and delighted.

MRS WHITE

My goodness Madeleine, look at the choices you have!

Mrs White guides Madeleine to the only empty desk in the classroom.

MRS WHITE  
Isn't that wonderful? Let's sit you here near  
your new friend Olivia and Sally.

Madeleine is relieved to be nearly sitting down.

As she moves to her desk all the eyes in the class follow her.

OLIVIA [9] and SALLY [8] stare fixedly at Madeleine's Afro hair.

As Mrs White returns to the head of the room, Olivia leans over to Sally and cups her small hands around Sally's ear to whisper, and gesture at Madeleine's bushy hair.

Sally giggles.

The sound causes Mrs White to spin around sharply.

MRS WHITE  
Now, class, let's...

Her voice trails off as it registers that all eyes in the classroom still remain skewered on Madeleine, who is looking out of the window with a blush on her face.

18. EXT VANUATU SCHOOL (1975) MORNING

Audio bridge: Children's chatter and laughter

A bunch of girls walk to school through a path in the bush.

Behind them Madeleine and Nelly follow rather slowly. They catch sight of butterflies feeding on flowers and attempt to try and catch one.

Their attempts are disturbed by a bunch of boys who come up behind them and start taunting them as they push past.

Nelly and Madeleine tell them off in return, and the boys carry on up the path yelling taunts behind them.

The school bell sounds.

19. INT VANUATU CLASSROOM MORNING

Audio bridge: Children's voices

Inside the flax and bamboo hut that is the classroom, the lessons are in French.

But today the children are being taught English. Their voices in chorus repeat sentences after the teacher.

Images of France [Eiffel Tower] and England [Big Ben, London bus] decorate mobiles hanging above the children's heads. The flimsy decorations flap in the wind.

20. EXT VANUATU SCHOOL PLAYGROUND DAY

Madeleine and Nelly are once again confronted by the taunting boys.

One attempt to kiss Madeleine and Nelly kicks him very hard on the shins. He pushes Nelly into some sharp rocks and she hurts herself. When they see this they flee.

Madeleine comforts Nelly, and they decide to not stay at school anymore, instead darting off into the bush.

21. EXT VANUATU BUSH DAY

In a clearing in the bush, Madeleine and Nelly hide in a small hut made out of palm leaves.

They've collected shells and are making necklaces to decorate the house with.

22. EXT VANUATU BEACH DUSK

Audio: Slight Wind rustling the leaves on the trees  
Language: Bislama

Madeleine and Nelly play amongst the beached canoes, their little voices dreaming up stories.

Madeleine sings softly to a black kitten cradled in her arms. Nelly looks for shells amongst the corals that the sea has dragged onto the shore.

A female voice [Alice - Nelly's mother] calls out. The girls stop and look up, then resume their activity.

A low hum can be heard. A small plane appears overhead. It flies quite close to the island as it prepares to land on the mainland of Santo, which can be seen on the horizon. Madeleine and Nelly drop what they're doing and begin to wave furiously at the plane.

NELLY

Do you think they can see us?

MADELEINE

Of course. My Papa says white people can look down on everything from the sky.

They continue to wave.

NELLY

They can see everything? Like God?

Madeleine nods.

NELLY

I bet it's bringing mademoiselles from France to teach us.

MADELEINE

Don't be silly! It's my Papa coming back from New Zealand.

NELLY

Well, my Papa says there's no such place and your Papa is hiding in Santo.

MADELEINE

Don't be stupid!

NELLY

Don't call me stupid! You're stupid!

MADELEINE

Papa's not scared of anyone.

NELLY

He is too! Christoph told me the song.

MADELEINE

What song?

NELLY

Fee, fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman! [beat] And anyway, you can't see inside that plane!

Nelly puts her hands on her hips as the black kitten is disturbed out of Madeleine's arms.

MADELEINE

Yes I can!

Alice calls out Nelly's name again. Nelly turns to leave.

NELLY

No you can't - everyone knows you're blind!

She runs off.

MADELEINE

Well, you're *stupideu!*

Madeleine calls after the retreating figure and sticks her tongue.

Madeleine notices that the kitten is missing. She calls out over and over again to the kitten but to no avail.

Audio bridge: The sound of the wind picks up

23. INT VANUATU ISLAND: HUT NIGHT

Audio bridge: wind rustling the trees

It's dark with only kerosene light to illuminate the room.

Madeleine is asleep on mats on the floor with thin blankets covering her small shoulders.

Titus has arrived home late from drinking kava, and Leah serves up his dinner.

Titus is upset about Madeleine leaving, talking in a low angry voice. [The wind picks up with his emotions]

Madeleine drifts in and out of sleep hearing bits of the conversation.

24. EXT VANUATU NEAR SCHOOL MORNING

Audio: The wind and it's getting stronger

Madeleine waits for Nelly at the corner of the road amongst the bush.

The other school kids walk by chatting. Christoph walks by with a group of boys. He sees Madeleine and pulls a face at her. She pokes her tongue out at him.

They pass on by; Madeleine continues to wait for Nelly.

The school bell sounds, Madeleine peers anxiously into the distance.

After the last chime rings out she turns and races to school by herself.

25. INT VANUATU CLASSROOM DAY

In class, Madeleine glances at Nelly's seat - it's empty.

Her face sinks with disappointment.

26. EXT VANUATU SCHOOL PLAYGROUND DAY

During recess, Madeleine plays marbles with some of the other kids.

They disagree on something, and Madeleine gathers her marbles and wanders off by herself.

27. EXT VANUATU SCHOOL PLAYGROUND DAY

The sky is grey and the air is windy and stormy.

Madeleine is walking along the school fence looking solemn.

CU: A few stray droplets of rain land on her face.

She stops and glances around towards the classrooms and students playing. When she is certain that no one is looking, she climbs through the fence and disappears into the bush.

It begins to rain and the children are called inside.

28. INT VANUATU BUSH PLAY-HUT DAY

[Language: Tutuba's island tongue]

Madeleine is curled up on a flax mat in the little hut, rain drops seep in through holes in the overlaying palm leaves.

The wind picks up, shaking the little hut.

She hears her Leah's voice in the distance, calling her name, and sits up but does not answer.

LEAH

Maaaadeleinee... Maaadeleine oh [translation of island method of calling]

This is repeated from another direction. The calling ceases.

Wind pulls the house in one direction then the other. A worried expression crosses Madeleine's face and she glances up.

The faint sounds of footsteps arrive at the doorway.

Leah pokes her head in through the opening.

Madeleine jumps at her silent and sudden appearance, her stare one of a guilt mixed with a small wild animal caught in the glare of the lights.

Leah frowns and makes a tsuk, tsuk sound.

LEAH

Hey, did you hear me calling. Why didn't you answer back?

Madeleine bites her bottom lip, half holding back tears that threaten to spill. She does not answer.

Leah's expression softens upon seeing the girl's face.

Leah stoops to enter the shaky little hut and sits beside the little figure.

Silence.

MADELEINE



Nelly wasn't at school.

Leah thinks a moment.

LEAH

Madeleine, you know Aunty Alice is going to have another baby... so, so she's not feeling too well. Nelly has to stay home and help...

Leah's voice trails off.

Madeleine looks at her grandmother in bewilderment.

MADELEINE

But why? What's she having another baby for?

Leah ponders; she picks up Madeleine's little hand and holds it.

LEAH

Oh, my girl, you'll understand one day... but for now, you must prepare for your big trip to New Zealand.

Madeleine leans on her grandmother's shoulder.

MADELEINE

But Nelly says there is no such place?

LEAH

Now how would Nelly know about that?

MADELEINE

And she says Papa is hiding.

Leah makes a cross between a tsuk tsuk and hissing sound, which is often a sign of disapproval.

LEAH

That girl talks a lot of rubbish sometimes.

Pause. The pair listens to the howling outside.

MADELEINE

Tell me a story, Boubou.

With that she tucks her little body onto her grandmother lap, and settles to listen.

LEAH

Well... [sad sigh] now that you're old enough and will soon be going very far away, it's time to tell the story of your grandfather, Boubou Titus' father. [Pause] He was a shape-shifter you know... and shape-shifters are all-knowing...

As she tells the story, Leah strokes Madeleine's hair. Her steady voice mingles with the wind, and the little hut sways around them.

MADELEINE [V/O]  
So where is Papa?

Audio bridge: ragged breathing, wind and ocean

29. EXT NEW ZEALAND: BETHEL'S BEACH (1976) AFTERNOON

Audio bridge: ragged breathing, wind and ocean

The sun is hiding behind clouds.

POV: Madeleine [9] looks along the beach. She sees a blurred, figure in the distance. The figure dissolves.

MADELEINE  
Papa?

She looks along to the far end of the beach, where there are distant more blurred figures.

She frowns, undecided as to which path to follow, peers at each path again, each blurred scenes appear frozen in the blue afternoon light.

Her lips are thin, blue - like her surroundings, she battles the wave welling up inside her.

As she searches the one end of the beach again, a ray of sunlight escapes from behind the clouds, a dog barks in the distance, life unfreezes. She turns and half walks, half runs towards the light.

30. EXT NEW ZEALAND: BETHEL'S BEACH LATER AFTERNOON

Audio bridge: Children's chatter, wind

Mrs White stands tensely to one side glancing off into the dunes as a young teacher aide; MISS BAILEY [27] counts a row of school children line up in front of a yellow bus.

The young woman reaches the end of the line, and glances up at the older woman.

MISS BAILEY  
Twenty-four

The older woman purses her lips into a thin, straight line. The wind howls as she growls.

MRS WHITE  
There has to be twenty-five. Count again.

The younger woman stands back from the line.

31. INT VANUATU: PORT VILA AIRPORT (1980) AFTERNOON

Language: Bislama

Madeleine sits alone on a wooden bench in the simple airport lounge.

She buys a juice at the little stall.

The girl [17] behind the counter asks her in English where she is from.

Madeleine is surprised at the question. It seems obvious to her that she is from here. She replies in Bislama.

MADELEINE

I'm going to Santo, to my family.

The girl reacts surprised.

GIRL

Oh you man Vanuatu! [Bislama] Oh so you're from Vanuatu].

32. EXT VANUATU: PORT VILA AIRPORT AFTERNOON

A Ute filled with people stops outside. Locals jump from the back and begin to unpack some of the cargo yams, mats, live chickens tied together and a live pig with curled tusks.

Chatter fills the small terminal.

Another car filled with people arrives.

The driver emerges from the first vehicle. He is a tall white FRENCHMAN [40+]. His passenger an equally tall Ni-Van JIMI STEVEN [30+] in full native dress, flanked by two others, one on each side, also in native dress. The Frenchman turns to him and talks importantly in French in a low conspiring manner, his eyes darting around the room.

33. INT VANUATU: PORT VILA AIRPORT AFTERNOON

Language: Bislama

Madeleine watches the pair [Jimi and Frenchman] talk for a moment.

MADELEINE

Who's that?

GIRL

Oh, that's Jimi Stevens. Big man from Santo.

They both look at the pair, but then cast their eyes down as the tall majestic-looking man glances over [typical ni-Vanuatu practice of respecting your elders or someone of higher status].

Jimi, in full native dress enters, fixes his penetrating eyes on the girls, stopping at Madeleine. He turns and does a final nod to the Frenchman and deliberately walks over. He stops and eyes the products behind the counter, then glances directly at Madeleine.

JIMI

You girl, do you want any more of this white man's food and drink?

Madeleine hesitates, unsure of his sincerity and how to reply properly to an elder.

She quickly recovers and points to one of the few local products on a plate on the counter; a local nut on coconut skewers.

He buys that as well as bottles of coke, chocolate bars and other imported products.

The girl hands Madeleine the skewer.

Without looking directly at Jimi, Madeleine nods and mutters her thanks.

MADELEINE

Ta.

JIMI

Where are you heading to, girl?

MADELEINE

Home. My mother is from Santo.

JIMI

*Mi man Santo tu* [I'm also man Santo].

He picks up all purchases and turns back into the lounge.

Madeleine returns to her seat in the waiting room, seeing the man dish out his treats to the children, woman and men.

She puts her headphones back on.

34. INT VANUATU: PORT VILA AIRPORT LATER IN THE AFTERNOON

POV: High angle people waiting in the lounge, Madeleine is off to one corner by the door.

MAN [V/O]

Flight to Malekula and Santo boarding now.

Madeleine rushes to gather up her things and moves towards the small domestic planes on the limestone tarmac filled with potholes.

Everyone else take their time, kissing relatives, shaking hands, passing on messages.

35. INT VANUATU: DOMESTIC PLANE AFTERNOON

POV: Madeleine stares at the large beads of sweat glistening on the upper lip hairs of a rather large woman packed into the seat in front of her.

The woman laughs and gossips with a thin woman sitting beside Madeleine, all the while fanning herself erratically, missing Madeleine's face narrowly each time. Madeleine eyes the instrument with disdain.

Both women in their bright mother-hubbard dresses [missionary inspired dress] have cornered her into her seat.

The small domestic plane was packed. Every man, woman, child, chicken and pig is loaded on, stuffed in the cargo area, under seats or on laps. It would have made Madeleine laugh if she wasn't so hot - the air-conditioning does not appear to be working.

To make matters worse, they've shut the door after much commotion, but still the plane has not moved.

The large woman in front suddenly turns her attention to Madeleine. Motioning with her head in Madeleine's direction, she spoke to the thin woman.

FAT WOMAN

*Eh, pikinin blo who ya?* [Bislama whose child is that?]

THIN WOMAN

[Disdain]

I don't know perhaps it's one of those *half-castes* families in Santo?

Both act like Madeleine wasn't there as they speak about her. Madeleine plays along, pretends she doesn't understand.

The fat woman turns to Madeleine.

FAT WOMAN

*You tok tok Bislama?* [Do you speak Bislama?]

Madeleine plays the hesitant.

MADELEINE

Small.

Her voice fades as if uncertain and she shrugs.

THIN WOMAN

*Parlais vous Francais?* [French]

Again Madeleine shrugs sheepishly.

FAT WOMAN

*Aaaaah, pikinin blo Englishman!* [Child of an Englishman]

To Madeleine, she attempts to ferret information in broken English.

FAT WOMAN

Where you from?

MADELEINE

New Zealand...

The fat woman turns to the thin one with a voice of authority on the matter announces what Madeleine has said in French.

THIN WOMAN

Who's your father?

MADELEINE

Teddy... Teddy Hughes...

Both women look at each other as if this explained it all.

FAT WOMAN

Oh Teddy! Oh my, my, this is Teddy's daughter!  
Well he certainly kept her quiet! [French]

The fat woman turns to the other and rattled off in French.

FAT WOMAN

And who do you think the mother is? That Teddy  
and his women - it can't be the latest one She's  
far too young. In fact the child may even be the  
same age!

And with that she hoots with laughter.

A puzzled expression creeps over Madeleine's features. She very nearly gave away her game of pretend, when everything began at once - the propellers on the small plane began to turn, the British pilot appeared in the cockpit and apologized for the delay in all three languages.

PILOT

Sorry for the delay folks. We'll be stopping for  
an hour in *Malekula* [island] to pick up some  
packages...

The child asleep beside the fat woman wakes and starts to cry; the chickens flutter; the pig begins to squeal.

As she's about to put her headphones back on, Jimi catches her eye and raised his eyebrows knowingly, as if to sympathise.

Madeleine smiles a little back, then dons her headphones and looks out the window. She breathes deeply, no longer disturbed by the noise, what she heard or the heat. She breathes in home.

[Music fades in]

36. EXT ESPIRITU SANTO AIRFIELD (1980) DAY

The PASSENGERS disembark the aircraft. Madeleine spies her father's Ute standing apart from the other vehicles alongside the airstrip.

She drops her bags on the ground and races toward TEDDY with her arms open.

MADELEINE

Paapaaaa.

She throws herself at him with an ecstatic hug.

37. EXT NEW ZEALAND: BETHELS (1976) DUSK

Madeleine [9] arrives at a stream where the fresh water rushes out to join the thrashing waves.

She hesitates, undecided. Beyond the stream hazy figures disappear over the dunes. She turns and looks back towards where she'd come from, her footprints on the black sand paint an uneven line.

A sheet of paper escapes from her clutched hand and flies into the water. Madeleine sees a school of Pacific flying fish in the sudden flash of white as it catches in the sun last rays.

FLYING FISHES [V/O]

Madeleine... [In unison]

Madeleine is astonished, her mouth opens wide. She looks around - no one, the wind howls.

Another page of paper escapes her clutches, the small fish shimmered from the water again.

FLYING FISHES [V/O]

Over here...

Madeleine squints into the rushing water.

FLYING FISHES [V/O]

We've been waiting...

Madeleine bites her lip, her breath heavy with excitement.

She sits on the black sand and begins to undo her shoelaces. In doing so she drops her exercise book filled with loose sheets of drawings, the wind catches it and flutters it in the air, water around her.

Madeleine does not notice. For her the papers are many shimmering flying fishes, lighting up the dark air with chatter and glow.

FLYING FISHES [V/O]  
Yes, yes hurry!

Madeleine quickens her pace.

38. EXT/INT VANUATU: ISLAND HUT (1976) EVENING

Madeleine tosses and turns on her mat bed on the coral floor of the hut.

A fire nearby dimly lights up the open hut.

Just outside, Leah stands washing dishes on a large tree stump, a small lamp beside her.

A voice can be heard talking along the path to the hut in the bush. Titus arrives home drunk.

TITUS  
Hello you two women Tutuba!

He stops and stands swaying, trying to focus on the scene, smiling.

Pause.

TITUS  
I said hello! [louder]

Leah gives a small laugh, as Madeleine sits up in her bed and rubs her eyes before peering at her beaming grandfather.

LEAH  
Oi...

TITUS  
It's time to go dancing you two. Put on your dresses, let's go!

Leah issues her disapproving tsuk tsuk sound, while Madeleine giggles at her grandfather, who does a little dance.

TITUS  
Come on, come on Leah. When will you dance with your granddaughter again?

Titus walks over to Leah, out of Madeleine's sight.

TITUS  
Leah? [soft] Leah! [Stern]

LEAH  
You're drunk!



TITUS

And what's wrong with a grandfather wanting to take his women out for one last dance? [slurs]

LEAH

And the money for the copra that we spent all of last month shelling? Where's that? [beat]  
Where's that money Karu [Titus' *kastom* name]?

Madeleine jumps up as Titus kicks over an aluminum pot.

TITUS

If you say one more thing, I'll -

LEAH

You'll what? Our granddaughter is about to leave us and we have nothing to give for her journey because you poured it down your throat-

Madeleine hears Titus hitting Leah.

She half screams, half cries, running out to put herself between her grandparents.

Blinking down at his granddaughter, Titus sobers up suddenly and disappears into the night.

39. EXT NEW ZEALAND: BETHEL'S (1976) DUSK

The infinite and dark beach; Madeleine's small figure sitting at the rushing water's edge with a trail of white paper scattered around her.

Audio bridge: The roar of the surf becomes the roar of a jet aircraft.

40. INT LONDON HEATHROW AIRPORT (1990) DAY/NIGHT

MADELEINE [23] stands waiting for her passport as the immigration officer checks it.

The woman finishes tapping into her computer, takes the passport and stamps it.

WOMAN

Welcome to Britain.

Madeleine beams at the hard-face woman.

MADELEINE

Thank you!

She takes the passport and nearly skips on.

41. INT HEATHROW AIRPORT DAY/NIGHT

A large 'Coming soon, the new improved Heathrow' poster greets Madeleine as she stands on the escalator going down.

At the bottom she steps off and bypasses the crowds at the luggage collection with her small, cheap backpack slung over her thin shoulders.

She heads towards the exit sign.

42. INT HEATHROW AIRPORT DAY/NIGHT

Madeleine attempts to walk through the metal detector.

Two immigration officials quickly stop her.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER  
Anything to declare luv?

MADELEINE  
Oh, yes - I'd like to make a telephone call please.

The men grin at the misplaced declaration.

MAN  
Just outside the terminal luv.

With that he points towards the line waiting to check bags through the X-ray machine.

Madeleine looks down the long line, and then walks slowly down to join it.

CU: Madeleine's face looks impatiently through the security camera.

43. INT HEATHROW AIRPORT DAY/NIGHT

Madeleine slowly walks through a hastily put together tunnel in the busy airport, which is currently under refurbishment; wires visibly sticking out and the makeshift floor wet.

Passengers push past as Madeleine stares at her surroundings, drinking the confusing structure in.

44. INT HEATHROW AIRPORT DAY/NIGHT

Madeleine approaches a row of phones.

She dumps her bag on top of the phone box, and pulls out a piece of paper with Papa written on it and a phone number.

She picks up the receiver, gingerly puts it to her ear.

MADELEINE

Hello?

The dial tone greets her. She glances over at a man talking, who turns his back at her glance.

The dial tone times out as she clutches the phone. Confused Madeleine puts the receiver back to her ear.

MADELEINE

Hello, hello?

She looks at the receiver in disgust and hangs up, sighing in exasperation.

Just then a girl with big hoop earrings approaches a phone. Madeleine jumps to attention, mirroring her every move.

The girl takes out her purse, finds a coin and pushes it into the slot, all the while chewing gum noisily.

Madeleine scrambles to do the same.

A smile lights up her face as a ring tone greets her.

FEMALE VOICE [V/O]

Hello, Hughes and Associates, can I help you?

Pause.

FEMALE VOICE [V/O]

Hello?

MADELEINE

Teddy - is Teddy there?

FEMALE VOICE [V/O]

I'm sorry; he's unavailable right this moment may I ask who's calling?

MADELEINE

My name is Madeleine.

FEMALE VOICE [V/O]

Well Madeleine, would you like to leave a message?

MADELEINE

Could you please tell him I'm here?

FEMALE VOICE [V/O]

Err, here where? Do you have a phone number?

Madeleine looks around wildly, gesturing at the girl hanging up the receiver beside her, who moves off quickly, avoiding Madeleine.

MADELEINE

I don't know...

The dial tone fills Madeleine's ear, and her heart sinks.

MADELEINE

Hello? Hello?

The tone times out. She hangs up the phone angrily.

45. INT ESPIRITU SANTO (1980) DAY

Language: English

Madeleine [13] smiles a wide, dreamy smile.

She laughs.

Teddy and Madeleine are driving along in the dusty single cabin Toyota Ute.

Teddy [40+] glances over at her.

TEDDY

Hey Maddie Bear, stick your arm the window, like this.

Teddy indicates his own elbow sticking out the window.

TEDDY

It creates more circulation, feel that?

Madeleine immediately imitates him, and laughs as the air rushes into her armpit.

But that was not enough; she sticks her head out of the window, happily letting the warm South Pacific engulf her.

Happily overwhelmed, she pulls her whole upper body through the window, sticking her arms all the way out and hooting.

The Toyota Hilux drives past figures walking on the road side, who whoop and wave back in greeting to Madeleine.

Moments later, she pulls back in, smiling.

MADELEINE

Yuck, I think I just swallowed a bug!

She says this cheerfully.

TEDDY

We have to go by the office and Norris before home, ok Maddie?

Madeleine nods.

Teddy makes a face at her, pinches her knee affectionately.

MADELEINE  
Stop it Dad! Stop it!

She squeals with delight.

46. INT ESPIRITU SANTO HUT (1980) MORNING

Language: Bislama and Tutuba's island tongue.

The South Pacific framed: In the darkened room early morning light filters green through the Bird of Paradise's beaks and large banana leaves growing quietly behind the netted windows, yellow around the edges.

On a mat and thin mattress on the floor, Leah is asleep.

Titus lets himself, and approaches Leah's sleeping figure.

Softly he calls out her name.

TITUS  
Leah... oh Leah.

She opens her eyes, a small smile on her lips; she knows he's excited but decides to play along.

LEAH  
Hmmm?

TITUS  
Wake up! Have you forgotten? Today our first grandchild returns!

Leah smiles, and turns to lie on her back as he gets ready to walk to the garden, whistling happily.

TITUS  
I will dig up those little sweet African yams. they'll be good for frying. Now, where did you put my hat?

LEAH  
You left it under your trousers.

Titus goes to his trousers that are draped/folded on a chair. He puts them on, pulls them up.

TITUS  
Ah, yes...

He pats his pockets forgetfully

TITUS

Matches?

LEAH

On the table.

He gathers this up, and goes to head out the door.

TITUS

*Alle, alle!*—

He turns at the door.

TITUS

[English] Come on get up, get up  
[Bislama] There'll be plenty of time for  
sleeping later.

He leaves.

Leah sits up, and rubs her eyes.

Titus appears again.

TITUS

Tobacco?

He looks around. Leah sighs in resignation as she closes her eyes.

LEAH

Under your bed.

TITUS

Who put it there?

He picks it up then heads out again.

TITUS

And don't forget about cooking some rice as well...

Leah looks at the heavens.

LEAH

Me? [beat] Forget?

Titus doesn't pick up her irony.

TITUS

Yes, we can't have her looking half starved.

Leah nods.

LEAH

Of course not.

Titus leaves.

She watches him out of the netted-window, smiles to herself and shakes her head.

47. EXT VANUATU HOUSE (1980) DAY

Teddy's Ute stops outside a sprawling property on the hill.

TEDDY

Come in, Maddie, I have to talk to Norris quickly.

MADELEINE

Oh, do I have to? Can't we just go home and see the Boubous?

Just then a large Labrador comes bounding up the vehicle.

MADELEINE

Oh, who's this? She's so gorgeous!

She jumps out as the animal flings herself into her.

Clutching bits of paper, Teddy marches into the house with Madeleine and the dog slowly following behind.

Teddy taps on the door, and calls out.

TEDDY

Norris?

NORRIS [off]

It's open, come in...

48. INT VANUATU HOUSE (1980) DAY

The trio noisily let themselves into house, and walk into the large living room with a huge vista of Santo harbour.

NORRIS [55+] finishes his phone conversation, and approaches.

NORRIS

Teddy! Long time, no see! (beat) And, of course, this must be Madeleine.

Norris turned his kind old eyes her wrestling with the dog.

NORRIS

My, my you've certainly grown.

TEDDY

Isn't she quite the madam?

Norris looks a little askance at Teddy.

NORRIS

Madam?

Teddy's tone tightens.

TEDDY

In the benign sense?

NORRIS

Of course?

He extends his hand towards Madeleine, she holds hers out expecting to shake hands. Instead Norris holds it firmly to flutter a genteel kiss on the back of her hand. Madeleine is surprised and blushes at his contrived show of gallantry.

NORRIS

Ah, I see Sophie is rather taken with you Maddy. I think she misses Jade...

Madeleine regains her composure.

MADELEINE

So where is Jade? [beat] And Julian?

Norris looks at Teddy questioningly, who shrugs ever so slightly as the dog leaps onto Madeleine again.

NORRIS

Well, these days being what they are Maddy, they've gone to Australia.

Norris stops briefly, as if he's about to say something else but then decides against it.

MADELEINE

But they are coming back, aren't they?

Norris darts a look at Teddy.

NORRIS

[scolds] Oh Sophie! [to Madeleine] Actually, she's not meant to be inside. Would you like to give her a run?

Just then the dog licks Madeleine's face, who laughs with delight.

MADELEINE

OK, come on Sophie!

And the two bound out onto the expansive lawn. Norris looks out toward them

NORRIS

Nice kid. Her English is good. [beat] The experience doesn't appear to have harmed her.

TEDDY

I would've hoped not. It cost me an arm and a leg.

Pause.

NORRIS

And what will she do with all that education here?

He lifts his eyebrows at Teddy.



NORRIS

If anything it makes her more vulnerable,  
especially here. You know what they're like with  
their women...

Pause. The men through the French doors to the girl and dog  
playing in the yard which disappears into a horizon of ocean  
and islands.

NORRIS

It would be a pity to see her end up like all  
the others.

Satisfied, Norris turns.

NORRIS

Drink?

Teddy nods his approval and the men move towards the bar.

TEDDY

The problem is - this place is also beginning to feel  
- foreign.

Norris turns gravely back to Teddy.

NORRIS

It's not looking good Teddy, not good at all.

TEDDY

In what way?

NORRIS

The *Nagrime* are out to cause trouble [beat] And  
the whisper is there'll be deportations - in  
*Eracore* [capital].

He begins to mix two gin and tonics.

Teddy turns back to gazing out at Madeleine and Sophie, the  
dog.

Norris hands Teddy a drink then puts to the armchairs facing  
out towards the magnificent view.

Both men sit, sipping on their drink and watching the duo play,  
lost in their own thoughts.

TEDDY

And nothing can be done?

NORRIS

Let me put it this way - come July 30 I doubt  
the administration will be hanging around.  
[beat] And London has no spare gun-boats.

He turns to look at Norris, who is watching his face closely.

TEDDY

You're saying absolutely nothing can be done?

NORRIS

Depends. Are we talking about you? Or her?

TEDDY

Norris, she's thinks she'll be returning to school in New Zealand.

Norris gazes out at Madeleine again. After a moment.

NORRIS

Will the mother's family look after her?

TEDDY

Of course. They always look after family here.

Norris remains unflappable.

NORRIS

And what about taking her with you?

Teddy smiles a bitter smile, and sighs.

TEDDY

You're joking - with Margaret, the girls and I?

Madeleine happily crashes against the glass veranda door, startling both men.

She bangs against the glass with both hands.

MADELEINE

Look, look!

She points to the dog, who is decorated with hibiscuses and frangipanis.

MADELEINE

Oh, Daddy, look how happy she is to be a tropical dog!

Teddy's hard expression deepens, but he forces a smile as Madeleine beams at him across the glass in between them.

49. EXT/INT SANTO HUT LATER

The hut is a kitchen made of flat bamboo walls and dried, woven flax on the roof.

On a bench closest to the door, Leah sits on a device used to grate coconut flesh, its content falling into a bright red plastic bowl below.

Beside her, her granddaughter CINDY [16] is cleaning large banana leaves for cooking.

Leah finishes, tossing the coconut shell towards the corner of

the dark hut, where other lay.

LEAH

Alle, one more Cindy.

Cindy picks up the long machete, and one brown, skinned coconut shell. She leans over the red bowl and elegantly cracks the coconut. The bowl catches the dripping juice.

She hands the halved shells to Leah.

Titus' shadow falls over the two, as he appears at the doorway. He carries a copra bag over one shoulder, filled with produce from the garden, and a machete in the other hand. He sets the bag down inside, breathing hard he sits down to rest.

TITUS

This man is getting old.

He looks at the two busy at work.

TITUS

After all this work, the little white Madam had better not turn her nose up at it?

CINDY

She won't. [Beat] I'll force her to eat it!

Titus chuckles. He pulls his tobacco and sets about rolling a cigarette; the trio go about their tasks.

The sound of a motor is heard approaching.

Both of the women move at once towards the door, and outside.

Titus remains in the dark hut.

The vehicle pulls up, and as soon as the engine turns off, the car door slams and Madeleine is out and running towards Leah and Cindy.

MADELEINE

Boubou Leah! Cindy!

She collides with her grandmother, squealing and laughing, kissing her over and over again.

LEAH

Oh Madeleine...

With tears in her eyes, Leah's long fingers touch Madeleine face and hair.

MADELEINE

Oh Boubou, no crying. Oh my God, Cindy!

The girls hug and laugh.

CINDY

God, how did you get so tall!

In the dark hut, Titus is frozen where he sits, tears filling his eyes.

MADELEINE

Where's Boubou Titus?

Leah lowers her tone playfully.

LEAH

He's hiding - go and find him.

Madeleine did not need to be told twice; she races towards the hut shouting his name.

Forced into action, Titus is nearly on his feet when Madeleine's gangly figure collides into him, knocking him back down into a hug.

TITUS

Watch out girl! Are you trying to give an old man a heart attack?

His voice is thick with emotion, tears spilling down his cheeks as she clings to him.

50. INT VANUATU HOUSE NIGHT

Leah is combing Madeleine's hair and plaiting it.

Madeleine has her glasses in her hands.

MADELEINE

So now I have to wear it all the time.

With that she puts the glasses on.

MADELEINE

See.

Titus enters the room the three are to share.

He stops in exaggerated shock.

TITUS

What's this? What's happened to your face?

Madeleine's hand shoots up as if to remove the glasses but then she stops herself, and smiles a crooked smile.

MADELEINE

Oh *Boubou*! They're just my glasses!

Titus shuffles around, standing this way and that, surveying her with great exaggeration.

Leah suppresses a laugh.

TITUS

I don't know Leah... [he shakes his head and smiles]  
I don't think she will ever get married looking like.

MADELEINE

But I don't wear it all the time - see!

She flings them off.

Titus and Leah laugh out loud at this, with Titus walking over to give her a kiss.

TITUS

Oh Boubou, you better keep them on eh...

Madeleine screws her face up at them both.

MADELEINE

Pooh you both.

Titus is now standing in front of a tattered old mattress that is his bed.

TITUS

And this? What's this?

He indicates the pile of National Geographic placed on top of his thin blanket. Both girls are suddenly busy with Madeleine's hair when Titus looks at them.

TITUS

Leah?

She finally looks at him, smiles and tips her head towards Madeleine.

LEAH

I think your Granddaughter has got you a present.

He picks up the top magazine and looks at the cover image of a picturesque snow covered mountain with wonder.

He looks at Madeleine with a smile.

TITUS

The white man's land is strange and amazing.

He turns to a page depicting a man skiing and whistles softly his amazement.

TITUS

The white man eh... [direct translation of a Vanuatu saying meaning absolute perplexing wonder]

He flicks through the magazine, squinting at the writing.

TITUS [mutters]

Now, how am I supposed to make sense of this scribble...

Leah finishes Madeleine's hair. She stands goes over to Titus and puts her arm around him.

MADELEINE  
Oh Boubou, I'll read it to you. Now, which one first?

Titus glances at the one he's holding.

TITUS  
Why would you want to do that? [Indicating the towards the man's image skiing]

Madeleine dons her glasses and they settle down on the bed for translation.

MADELEINE  
Boubou, he's skiing [beat] that's snow!

Titus looks at the image again, then at her still puzzled.

MADELEINE  
People do it for fun.

Leah pulls up a chair to listen in.

51. INT LONDON CLUB (1990) EARLY MORNING

Madeleine and Sophie are sitting closely on a black vinyl sofa talking; their eyes are like saucers and every so often they suck their cheeks in and lose focus on each other as a euphoric shudder passes through their bodies.

SOPHIE  
Your skin feels so lovely...

She strokes Madeleine's hand, which makes her giggle.

SOPHIE  
[Cockney]  
And your hair is wild! God, I'd kill for some curls!

Madeleine smile widens.

MADELEINE  
But I like your hair - the colour and how straight it is...

She reaches out and touches it. Seconds pass.

SOPHIE

Spike says you're from New Zealand [beat]. My father use to work in the colonies, way back when we were little.

Sophie's cockney accent suddenly gives way to a posher tone.

MADELEINE

Oh, really where?

SOPHIE

On some fabulous Pacific island... We lived here in England at the time, Mother didn't want to go. He would bring us these gorgeous shells... I always use to wonder what creatures live in such pretty shells...

A new dark, throbbing beat began.

SOPHIE

Oh, I loooove this song!

She stands and stretches.

SOPHIE

Cum en then, Angel!

Her old accent returns, and she pulls Madeleine off the couch and onto the dance floor, joining Sophie, Wazza and Stu.

Spike is now on the dance floor. He wraps his arm around Madeleine's waist from behind and pulls her close, her back into his chest, whispers something in her ear. She smiles and relaxes into him, they sway, him whispering, her smiling, both of their bodies glistening with sweat.

52. EXT NEW ZEALAND: BETHELLS (1976) AFTERNOON

The lonely sand dunes slope longingly into the trashing West Coast waves.

Footprints on the sand are slowly being erased by the incoming tide.

Madeleine's paper trail is scattered all along the shore line.

53. INT NEW ZEALAND HOSPITAL (1976) AFTERNOON

Madeleine lies in a hospital bed Just outside by the doorway, MRS WHITE [40+] and MISS BAILEY [27] talk in lowered tones.

MISS BAILEY

Poor wee skinny chook. [Beat] Still, it looks like she's got a bit of colour back.

MRS WHITE  
So what exactly happened hmm?

They both look at Madeleine, as she continues to stare out the window.

MISS BAILEY  
Well - I'm was instructing the girls about the role of marram grass in the sand dunes.

MRS WHITE  
And?

MISS BAILEY  
Well - she must have wandered off - I thought she'd gone to spend a penny.

MRS WHITE  
In the sand dunes? Hmm? [beat] And it didn't cross your mind that half an hour was rather more than a penny's worth?

MISS BAILEY  
The latrines were somewhat distant at the time Mrs White. [beat] And you will be aware that some girls are inclined to loiter.

MRS WHITE  
And freeze to death?

MRS BAILEY  
Yes, well - she didn't mention feeling cold.

MRS WHITE  
The nurse said she was near hypothermic!

MISS BAILEY  
I suppose it takes a while to acclimatize...

They again turn to look at Madeleine staring blankly out of the window.

MRS WHITE  
Well, I think we should thank God she didn't end up in the ocean. [beat] And I'd wager she can't swim.

MISS BAILEY  
Oh surely not.

MRS WHITE  
Not all schools have swimming pools like ours Miss Bailey.



With that, the older woman moves into the room with an air of authority, and Miss Bailey bows out.

Mrs White re-enters Madeleine's room, and puts on a smiley face.

MRS WHITE  
All right then. [beat] Are we feeling perkier,  
Madeleine?

MADELEINE  
[small voice]  
Thank you, Mrs White.

MRS WHITE  
Then we'd better make this phone call?

MADELEINE  
[small voice]  
Yes, Mrs White.

Mrs White lifts the receiver from the bedside table.

MRS WHITE  
Hello? Is that the charge nurse? [beat] Yes I'd  
like to put that call to Vanuatu now please.

Mrs White covers the mouth piece as she turns to Madeleine.

MRS WHITE  
Now, we must remember, we don't want to upset Daddy  
unnecessarily - do we?

MADELEINE  
[small voice]  
No, Mrs White.

MISS WHITE  
So, I think if we say - you went to a big beach  
and you had a little fright - he shouldn't get  
overly worried? Do you think? Hmm?

MADELEINE  
[small voice]  
No, Mrs White.

54. INT VANUATU 1976: OCTAGONAL HOUSE AFTERNOON

TEDDY [35+] is sitting at the edge of his bed, shirtless with a bright sarong wrapped around his hips.

The bedside phone rings, he lifts the receiver.

TEDDY  
Hello? Ted Hughes. [beat] Hello?

55. INT NEW ZEALAND 1976: HOSPITAL AFTERNOON

MRS WHITE  
Yes Mr Hughes. Madeleine has just had a little  
adventure I think she's like to tell you about.

MRS WHITE  
[beat] She's right alongside me now, so I'll just  
pass the phone over to her.

Mrs White covers the handset as she hands it to Madeleine she  
smile sweetly and whispers.

MRS WHITE  
Now, don't forget what we talked about. Smile!

Madeleine smiles obediently.

MADELEINE  
[Bislama]  
Papa? [beat, the smiles dissolves] Papa, I want to  
come home.

Mrs White's smile curdles, but she manages to feign a smile and  
whisper brightly.

MRS WHITE  
In English, dear - show him how well you speak  
English.

56. INT VANUATU: OCTAGONAL HOUSE AFTERNOON

Teddy twists over the phone, and softens his tone soothingly.

TEDDY  
Maddie bear, not yet, not yet, you have  
to make sure you get better.

57. INT NEW ZEALAND: HOSPITAL AFTERNOON

MADELEINE  
[Bislama]  
Yes, Papa, but I miss the Boubous and you, and I  
really want to come home. [her voice quivers]

Mrs White enunciates.

MRS WHITE  
Eng-lish?

MADELEINE  
Please, please Papa.

Her voice cracks, little knuckles white from grasping the phone too tightly as she listens, reining her sob in.

58. INT VANUATU: OCTAGONAL HOUSE AFTERNOON

TEDDY

Maddie, we all miss you too but it's very important you stay at school. (beat) We talked about this, remember?

A young girl's voice calls from the bathroom.

GIRL [OFF]

Ted? Teddy? Are you ready for me?

He puts his hand over the receiver.

TEDDY

I'm on the phone.

While still looking towards the bathroom, he removes his hand from the receiver.

TEDDY

Now, tell me about school Maddie - have you been doing well? [beat] What's your favourite subject?

GIRL [OFF]

Teddy, I'm coming...

Teddy puts his hand over the receiver, and is about to reply then changes his mind.

TEDDY

Sorry, Maddie - I've got to go. I'm busy right now. Look, I'll call you back later. Now promise me you'll get better and work hard to catch up at school.

59. INT VANUATU: OCTAGONAL HOUSE AFTERNOON

Teddy puts down the receiver, and bends over the desk to write something down.

TEDDY

Stephanie, next time...

A shiny, naked ebony skin body presses up against his back.

GIRL

Yes? Now, what was that you were saying?

He twists around, pulling her onto the bed.

TEDDY

Oh, never mind.

The black and white limbs arrange themselves around each other; the only sound now is the girl's giggling.

60. EXT VANUATU: SANTO MARKETS (1980) DAWN

A yawning Madeleine [13] leans on a bench filled with baskets of food.

LEAH

Madeleine! Oh la la, you're squashing the mangoes!

She quickly jumps off with a guilty look on her face.

LEAH

And while you're up, you can set those up over there.

She says this in a bossy but cheerful manner; thrilled to have her granddaughter along.

Madeleine sighs, reluctantly returning to task.

They finish setting up shop.

Many of the other sellers (who are predominantly women and their children, grandchildren) are also setting up.

Some are asleep under tables, others sit talking to each other. Most wore bright coloured mother-hubbard dresses or *parepare* [sarongs].

The market ladies are fascinated by Madeleine, approaching the pair to ask questions and kiss her, much to Madeleine annoyance.

Leah, however, gracefully entertains everyone, answering questions and introducing Madeleine, who like all girls is sulking by 7am.

MADELEINE

Boubou Leah, that's enough! I'm starting to smell like saliva with all this kissing!

Leah merely laughs.

Madeleine stamps her feet at not being taken seriously.

MADELEINE

Well, I'm having a nap so don't you disturb me!

Leah laughs and kisses her as she struggles.

LEAH

Oh Madeleine.

A grumpy Madeleine breaks free and climbs under the produce bench, dons her Walkman to shut them out.

Leah settles behind her vegetable produce, neatly stacked on the table, talking to her neighbour, YVETTE [50+], in French.

Madeleine lies on the bottom bench, headphones on. Despite this, she could still hear Yvette's loud voice.

Yvette, a gossip vivacious women, plies Leah with questions, who proudly answers them. Madeleine turns her music down and listens to the conversation between the ladies.

YVETTE

That one has an unusual beauty. No?

LEAH

Yes, she is very pretty.

YVETTE

Does she get it from her mother?

LEAH

Yes, of course...

YVETTE

Or her father side?

Leah ignores the remark.

LEAH

[firm tone]

This one's Papa sent her to school in New Zealand.

Madeleine rolls her eyes at the conversation, and turns up the music.

61. EXT VANUATU: SANTO MARKETS LATER THAT MORNING

A small Chinese woman approaches Leah and Madeleine's table. She points at the yam bundle.

CHINESE WOMAN

[thick accent]

Kumala? [kumara - sweet potato] Gud? Gud?

Leah indicates with her hand for her to wait by holding her hands up, and shakes Madeleine awake.

LEAH

Madeleine, can you help me with this woman?

A groggy Madeleine flings a long leg out from beneath the table where she was dozing.

She sees the woman pointing at the yam, Leah shaking her head and pointing towards a sweeter variety of yam.

LEAH

Sweet. Sweet yam.

The woman shakes her head and continues to point at the other yams.

WOMAN

*Kumala, kumala!*

This struggle continues for a few minutes longer, with Leah pointing to the sweeter yams and the Chinese woman pointing to the others.

LEAH

Sweet, Sweet.

WOMAN

*Kumala, kumala - how much?*

Leah looks to Yvette and shrugs as if to say 'what am I suppose to do?'

Madeleine watches them going back and forth for a bit longer, and yawns.

MADELEINE

1000 Francs!

The woman shakes her head vigorously.

WOMAN

No, no, no, no, NO - 200 Francs, 200 Francs!

She repeats, waving the money around.

Madeleine rolls her eyes.

MADELEINE

800 Francs!

The woman shakes her head.

WOMAN

Too much, too much! 400!

She waves her hands at Madeleine, who narrows her eyes at her.

MADELEINE

700!

The woman hisses.

WOMAN

425!

Madeleine smiles widely.

MADELEINE

[calm]  
625.

The Chinese woman throws her hands up in mock shock.

WOMAN  
550 - no more, no more!

Madeleine begins nodding.

MADELEINE  
550 - yes!

She holds out her hand. Thrusting the bill into Madeleine's hand, grabs the bundle of yam and rushes off.

Madeleine, Leah and Yvette stare after the small figure walking quickly away.

WOMAN  
Too much, too much!

She mimics, making a face behind her back.

MADELEINE  
Stupide.

She begins counting the money.

Leah looks at Madeleine disapprovingly, speaking only for her ears in their Tutuvan language.

LEAH  
Madeleine, don't behave like that - that bundle of yams was only 200 Francs.

Yvette grins at Leah, and cocks an eyebrow at Madeleine.

YVETTE  
Oooooe! Never mind dear - she's in store for an itchy meal.

Leah cackles heartily.

62. EXT SANTO MARKETS: VANUATU MIDDAY

It's mid-morning, it's hot and the market place is buzzing.

Madeleine is sitting on the bench looking decidedly bored. Leah is buzzing around the produce.

LEAH  
Maddy, keep an eye on things while I skip off to the toilet.

MADELEINE  
OK, I'll go after you.

With a sway of a colourful hips, Leah disappears.

Seeing this, Yvette moves closer to Madeleine.

YVETTE

So, you go to school in New Zealand do you?

Madeleine reluctantly volunteers answers.

MADELEINE

Yes.

YVETTE

Now, you're back to visit your Mummy and Daddy?

MADELEINE

And my Boubous...

Madeleine busies herself under the table, picks up her book and sits reading, ignoring Yvette announcing her answers to the neighbours.

A group boys [12-19] make their way around the markets. As they near her table they begin talking and laughing loudly, frequently glancing in her direction to get her attention.

Madeleine ignores them.

One of the boys whistles in mock appreciation.

BOY 1

[Bislama]

Gosh, these market women sure are pretty.

Madeleine ignores him.

BOY 1

[French]

Though some are prettier than others.

Madeleine continues to ignore him.

CHRISTOPH [17] casually strolls over and stops right in front of Madeleine.

CHRISTOPH

How much pretty lady?

Madeleine sighs and puts her book down, glaring at the beautiful half-caste boy smiling at her. Recognising him as Christoph, the teacher's son that she use to play with on the island as a girl but yet not quite knowing what to say, she blushes.

CHRISTOPH

You look familiar...

Annoyed and embarrassed even more by her own blushing, she's unsure which language to answer in.

Finally settling on Bislama, she looks at Leah's produce and responds sharply, without meaning to.



MADELEINE

What is it you want?

The group behind Christoph burst out laughing and whistling at her English-accented Bislama.

BOY 1

Ooooh better watch out Christoph, she's not from around here.

BOY 2

Watch out, watch out Christoph, she's cross, she's cross!

Madeleine glares at them. Christoph catches her eye and smiles.

CHRISTOPH

Ignore them [he indicates with a cock of his head].

The two boys move off towards a group of girls by the river.

CHRISTOPH

Hey I remember you!

MADELEINE

And I remember you.

CHRISTOPH

What do you remember?

MADELEINE

You left me and Nelly adrift in the lagoon.

The smile on Christoph's face widens.

MADELEINE

Then the hurricane came and we were nearly blown out to sea.

CHRISTOPH

But you weren't, and here you are.

MADELEINE

No. [beat, she looks at the produce again]  
What you want?

Christoph laughs lightly, shaking his head.

CHRISTOPH

You're still going to hold it against me?

[Beat] His teasing eyes sought hers, finally holding it until hers softens a little. A small smile creeps onto her lips.

CHRISTOPH

Everything [he says this with a sweep of his arm]

Madeleine cocks an eyebrow at him in mock disbelief.

MADELEINE  
Everything eh?

CHRISTOPH  
Everything. [he smiles directly at her]

Madeleine does a quick calculation then adds another 10,000 francs.

MADELEINE  
[Beat] Well, that would be 20,000 francs then.

CHRISTOPH  
I see...

Christoph makes a show of looking at the produce then lets his gaze wander over to her.

Madeleine drops her hand from her hips, and attempts to look busy rearranging the mangos.

He looks directly at her, his easy smile disappearing into a quiet curious look.

CHRISTOPH  
So where have you been hiding? [said quietly]

MADELEINE  
Nowhere.

Pause. Christoph shrugs sheepishly, the cocky smile creeps back.

CHRISTOPH  
*Alle* [see you]

Christoph joins the other two boys at the far end of the river side market.

Madeleine bites her lip, feeling foolish. She looks across at Yvette, who had been watching from a distance while pretending not to.

She quickly looks away before Yvette is tempted to say anything.

But Yvette approaches anyway.

YVETTE  
Ah, don't worry about him. That boy thinks he's a big man at 17!

Despite herself, Madeleine shoulders relax a little, comforted

by Yvette's comment.

MADELEINE  
[Eyes still downcast]  
I used to play with him but [beat] he seems  
different now... [voice trails off]

Yvette nods.

YVETTE  
Well, tell you what girl, a lot of things have  
changed around here [says this as she surveys  
the scene].

Madeleine nods ever so slightly.

YVETTE  
That boy - takes after his father - nothing but  
trouble [she shakes her head, almost sadly].

Pause. Madeleine finally looks up at Yvette.

MADELEINE  
What trouble?

Back to her jovial self, Yvette happily moves closer and lowers  
her voice in a conspiring manner.

YVETTE  
His father is that *Fanafo* half-cast Jimi  
Stevens.

Madeleine nods, though her face remains slightly puzzled.

YVETTE  
Jimi sends the boy off to *Niugini* and he  
comes back flash, turning his nose up at *man*  
*ples* like us [beat] stay away from him I tell  
ya, nothing but trouble.

Madeleine looks away, and mutters aloud.

MADELEINE  
Aunty, I think I need to go to the toilet.

Yvette, delighted at being called Aunty, urges.

YVETTE  
Of course dear girl! You, run along before  
there's an unfortunate accident. Everything  
will be safe with me.

Madeleine smiles. She then stoops and pulls out a pair of pink  
high heels from her bag under the bench.

Slipping them on, she hobbles off towards the white concrete  
buildings in the near distance as everyone stares at the

strange sight.

Christoph emerges from somewhere to follow her at a distance.

63. EXT VANUATU SANTO TOWN: MAIN ROAD MIDDAY

Madeleine is finding it difficult walking in the heat with her pumps.

She stops at the curb and waits as noisy diesel trucks roared or crept along the dusty road.

She dashes across the road, nimbly dodging the many potholes.

On the other side of the road, Madeleine stops in front of a Chinese shop, and squints up and down the street.

Two young boys, a little girl and an old man sit on benches outside the shop. They stare at her as she moves on.

Madeleine walks along the dusty road, getting hotter and more exasperated.

People stare at her curiously as she defiantly struggles on.

One of her heels suddenly snags in a pot-hole. Madeleine's face grimaces in pain as she sinks down on the dusty sidewalk.

MADELEINE

Bloody hell!

Someone bursts out in laughter, Madeleine turns bright red. She doesn't move for a moment, rooted to the spot by pain and embarrassment.

A woman walking by offers help. Madeleine shakes her head vigorously. The woman moves on.

Ignoring the eyes on her, Madeleine pulls herself together and untangles her blistered and dusty feet out of the wedged shoe.

She struggles with the shoe, trying to pry it out of the crack, making a mess of the pink paint job.

MADELEINE

Oh no!

She stops, her eyes blur as tears well up in her eyes.

NELLY [OFF]

Madeleine?

A playful female voice, filled with humour, breaths her name.

Madeleine looks up into the sunlight, squinting into the smiling face, unable to make out its detail.

A cool hand on her shoulder pulls Madeleine from her daze.

And then as if she'd been there all along, Nelly stands smiling with her perfect teeth and smooth dark complexion from above.

Madeleine is stunned, both from the heat and disbelief at seeing Nelly.

Nelly reaches out and clasps Madeleine's hand.

NELLY

God, Madeleine, you're hot and sweaty!

Madeleine's face lights up, forgetting the shoe, grabs Nelly's arms and straightens up.

MADELEINE

Oh my God, Nelly, is it you?

Nelly laughs as they grab each other in a hug, both talking at once, their words over-lapping each other and turning high pitched and tangled with laughter until they're almost squealing and jumping up and down on the side of the dusty road, as people watch the turn of events with interest.

64. INT LONDON OFFICE (1990) AFTERNOON

In her cheap, mismatched outfit, MADELEINE [23] waits in the plush downtown office of Hughes and Associates.

Two well-dressed younger clerks cannot suppress their laughter while glancing in her direction, Madeleine immediately feels all eyes on her.

Teddy Hughes' PA, ROSIE [28], and ANOTHER [25] pause at the door.

ROSIE

That's her.

She nods ever so slightly in Madeleine direction, careful not to look directly at her, as if not to frighten a wild animal.

The women looked at Madeleine, then back at Rosie, uncertainly.

ROSIE

What I'm saying is that, I've met Teddy's daughter and that girl looks nothing like her.

ANOTHER

Do you think she's the full quid?

Rosie eyes Madeleine.

ROSIE

She is scrawny.

ANOTHER

I reckon she's a junkie.

They both look at Madeleine.

ROSIE

I'd better get her off the premises.

Taking charge, Rosie approached a now petrified-looking Madeleine.

ROSIE

[patronising overly polite tone]

Unfortunately, miss. [beat] Unfortunately, I have to ask you to leave.

Madeleine frowns, looks her in the eye.

MADELEINE

Why?

ROSIE

Because I think you're mistaken.

MADELEINE

How?

ROSIE

Mr Hughes DOES have a daughter but having met her, it's not you.

MADELEINE

Oh. Another daughter... [voice trails off]

Rosie gestures to TWO MALE STAFF nearby.

ROSIE

I'm sorry. But these gentlemen will escort you out.

Wide-eyed and red with embarrassment, Madeleine sits glued to the seat, hugging her bag to her chest.

MADELEINE

But my Father, Teddy, is expecting me!

All eyes turned in their direction.

ROSIE

Is that right? [beat] So how come, at this moment, he happens to be in Paris?

MALE

This way miss-

Madeleine rises, and exits wide-eyed and furious. The men trailing her.

65. EXT LONDON STREET EARLY EVENING

Madeleine wanders the shopping district, clutching her bag, looking miserable.

As evening falls, brilliant window displays came alight, distracting her from her held back tears.

Like a moth to a flame, she arrives at the exclusive shopping district, enchanted by the beautiful things in window after window.

She stops in front one in particular, and presses her hand and face against the glowing glass, mesmerized.

A beautifully dressed shop girl taps disapprovingly on the other side of the glass.

Madeleine jumps with fright at the sound, and moves on quickly.

66. INT LONDON PUB NIGHT

Audio: boisterous chatter

Busy pub overflowing with people drinking, talking and laughing.

The door opens and a blast of cold air sweeps through as

Madeleine enters in the same cheap outfit she wore from the airport. Her slim frame is tense, braced against the temperature and the seemingly cold people. She tugs nervously at her messy frizzy hair, eyes darting around the room.

Eyes turn her way curiously as she awkwardly makes her way into the crowd's warmth, relaxing a little as people parted to accept her into the fold. She stops near the bar, uncertain. She leans against a thick wooden beam nearest to her, tired. An attractive pale girl, PENNY [23], a cigarette in one hand moves quickly past her towards the bar.

PENNY

[Cockney]  
Excuse me luv.

Madeleine hurries out of her way.

Penny leans on the bar and catches the eye of the girl behind the bar, SOPHIE [21], who is serving another customer. She gesture to her, as if to ask- 'well?' Sophie shakes her head in reply. Penny sighs dramatically and turns, slumping back against the bar.

Penny eyes Madeleine's semi-slumped figure as she drags on her cigarette.

PENNY

You awright?

Madeleine looks up, surprised, and nods vigorously. Sophie puffs furiously on the cigarette.

PENNY

I tell ya. Waiting for men'll be the friggin' end of me.

She checks Madeleine with a sideways look; Madeleine, unsure of what Penny meant, smiles and nods ever so slightly.

PENNY

What d'you say? Waiting for these berks is worse than waiting for 'the curse'.

Hardly understanding a word Madeleine nods nervously.

PENNY

I betcha he's bleedin outside. I betcha he's keepin an eye on me. He's waitin until I'm half pissed and thinkin I'll be the complete push over.

Penny skulls her drink and bangs the empty glass on the bar.

PENNY

Well, I tell ya. He's done it once too often. You wait and see. Tonight he's in for a fuckin surprise.  
[beat] Where was you from luv?

Madeleine smiles wanly. Looks distant.

67. EXT VANUATU SANTO TOWN: MAIN ROAD (1980) MIDDAY

Nelly and Madeline silently dance and hug each other.

Audio bridge:

JEZZIE [V/O]



[scots]  
Same again luv?

68. INT LONDON PUB NIGHT

Madeleine 'comes to', looks at the empty space on the bar then up at the barman JEZZIE [25].

He gives cursory nod at Penny. He's filling Penny's glass in a flamboyant, gay but condescending manner.

JEZZIE

[scot]  
You with the slapper? [indicates to Penny with his head]

Madeleine looks at him, confused. Penny feigns indignant.

PENNY

[cockney]  
Ah up y' kilt y'jealous Jezzie bitch.

Jezzie then continues to fill a glass for Madeleine. He 'confides' aloud to Madeleine and the bar.

JEZZIE

[scot]  
Give the sassernak a sniff of a cork and she's anyone's.

He lifts his eyebrow at Penny, who purses her lips in annoyance, hissing at his back as he saunters off.

PENNY

Jealous Jezzie bitch.

She gulps another mouthful of her drink, gets out another fag and unsteadily puts it to her lips and pouts.

PENNY

Light me up light darl'

The pub door bangs open, in a blast of cold air sweeps in SPIKE [29] enters. He spots Penny takes in her agitation. Penny, one hand on her hip, strikes a pose.

PENNY

Take your bloody time, will ya?

Ignoring the venom, Spike's lips curl into a smoky, lazy smile. He looks Madeleine over.

SPIKE

[cockney]  
Always have luv, always have.

PENNY

Ah you're too modest.

She turns to confides with Madeleine again.

PENNY

You ever need a six second shag?  
He's your man. [beat] He's gone before  
he comes.

He leans close, takes Penny's hand, handing over a small package as he kisses her on the cheek. Penny accepts the embrace in a stiff manner.

SPIKE

Why don't you go and fix yourself up first?

Penny stands abruptly and thrusts her wine at a startled Madeleine.

PENNY

Here. Look after this will you? [beat] And  
don't let him put anything in it.

Penny lurches toward the rest rooms. Spike turns to Madeleine.

SPIKE

Don't mind her, luv [nods after Penny].

Madeleine shrugs, as if to say she couldn't care less.

Spike smiles his smoky half-smile.

Pause.

SPIKE

I'm Spike. [beat] I don't think we've been  
introduced?

He holds out his hand. She hesitates. Finally shakes his hand.

MADELEINE

Madeleine [stammers] I'm Madeleine [more firm, full  
lips curving into a wide smile]

Spike settles down, exudes confidence. He looks toward the departed Penny.

SPIKE

She's a right mess that one, lucky she can go home  
to Oxford once she's done down these trenches.  
[beat fixes his piercing blue eyes at Madeleine] So  
watcha know?

69. INT LONDON OFFICE (1990) AFTERNOON

Madeleine stands wide-eyed and furious before Rosie in the foyer of Hughes Associates.

Audio bridge:

SOPHIE (V/O)  
Watcha after?

WAZZA (V/O)  
[scouse]  
The usual darling.

70. INT LONDON PUB NIGHT

Madeleine becomes aware WAZZA [29] is standing beside and looking down at her.

WAZZA  
So what's this?

Spike takes a full glass from the bar and puts it before Madeleine. He talks over his shoulder to Sophie.

SPIKE  
Tab it luv.

He winks at Madeleine.

Wazza nudges Spike and murmurs, as if Madeleine is out of earshot.

WAZZA  
You fancy a different flavor?

SPIKE  
Eh?

WAZZA  
Who's the Paki?

Spike is sheepish.

SPIKE  
Hav some manners Waz...

A knowing Madeleine looks up from her drink [beer] to catch Wazza's eye. He seems momentarily embarrassed, then raises his glass to her.

WAZZA  
Bottoms up!

He looks away to mutter again.

WAZZA  
You lucky bastard. She looks hot to trot.  
A touch of the Gypsy Rose Lee?

SPIKE  
I think she's an angel. [beat] Keep ya filthy paws  
off er eh?

Wazza smirks into his beer.

WAZZA  
Well, fuck me. Listen to old father time.

They both ponder this while drinking and looking at Madeleine,  
who now sniffs the drink.

WAZZA  
It's lolly water luv! Bottom's up?

MADELEINE  
Eh?

WAZZA  
[as if she is a retard]  
Lol-lee-war-ter?

Madeleine, more than irritated by Wazza. Uses her most round  
vowels.

MADELEINE  
Excuse me? Are you by any chance - retarded?

Spike chuckles as Wazza splutters into his beer.

WAZZA  
Fuck me - a fuckin posh one. I think I'd better  
spend a penny.

As Wazza knocks back his drink and goes to move off, Spike  
turns to sit next to Madeleine. He explains within Wazza's  
hearing

SPIKE  
Ignore the riff raff luv [beat]. He's scouse.

MADELEINE  
Scouse?

Wazza continues to lurk.

WAZZA  
Now that's pig ignorant [he sings] 'Ferry, cross the  
Mersey'.

SPIKE  
Oh for pity's sake Wazza do you have to be so  
fuckin' Victorian?

WAZZA  
It's still good music.

Wazza looks at Madeleine.

WAZZA

I bet you know Gerry and the Pacemakers don'tcha?

Wazza dries at Madeleine's glazed look.

WAZZA

So where do you come from?

MADELEINE

New Zealand [firmly, as if to convince herself].

Wazza's eyebrows rise.

WAZZA

Oh? You're a fuckin' Maori?

Madeleine sighs in exasperation, rolls her eyes, turns to Spike, she arches her an eyebrow.

MADELEINE

Is he for real?

Spike lets out a laugh.

SPIKE

Wazza! She's got you sorted. Now be a decent pillock and piss off.

Spike catches Madeleine's eye and shrugs inclusively.

Madeleine expression is one of relief.

71. EXT NEW ZEALAND: BETHELLS (1976) AFTERNOON

The lonely sand dunes slope longingly into the trashing West Coast waves.

Footprints on the sand are slowly being erased by the incoming tide.

72. INT LONDON PUB NIGHT

People spill out onto the street from the pub and head off noisily in various directions. Madeleine slips out of the door, with Spike following closely behind.

SPIKE

So, where's your digs?

Madeleine stops in her tracks, sucks in her breath as the cold air hits her lungs. She seems dazed, a little disorientated. Spike pulls up beside her.

MADELEINE  
I was going to get a cab?

SPIKE  
Where to?

After a moment.

MADELEINE  
I'm not sure.

SPIKE  
Hey Angel - tell you what - you come back to my place. Have a nightcap and we'll sort it out there. Yer keen?

She stands frozen to the spot, not quite comprehending what he said. She drops her head avoiding his eyes. They stand there, almost at loss for words as people push past them.

SPIKE  
Come on then. Everyone'll be along...

As he uses his body to steer her in the new direction, somewhere in the night Wazza calls out.

WAZZA [OFF]  
West Ham one! New Zealand nil!

As Spike guides Madeleine their hands come into contact.

SPIKE  
Jesus, yer hands are freezin'

In a knee-jerk reaction, she snatches it away, turning away from Spike's figure in embarrassment. They are awkward again. Madeleine turns to leave. Spike quickly blocks her path.

SPIKE  
You'll die waiting for a cab. You'll freeze t'death. You're not a fuckin' penguin.

In trying to prevent the situation from deteriorating, Spike turns to comedy. She shuffles in a penguin-like manner until he's standing in front of her.

SPIKE  
I mean 'aven't you noticed? Like even the fuckin' penguins 'ave 'ad the common sense t' stay inside.

The question hangs awkwardly in the cold air between them. She hangs her head, her lips is turning blue. He digs into his pockets and produces a pair of gloves.

SPIKE  
Here, at least take the gloves.

A smile tugs at the corner of Madeleine's mouth. She looks up

sharply, narrows her eyes at his silly walk. Spike taps his shoulder and then the other in mock blessing then presents the gloves to her, before opening one and motioning to her hands. She slowly smiles, complying with the act as he helps her into one glove and then the other.

When this is done they stand there smiling foolishly at each other.

SPIKE

Better?

Madeleine nods.

73. INT LONDON FLAT: LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Penny and Wazza's faces peer at Madeleine.

WAZZA

You're not a copper are ya?

Madeleine flushes, feeling foolish. She accepts the joint and tokes softly, grimacing at the flavour.

Wazza and Penny laugh at her expression.

Spike appears.

Madeleine, in mid-toke, splutters, coughs and noticeably reddens, self-conscious in Spike's presence.

Wazza and Penny laugh even more. Madeleine groans and buries her head in Penny's arm - coughing.

Spike smiles widely and attempts not to laugh. Coming up for air, Madeleine mumbles weakly.

MADELEINE

Toilet!

Wazza and Penny set off into peals of laughter again.

Chuckling, Spike motions for Madeleine to follow him.

74. INT LONDON FLAT: BATHROOM NIGHT

Madeleine's upside down face, drinking water straight from the tap in the bathroom noisily.

Spike is leaning on the wall outside the bathroom. Someone approaches Spike. They talk in low tones.

Madeleine finishes and listens to the murmuring.

She stands and looks at her wet flushed face in the mirror. Feeling dizzy she bends down again, turns the cold tap on,

sticks her face under it and closes her eyes.

Madeleine's face, wet, kinky hair plastered on her forehead and across her eyes as the water washes over her face, cool and soothing.

Spike's fingers brush the hair from her eyes.

Madeleine reactively snaps her head up, hitting her forehead on the tap.

MADELEINE

Shit!

She stumbles holding her forehead, then slides down to sit on the toilet.

Spike reaches out, catches her bruised forehead and rubs it.

MADELEINE

Aou! Aou! That's sore!

Spike lets go and his hand comes away with blood.

SPIKE

Shite!

Madeleine holds her head and groans from the toilet.

Spike grabs a towel hanging on the rack, and hands it to her.

SPIKE

'Ere!

Madeleine covers her bloody forehead with it, bending over and down in the process.

Spike looks at her bent figure, moments go by.

SPIKE

Aw right then?

Madeleine stands and slowly takes her hand away from the cut. She frowns at her reflection, the cut looks nasty and weeping still.

MADELEINE

I'm fine.

Spike stands behind her, his reflection inches away from her.

She looks at a fresh drop of blood running down her forehead, then her dark eyes flick over into his piercing blue ones.

Her eyes glaze over, a feeling of nausea overwhelms her.

MADELEINE

Feel... sick!



She clutches her stomach, her face colourless, before collapsing against the toilet, and retching into the bowl.

Spike stands frozen watching her body heave. A look of guilt flashes over his face, then he drops down to her level.

Her face is shiny with sweat as she pauses.

SPIKE

Ye alright?

In response she begins vomiting again, flying liquid narrowly avoiding Spike as he awkwardly pats her back.

SPIKE

Christ, ye getting it all over ye 'air.

He gently gathers her frizzy hair and holds it off her face.

She finishes heaving and slumps against the ceramic, sticky with sweat.

Spike sighs, straightens up and lights a cigarette, all the while looking at Madeleine curled up on the floor. She stares back at him, breathing heavily.

He puts out the cigarette after a few drags and squats down again, closer to her.

SPIKE

Looks like a snog is totally out of the question?

Madeleine smiles weakly, and chokes out a raspy laugh.

MADELEINE

Not a good time.

Spike smiles. He reaches out and brushes her hair away from her eyes.

SPIKE

Right then, time for some shut eye?

Madeleine nods once, exhausted.

SPIKE

Cum on then.

And he bends down to pick her up as if she were as light as a feather. She lets him.

75. EXT VANUATU SANTO: MAIN ROAD (1980) MIDDAY

Language: Bislama

Madeleine and Nelly are walking along arm-in-arm, talking.

NELLY

You have to tell me everything!

Madeleine, shiny with sweat, grimaces.

MADELEINE

Yes, of course, but I'm soo hot, Nelly!  
Can we find somewhere shady to sit and -

NELLY

Let's go to *la plage*. Come on!

She half drags Madeleine along.

MADELEINE

And a drink - I need a cold drink! [whine]

NELLY

Oh, come on then - Gosh! You've become so  
soft-soft and your skin is so... white!

Nelly laughs. They wander off with Madeleine carrying her pink high heel shoes.

76. EXT LUGANVILLE: SIDE STREET MIDDAY

The ocean breeze drifts around the waterfront area; a shady and grassy space often used for festivals and public events.

Madeleine, and Nelly are meandering along, drinking bright orange homemade sodas usually sold in local shops.

Madeleine is fanning herself with a fan made out of coconut flax.

NELLY

You have to get me one - don't forget!

Madeleine stops and stares down at her feet then back up at Nelly's smiling face.

MADELEINE

You can have this one if you want?

NELLY

Let me try.

The girls swap shoes; pink pumps for a pair of old jandals.

The pumps fit Nelly's feet perfectly; the pink contrasting against her ebony tone. She takes a few smooth steps as Madeleine watches enviously.

NELLY

These white-man shoes are number one!

She laughs and suddenly links arms with Madeleine, pulling her close and lowers her tone conspiringly.

NELLY

And you have a white boyfriend?

Madeleine acts coy. Not knowing how to answer. Nelly supposes.

NELLY

What is he like?

Madeleine affects a maturity.

MADELEINE

Of course! I've had three!

Nelly lets out a whooping laugh, and clicks fingers with Madeleine.

NELLY

So have I! [beat] Were they any good?

Madeleine is caught off guard.

MADELEINE

How do you mean?

NELLY

You know?

Madeleine's confusion deepens.

MADELEINE

Oh, yeah. [beat] They were pretty good.

NELLY

How good?

MADELEINE

Well. [beat] How good were yours?

With that Nelly roars into peals of laughter. Madeleine turns red.

NELLY

Oh Maddy! [lowers her voice] I think the black man is better than the white men.

Madeleine frowns.

MADELEINE

Better?

NELLY

Yes! [beat] You know. At push-push.

MADELEINE

Oh? Yeah - sure.

Madeleine rises and begins to walk. She's awkward but Nelly does not notice.

NELLY

But the white guys are nicer and buy nice presents, especially the old ones! [beat] And always say thank you.

She sighs.

NELLY

But it's a pity they're not that fit.

MADELEINE

Fit?

NELLY

In the sack.

Madeleine's mind and pulse are racing. She attempts to keep up the pretense. She is now aware they are being trailed by a couple of male youths.

MADELEINE

And the young?

NELLY

Ah, they are always full of sweet talk.

They stop beside the district agency which is boarded up with planks of wood over the doors and *namele* leaves, meaning tabu.

Madeleine stares at the building.

MADELEINE

What's going on over there?

Nelly shrugs but lowers her tone.

NELLY

It's *Vemarana* - they put *leaf namele* up 'cause they want to be independent from the rest of the islands.

A puzzled expression washes over Madeleine's face.

MADELEINE

Boubou says they want to be independent to be dependent.

Nelly laughs and shrugs.

NELLY

We're going to be independent

soon anyway.

Madeleine still looks confused, but suddenly stops fanning and looks hard past the building.

MADELEINE

Oh my God!

Nelly turns to follow her eyes.

MADELEINE

Don't look!

Nelly looks back at Madeleine.

MADELEINE

Is that Christoph?

Nelly turns back to look towards the rear of the building.

MADELEINE

Don't look! [Beat] Is he looking this way?

A whistle sails out from behind the site, followed by laughter. Nelly puts her hand on her hips and rolls her eyes.

NELLY

Ooooo, you like Christoph?

Madeleine feigns revulsion.

MADELEINE

No! He's a show-off. As if anybody would want him!

NELLY

Heard he's not bad in the sack.

Madeleine is stunned.

MADELEINE

How do you -? [know]

Nelly turns around, and lets out a piercing whistle towards the building.

Heads look up from a group half hidden behind the tall fence and foliage surrounding the building. Nelly indicates to Christoph to come over.

MADELEINE

Nelly! Oh my God! What are you doing?

A shy and embarrassed Madeleine hides behind an edge, as Nelly smoothly saunters over to the site.

Christoph takes his time.

Nelly turns to Madeleine's half hidden figure.

NELLY  
Madeleine, come on!

Madeleine shakes her head vigorously.

A bare-chested Christoph approaches Nelly, his taut and caramel-coloured physique drenches in sweat.

Madeleine watches the pair talk from behind the hedge.

Christoph glances over towards her.

CHRISTOPH  
Madeleine, are you scared to talk to me?

Madeleine reddens, rooted to the spot. Nelly giggles. They talk for a few seconds longer, then Christoph hands her the cigarette tucked behind his ear, and Nelly dashes back to Madeleine.

NELLY  
Let's go, Mads.

MADELEINE  
What did you say?

NELLY  
He likes you.

She links arms with Madeleine, and they set off.

Madeleine turns back to look at the site, catches Christoph's eyes as he's teased by his friends.

He winks at her; she reddens, turns away quickly, breaks free of Nelly and begins to run.

NELLY  
Madeleine, wait up!

Nelly wobbles on the heels then takes them off and catches up with Madeleine.

77. EXT BRIGHTON PIER (1990) DAY/NIGHT

Madeleine [23] and Spike [29] are running along the pier. She's ahead and he's close behind with Madeleine's bag.

Madeleine's hair comes undone, the curls bounce out.

Spike catches up with her and is about to overtake her. Their smiling eyes meet, breath ragged, their eyes, smiles spur each other on. Madeleine eye's flash as Spike tries to overtake her.

But she pulls ahead, her laugh sprinkles the air.

78. INT LONDON: BEDROOM (1990) DAY/NIGHT

Light filters in through the half drawn curtains.

The door opens and Spike and Madeleine burst in, breathing hard and laughing. Both are sweaty from the run. There are clothes on the floor, the bed is unmade.

Spike takes off his leather jacket and throws it on the pile on the armchair.

SPIKE

Thirsty?

Madeleine nods, and he exits.

Madeleine looks around the room; it's disheveled like a boy's room. A large, filled bookshelf sits against one wall; dominant and quiet in being the only neatly arranged object in the room. She moves across to it, squinting at its content. She notices it's alphabetically arranged.

Turning her head at an angle, she read some of the titles. She and reaches out to lift a large format photographic book. It's title: South Seas Paradise. Spike enters.

SPIKE

Some nice pictures in that. Half naked women.

MADELEINE

Is that why you buy them?

SPIKE

No. I'm going to go there one day.

MADELEINE

What for?

SPIKE

Everyone wants to go to paradise.

Madeleine smiles softly at this, and then her gaze shifts to a distance spot, lost in thought.

79. EXT LUGANVILLE: HOME (1980) LATE AFTERNOON

A warm breeze drifts through the tall ceilinged French colonial structure.

One end opens out to the blue-green Pacific Ocean lapping gently onto white sand beach.

Teddy [40+] sits on the concrete steps facing beach reading a paperback, eating peanuts and drinking beer. He's shirtless, a sarong wrapped around his waist.

Audio: A vehicle pulls up outside; voices as they descended and footsteps hurry towards the house; the door opens and bangs shut.

Leah and Madeleine approach.

MADELEINE

Daddy? Dad?

She rounds the corner just as Teddy stands, readjusting his wrap.

TEDDY

How did it go?

Madeleine approaches and throws herself on the couch in exasperation.

MADELEINE

We had to leave early.

Teddy takes a swig at his beer.

TEDDY

Why?

MADELEINE

All these *man Fanafo* turned up [beat]  
heaps of them!

Teddy eyes catch Leah's quiet entrance; leans against a cupboard and listens.

He turns to include her in the conversation, switching to Bislama.

TEDDY

*Man Fanafo* aah?

Leah nods.

TEDDY

That troublemaker Jimmy Steven with them?

Leah shrugs and shakes her head.

LEAH

Maybe... but I didn't see him.

MADELEINE

And Aunt Yvette came back from the shops  
completely out of her head!

TEDDY

Ah, Yvette shrieks at the sight of her shadow.



LEAH

Yes, she is very excitable.

MADELEINE

But people started to pack up - and then the police truck filled with police went past really fast.

LEAH

So it seemed best we did too.

MADELEINE

And then all hell broke loose!

Teddy reflects on the news before taking another swig, draining the bottle.

TEDDY

So what does old Titus make of all this?

LEAH

He doesn't know. He's been out fishing.

Leah does not answer.

TEDDY

Stevens talks rubbish. [beat] I tell you if Titus follows Jimmy he will find himself in *kalabus* [jail]!

Leah regards Teddy stoically. After a moment.

LEAH

A man has to follow his *kastom*.

Leah mutters, matter of fact, as she exits.

LEAH

I better hang up the bananas or else the rats will get fat.

Teddy rises, dons shirt, trousers, shoes and jacket. He crosses to his desk as gets his leather briefcase and stuffs it with assorted papers.

MADELEINE

Where are you going?

Teddy locates what he's looking for and moves towards the door with Madeleine trailing after him.

TEDDY

I need to check the office.

MADELEINE

Can I come?

TEDDY

No Maddie, it sounds too dangerous. I'll be back soon.

The car door slams before the Ute starts, and pulls away.

80. EXT LONDON: STREET (1990) DAY

Madeleine stands outside a block of expensive apartments, eyeing the door man warily.

Her mouth now blue, she finally plucks up the courage after much indecision, and approaches the man, who to her surprise holds the door open to her.

She hurries in before he changes his mind.

81. INT LONDON: APARTMENT LOBBY (1990) DAY

The old fashion elevator door opens and Madeleine walks down the tomb-like plush hall.

She stops outside a door, rummages through her bag for a piece of paper, which she checks, checks again.

Checks at her reflection on the shiny gold door, patting her hair down to no avail, quickly rings the door bell and waits nervously.

Footsteps approach the door from inside; it opens and an older woman with her hair pulled back into a tight bun looks out at her questioningly.

WOMAN

Can I help you?

After a moment's stunned silence, Madeleine stammers out a reply.

MADELEINE

I, I - I'm looking for Mr Teddy Hughes.

WOMAN

Yes?

MADELEINE

I'd like to speak with him - please.

The woman narrows her gaze, purses her thin lips.

WOMAN

Do you have an appointment?

MADELEINE

No. [smiles nervous] I am his daughter.

The woman's face clouds.

WOMAN

Oh? [beat] And your name?

MADELEINE

Madeleine.

WOMAN

Hughes?

MADELEINE

Yes? [beat] Is there a problem?

WOMAN

And your mother's name?

MADELEINE

Josephine.

A thin smile appears on the woman's face.

WOMAN

I think you're sadly mistaken dear. [beat]  
You have the wrong Mr Hughes. [beat] Good day.

The woman draws in a sharp breath, her expression visibly hardening as she peers over her glasses.

She quickly moves to close the door, as Madeleine scrambles to give her a piece of paper with her phone number.

MADELEINE

But this is the address he gave me.

The door closes in her face.

Madeleine looks down at the piece of paper, trembling in her hand.

She sits down outside the door, tears a leaf out of her diary, and begins to write a note.

Once written, she folds the note as neat as possible and tries to slip it under the door. Straightening up she changes her mind and pick up the paper and wedges it into the door by the knob. It falls onto the ground.

She stares at the lonely and scrap-like bit of paper on the floor, her breathing ragged from holding her despair in. She becomes aware that someone else is approaching along the hall.

She looks up to see two uniformed building security men approaching.

She turns to flee in the opposite direction. They hurry after her.

82. INT LONDON: BEDROOM (1990) DAY/NIGHT

Madeleine stands reading the back of a paperback in the semi-dark.

Spike re-enters the room, stands by the door looking at her turned back.

He comes up close behind her; putting his one hand out, inches from her head and gently, softly traces the back of her head brushing the tips of the stringy curls that have escaped her hair band.

She does not turn. Her eyes move sideways as if to catch his movement. She spins around fast, a flash of smiling lips and white teeth.

But he steps away before she could catch him. They catch each eyes, he shrugs sheepishly and smiles his lazy, sexy smile.

They look at each other smiling.

Her eyes catch a large book he held in one hand; the words New Zealand is written across it.

He sees her looking at it opens it to a market page and reads in an almost proper voice.

SPIKE

The indigenous Maori people of New Zealand are Polynesians, physically characterised by their almond shaped eyes, straight hair and broad, flat facial features...

He turns the open book around to reveal an image of the 'typical' Maori man and woman.

She looks at the image.

SPIKE

You're not really from New Zealand, are ya?

She looks at him, colour creeping onto her face; her expression defiant.

MADELEINE

[quiet but firm]  
Not originally. [beat] Does it matter?

She sharply turns back towards the book shelf, signaling an end to the conversation.

Spike gazes at her stiff figure then drops the book on his bed.

Stepping closer to her, he reaches out and slowly touches her hair; fingers brushing her curls, pulling it out until it is straight then letting it spring back into a tight ball.

SPIKE

So what are ya?

She turns to him; pouring her eyes into his. Finally.

Reach out her long-fingers catch the back of Spike's shaved head and runs her palms slowly over his skull.

MADELEINE

I can be whatever you want me to be.

He turns his face so that he's breathing into her palm. Then bowing his head, he closes his eyes resting his naked skull on her breast bone.

She draws her fingers over his bowed eyes and forehead as if to bless him.

SPIKE

[smiling]  
Not right now. No.

In the next heartbeat, his arm circles her slender waist and jerks her to him. Her laughter crackles like electricity in the air.

83. INT LONDON: BEDROOM(1992) DAY/NIGHT

The room is quiet but messy.

Madeleine [25] wakes up suddenly, as if from a dreamless black vacuum.

She is lying next to Spike in a darkened room. They are semi-naked, and sticky with sweat, staining the sheets flung over them.

Slivers of light fall over them through the torn curtains.

Her vision still coated with the sugary remnants of heroine; Madeleine dilated pupils stares at rays of light slicing through the air.

Beside her Spike twitches in euphoric slumber, his face relaxed, his slit-like eyes fixed on Madeleine but unseeing, one tattooed arm wrapped around her body, claiming her.

She reaches up, her fingertips touches through the light ray.

The light on her finger tips turns into a techni-coloured lens flare.

The sound of young Madeleine's laughter sprinkles around the room.

84. EXT VANUATU: VILLAGE(1975) MORNING

Titus is standing by the door way to a hut, making funny faces, to which Madeleine laughs.

He stops his shuffling, and lowers his tone conspiringly.

TITUS

Hey, Boubou Leah, will be back soon so you better hurry or she'll get all grumpy...

With that he contorts his face into an angry one; more laughter from Madeleine inside.

He walks over and settles down next to the kettle heating up in the small open kitchen.

Silence.

Sound of footsteps, then Leah appears along the path, carrying a bucket filled with water.

She cocks an eyebrow at Titus.

LEAH

Where's Madeleine?

Titus points towards the hut with an amused expression.

TITUS

She's still in there doing God-knows-what.

Leah sighs.

LEAH

Madeleine, *alle, alle, alle* [come on], let's go!

Leah begins to comb her hair. Seconds pass.

The thin wooden door bangs open, and Madeleine [8] finally emerges.

As she walks over in a new pink dress, her Grandfather Titus whistles in affectionate jest.

TITUS

*Missus blo Tutuba ya!* [Difficult to translate, essentially means 'Island madam']

This prompts her to run over and force herself into his lap.

TITUS

Oh no, no, no, Madams can't act like babies now. [beat] And is this the latest 'uncombed' hairstyle?

Madeleine ignores this and curls in more.

Just then, a set of twin girls[12] appear from the bush path.

GIRL 1

*Alle Boubou (Grandmother)*, shall we get going?

Leah nods.

LEAH

Yes, let's go. Madeleine, up, up, up.

She picks up her flax bag as Madeleine untangles herself from her Grandfather.

MADELEINE

But where is Nelly? I'm not going without her!

Leah and Titus exchange a look.

TITUS

Come on, off you go. You don't want to be Godless like your grandfather.

Madeleine looks at him suspiciously.

MADELEINE

I don't believe you!

GIRL 1

I heard Aunty Alice and the girls early this morning, maybe they're already there?

Madeleine now looks at her suspiciously, to which her cousin shrugs.

MADELEINE

I can stay here with *Boubou* Titus, can't I Boubou?

TITUS

Absolutely not! I've a hard day's gardening ahead of me.

With this Madeleine small figure puts one hand on her hips and points at her Grandfather.

MADELEINE

But it's Sunday - the Lord's day - you're not suppose to be working!

She stamps her feet at the last statement, as Titus suppresses a laugh which comes out as a snort.

Leah decides to put a stop to it all.

LEAH

Madeleine, you trying my patience. You're not going to the gardens with your Godless Grandfather. [beat] You want to the devil to wait for you?

She takes Madeleine's little hand firmly and marches her down the path, with the twins following.

MADELEINE

Alright, alright, I'm coming!

She struggles out of her Grandmother grasp, turns just before they disappear out of Titus' sight, and pokes her tongue out at him.

He lets out a belly laugh.

85. EXT/INT VANUATU: CHURCH (1975) MORNING

The small concrete-white church gleams in the morning sun; the sound of raised voices singing wafting out.

Behind it, tall palm trees silent sit.

'Church of Christ' is inscribed into the cement directly above the arched door way.

Inside, the congregation is underway, with everyone on their feet in the aisles singing, led by the delicate boned figure of Pastor WILLIE [50+], Titus' brother, at the head clutching the hymn book.

On the left, two rows back; Leah, the twins and Madeleine stand singing along.

Throughout the hymn, Madeleine would stop singing and glance searchingly around the room, trying to spot Nelly.

The hymn ends, and Pastor Willie leads the congregation in prayer.

Madeleine takes this opportunity to twist completely around to search the further aisles.

As she's doing so, her name suddenly comes up in Pastor Willie's blessing.

PASTOR WILLIE

And God, the Almighty Lord, please bless one of our own, Madeleine, as she embarks on her journey to New Zealand...

At this, Leah opens one eye and looks at Madeleine's turned frame. She makes a low hissing sound for Madeleine to face the front.

Madeleine scrambles around, and quickly bows her head in prayer.

86. INT LONDON: BEDROOM(1995) DAY/NIGHT

Spike stirs in his laced-sleep beside her.

SPIKE

Angel? Me Angel, Pacific princess...



Madeleine turns in the bed to face him, stroking his face soothingly. He opens his bright blue eyes, looks at her and smiles. She moves in as close as she can, and touches his shaved head.

MADELEINE

[mock cockney]  
Ye awroight?

SPIKE

A wicked dream.

MADELEINE

About?

SPIKE

You'd left me.

MADELEINE

[mock, teases]  
Oow - poor thing?

SPIKE

But you'd left all ya clothes. [beat] Like  
it was bleedin' strange.

Madeleine brushes her lips against his. She laughs

MADELEINE

What, me with no clothes?

He pulls her close and buries his head against her chest, his grip tightening around her.

SPIKE

No, it was me. I was like - a hermit crab.

Above him, she holds him; tears filling her eyes for a moment, she then blinks them away. She looks at forever, closes her eyes.

87. INT VANUATU: OCTAGONAL HOUSE (1975) NIGHT

A dream.

It's dark in the Octagonal House, everyone is asleep, waves gently lap through the open French doors.

Madeleine [8] eye lids flutter, and then open in the dark.

She reaches over to the other side of the bed, touching empty space.

MADELEINE

Boubou?

Her voice echoes with the waves.

Something crawls over her fingers, she snatches it away.

Her small figure, wearing an oversized t-shirt gets up in the dark.

She moves into the bathroom, stands for a moment and listens, thinking she could hear voices in the distance.

Entering her parents' bedroom, she stands in the doorway, squints at the forms in bed.

MADELEINE

Mama?

The netted-colonial style windows are open and the bright hibiscus patterned curtains are blowing in the breeze.

She moves closer to the bed and sees that the its empty. A hint of panic enters her voice, breath quickens.

MADELEINE

Mama? [long beat] Papa?

She walks out into the large Octagonal room.

MADELEINE

Boubou Leah? [long beat] Boubou Titus?

She walks from room to room, calling out, her own voice echoing back at her in answer.

88. EXT ESPIRITU SANTO - THE OCTAGONAL HOUSE NIGHT

She walks through her mother's garden as plants slither and grow towards from dark corners.

She stops at the gate facing out towards the plantation; the darkness and silence breathing with her ragged breath.

MADELEINE

Mama! [long beat] Mama!

She calls out, and the darkness swallows up her voice.

MADELEINE

Mama!

Her voice is horse and she is in complete panic now. She considers running out into the plantation and finding others but for some reason she cannot, rooted by fear to the spot.

MADELEINE

Mama!

Arms reach out and enclose shoulders; Madeleine nearly jumps out of her skin.

JOSEPHINE (V/O)

Maddy!

Madeleine's voice is stuck in her throat. Her mother appears so small and not altogether real, a ghost.

MADELEINE

Mama, where are?

JOSEPHINE (V/O)

I'm here!

MADELEINE

Where? [looks around] Where are you Mama?

JOSEPHINE (V/O)

Sssh! Come back and lie by my side.

Madeleine is puzzled by this woman who appears to be her mother.

Josephine gently steers a dazed and confused Madeleine back to the house.

At the door, Josephine vanishes ahead.

Madeleine glances back over her shoulder towards the Octagonal house in the distance, a figure stands by the window holding lamp/torch.

89. EXT SANTO: SWIMMING LAGOON (1980) MIDDAY

Madeleine [13] has joined a group from the plantation, made up mostly of woman and kids, to go swimming at a nearby fresh water hole.

Everyone is in the water except for Madeleine, who is reading on the bank.

LITTLE GIRL

Madeleine! Madeleine!

Madeleine sighs in exasperation at being repeatedly interrupted, but looks up anyway.

LITTLE GIRL

Watch this!

With that, the small form dives under the crystal blue water; not emerging for an unbelievable long time.

Madeleine claps when she does, then turn back to her book.

LITTLE GIRL

Madeleine! Madeleine!

[Beat]

MADELEINE

Not now, Valerie!

MOTHER

Valerie, don't bother Miss Madeleine now.

Madeleine continues with her reading as a Ute full of people pull up.

People jump out.

A shadow falls over Madeleine. She looks up annoyed but unable to make out whom it is as she's staring straight into the light.

CHRISTOPH

[teasing]

Hey, market women don't read books.

A bare chested Christoph flops down beside her.

Suddenly Madeleine is all self-conscious; unsure of whether she should put the book down or not.

CHRISTOPH

But then I guess most market women don't go to school in New Zealand.

Madeleine finds her voice.

MADELEINE

I see you've done your homework.

Christoph takes out a bottle of red wine wrapped in a brown bag, he pulls the cork and takes a swig, continuing to tease her.

CHRISTOPH

Of course. [Beat] What's in your book?

Madeleine looks at the copy of *Pride and Prejudice* in her hand, unsure of how to begin explaining it.

MADELEINE

Well, it's about a girl...

CHRISTOPH

A woman Vanuatu? Like you?

She stares distantly at her feet. Then quietly.

MADELEINE

No, not a woman Vanuatu like me.

Christoph chuckles softly, Madeleine continues to look intently at the grass but smiles.

CHRISTOPH

Well woman Vanuatu, prove it.

He nudges the bottle towards her. She looks at it.

MADELEINE  
What is it?

CHRISTOPH  
It's good for you, that's what it is!

MADELEINE  
But what is it?

CHRISTOPH  
It's the blood of an Englishman [he winks at her and  
takes a swig]

He nudges the bottle toward her again. After a while she lifts  
it to her lips. She grimaces at the taste. She hands it back.

CHRISTOPH  
Good stuff eh? [beat] Good French wine...

She shrugs as the liquid begins to warm up her insides. They  
sit in silence.

CHRISTOPH  
I bet they didn't teach you that in New Zealand?  
They smile at each other goofily.

90. EXT SANTO AIRPORT (1980) MID-MORNING

The day is turning into a typical beautiful day in the tropics.

Madeleine exist the small airport terminal, eyes looking around  
wildly in disbelief.

The whole of the once grassy runway is littered with freshly  
dug large holes.

91. INT SANTO AIRPORT MIDDAY

Madeleine sits on a wooden bench inside the busy little  
terminal, waiting.

Yvette and Leah gossip. Every so often Yvette looks over at  
Madeleine and sadly shakes her head.

Madeleine ignores them.

92. INT SANTO AIRPORT EARLY AFTERNOON

Madeleine had moved over to a bench with a table closer to the  
window, and looks out onto the runway expectantly.

The heat is unbearable. Everybody is sweating.

93. INT SANTO AIRPORT MID-AFTERNOON

The crowd has thinned out a little.

Madeleine is asleep on the bench, her sweaty head cushioned by her arms.

Leah sits beside her talking to another woman beside them.

94. EXT SANTO: SWIMMING LAGOON AFTERNOON

Christoph and Madeleine are lying side by side staring straight into the endless blue sky, the empty bottle cast aside on the grass.

They are both drunk and relaxed. Christoph has one arm over his eyes, pretending he was dozing. He peers at her with one eye.

CHRISTOPH

What do you do when you're not at school?

MADELEINE

Go to the cinema and then sometimes we sneak out of the cinema and go to clubs!

CHRISTOPH

What are the clubs like?

Madeleine thinks this over quickly, having just made this fact up.

MADELEINE

[Bluffing]

They're really big with lots of rich people everyone is dressed up and they have cool lights on the dance floor!

CHRISTOPH

What kind of music?

MADELEINE

All sorts! [Beat] Kinda of a waste though, you know what white people look like when they dance...

She rolls her eyes with this last comment, and Christoph laughs.

CHRISTOPH

I bet I could smoke up the dance floor!

He whistles to emphasize how cool it would be.

CHRISTOPH  
I could come to New Zealand and visit you!

MADELEINE  
You'll need money to get there!

Silence. Christoph sobers up a little, his mood dips. Madeleine regrets saying that.

MADELEINE  
Sorry.

Silence.

MADELEINE  
Would your father give you the money? He's a chief, isn't he?

Christoph makes a hissing sound at the back of his throat, and laughs bitterly.

CHRISTOPH  
Nah, he's just a big chief piss head.

Christoph sits up and takes out a crumpled cigarette, lights it and puffs away furiously.

CHRISTOPH  
Big man, big asshole...

95. INT SANTO AIRPORT LATE-AFTERNOON

The crowd has thinned out even more.

Leah is sitting beside Madeleine, leaning back on the concrete with her eyes close.

Madeleine comes to and looks around all blurry-eyed. She quickly sits up and looks out of the window expectantly.

Her face floods with disappointment as the mounds of earth stare back at her.

Madeleine stands between the terminal and the runway, straining into the distant skies.

The sun has taken on a deeper yellowed hue as it prepares to set.

Shoulders now slumped, she tries not to cry as tears fill her eyes.

A hand touches her shoulder, it's Leah.

MADELEINE  
Daddy's not coming back is he?

Leah does not reply at first. Madeleine blinks back the tears, not trusting herself to say any more. They both look at the up turned earth.

LEAH

He is not a bad man. He is searching for something that doesn't exist.

MADELEINE

And what is that Boubou?

LEAH

His roots.

MADELEINE

And what about me?

96. EXT SANTO: SWIMMING LAGOON AFTERNOON

Madeleine is now swimming in the blue lagoon with the kids, who are splashing and shouting around her.

Christoph is on the other side of the water; he's climbed up a tree overhanging the lagoon, reaching a large vine being used as a swing by some of the boys he arrived with.

He swings off, making a silly Tarzan noise then splashing into the blue.

Madeleine is resting along the bank, holding onto a large root from the same tree, as Christoph resurfaces beside her.

CHRISTOPH

Hey... wanna try?

He indicates towards the swing above them. Madeleine eyes it nervously, looks at him then shakes her head vigorously.

MADELEINE

I hate heights...

Silence as they watch one of the other boys swing off.

Madeleine tugs at Christoph's arm, and he turns his hazel eyes on her.

MADELEINE

Maybe... maybe my father can help you with the money? I'll can talk to him.

CHRISTOPH

No!

Madeleine falls silent. Christoph softens his tone.

CHRISTOPH

No. I have to sort it out.



MADELEINE

Maybe we don't have to go anyway? New Zealand is kinda weird anyway it's cold, and the people are kinda cold too.

They fall back into silence again, watching another person have a go at the swing - a girl this time. Her dive into the blue depth is smooth and elegant. Christoph turns to look at Madeleine, and grins.

CHRISTOPH

You want to be *woman Vanuatu*?  
[beat] Then you have to do it.

He extends a hand down towards her.

She looks up at him, not seeing him but just his figure above her, bathed in light shining through the trees from behind him. And she extends a long arm towards the lit figure.

MADELEINE

[deep breath]  
Okay.

97. EXT VANUATU: BEACH (1975) EARLY MORNING

The water was choppy, and the small boat is held still as people climbed on.

On the shore Madeleine's aunts, uncles and various cousins have gathered.

Hardly any sound was made, just the rustling leaves by the wind and the turbulent water slapping against the boat.

Everyone kissed Madeleine quietly and quickly, some with tears in their eyes.

Once this finished Leah approaches Madeleine.

LEAH

Ready?

Madeleine looks back up the path to the village.

MADELEINE

What about Nelly?

Leah and Titus look at each other, as one of the men holding the boat in the choppy water calls out.

MAN

We better get going. The storm will hit around midday, the radio said this morning.

Leah turns to Madeleine.

LEAH

Come on Maddy, let's go.

She sweeps Madeleine up with the small hand-sewn calico bag she's clutching, and begins moving towards the boat.

As Leah wades through the water a wave hits her and she stumbles, and Madeleine whimpers and begins to struggle in her arms.

MADELEINE

Boubou, I don't wanna go...

Titus, who is following the pair closely, steadies Leah then pulls Madeleine into his arms, holding her close.

TITUS

Go on Leah.

Leah reaches the boat and mounts, then held out her arms to motion for Madeleine.

Titus approaches the boat with Madeleine who has her face tucked into his neck, crying softly.

With much pain and sadness in his eyes, Titus speaks into Madeleine ear.

TITUS

My girl, my granddaughter - be strong - we will see each other again one day very soon.

He says this then kisses her, and before the tears in his eyes spill, he places Madeleine in the boat, and then pushes it boat off.

Madeleine's eyes stay on her grandfather; slowly they fill with tears, her arms still a little outstretched.

As the engine starts up Leah pulls her into her lap, holding her close.

LEAH

Now, now, Maddy, be strong. [beat] And when you Come back I'll tell you another story about your grandfather.

Madeleine lowers her arms and looks up at her, tears spill out of her eyes but does not reach her voice.

As the boat starts away Madeleine looks back Titus, who is in the water still, behind him the group wave.

She waves back.

Slowly, the people on the shore begin to get smaller.

Madeleine sees a small figure running onto the beach and waving; it's Nelly.

Madeleine's teary face lights up, and she waves and waves until her arms ache.

JOSEPHINE [V/O]  
And the turtle said jump on my back, and I  
will take you home.

98. INT \_\_\_\_\_ VANUATU: HOME (1980) \_\_\_\_\_ DUSK

Language: Tutuvan dialect and Bislama

Leah is folding clothes on a mat by the fire.

The door slams, and Madeleine walks in and straight into the bedroom without a word.

Leah pauses in what she's doing.

LEAH  
Madeleine? [beat] Madeleine!

MADELEINE  
What?!

Leah stands by the doorway watching Madeleine change into her best dress, attempts to pat her hair down and attempt to put lipstick on.

LEAH  
Where are you going?

Madeleine does not answer, continues with a determined expression.

LEAH  
*Vatare-solamol* [Madeleine's *kastom* name]! Did  
you not hear?

Madeleine stops abruptly.

MADELEINE  
What does it look like?! I'm going into town!

She grabs her bag and moves towards the doorway, attempting to get around Leah's figure.

LEAH  
Madeleine! Please! Another day!

MADELEINE  
I have to go, Boubou. I'm not a child-

They struggle by the door. Madeleine's youth and vigour wins out in the end. As Leah feels her slipping from her grasp, she makes one last tearful plea.

LEAH  
*Vatare*, listen to me, listen!

Madeleine's stops pushing as Leah roughly takes her face into her hands.

They are both crying.

LEAH

The only daughter of my only daughter. Us women, we have to look after each other! Do you understand?

She stops, tears choking her voice.

She lessens her grip, Madeleine stops struggling all together and they collapse against one another.

Leah begins to stroke Madeleine crying face.

LEAH

You are headstrong. Just like her! Just like your mother. She didn't listen - wouldn't listen! And she left me heartbroken.

Madeleine cuts in with a sob.

MADELEINE

But Boubou, I need to learn!

With a last cry, she struggles free and runs to the doorway.

MADELEINE

Boubou, I'll be back later, ok?

Leah collapses against the table in one corner, sending the dishes flying to the floor.

Madeleine hesitates at the doorway and then she is gone.

99. EXT VANUATU: HOME DUSK

The sky is bright with a brilliant Pacific sun set.

Tall sand coloured reeds sway in the slight breeze, beyond this coconut palms sway gently also.

The snake-like white coral road is luminous.

Madeleine's figure strides purposefully along the road.

She appears pensive and is carrying her shoes.

For a moment she stops, breathing hard.

There is a rustling in the reeds. There are echoes of childish laughter. Her frizzy mop unties and fans out over her shoulder and face.

**Crossfade.**

100. EXT VANUATU: HOME (1975) DUSK

She's taken back to 1975: Madeleine [8] and Nelly [11] running amongst the sand coloured reeds. They are being chased by Christoph.

Snatches of their laughter and voices sprinkle in the air.

NELLY

Madeleine! Madeleine wait for me!

Echoes of the young Nelly's voice as she calls out.

Young Madeleine laughs.

MADELEINE

Hurry! Hurry!

Nelly trips and shrieks. Christoph pounces on her. Madeleine duck into the reeds to look back.

CHRISTOPH

Gotcha!

He has straddled Nelly who lies on her back. She squirms and shrieks with laughter as Christoph attempts to kiss her on the lips.

Youthful laughter echoes in the wind.

**Crossfade.**

101. EXT VANUATU: HOME (1980) DUSK

Madeleine [13] runs on.

102. EXT/INT SANTO TOWN: MANSION EVENING

The party is in full swing as Madeleine arrives.

She looks around frantically at the debauched scene; cases of French champagne is stacked high in the kitchen; half-naked girls sit on men's laps.

DIDIER [32] spots Madeleine and waves her over.

DIDIER

Madeleine! Welcome!

He lifts a half-naked girl off his lap, and makes his way over to Madeleine.

DIDIER  
Come and join us! Come! Come! You look like a  
princess!

He ushers Madeleine in, to the main table full of food and  
drinks.

DIDIER  
Champagne?

He hands her a champagne glass.

MADELEINE  
Monsieur Didier, is Christoph here?

DIDIER  
I am sure he is.

He ushers her onto a full chaise lounge, dropping down beside  
her.

DIDIER  
Although last time I saw him he seemed  
otherwise engaged.

MADELEINE  
But?

DIDIER  
But talk to me first!

Didier pats her knee.

DIDIER  
You'll have all night to catch up with  
him later.

Didier turns to the half nude girl beside, and fondles her  
exposed breast.

Madeleine lurches as if bumped. Her drink soaks his lap.  
Madeleine scrambles up.

MADELEINE  
Oh, I am sorry! Let me fetch something.

DIDIER  
Clumsy child!

Madeleine flees the scene.

103. EXT/INT SANTO TOWN: MANSION EVENING

Madeleine meanders further into the large mansion.

Each room more debauched than the other.

She hears the sound of low throaty feminine laughter.

She floats to the doorway, peers in. Naked bodies are scattered throughout the large comfortable room.

Christoph is there with a WHITE GIRL on either side. His shirt is unbuttoned to the waist and he is open mouth kissing one as cups the other's breast through her bodice. One sinks to her knees as she works on unzipping his fly.

Christoph's eyes are glazed, euphoric face. After a moment he becomes aware Madeleine stands in the doorway, at first he is unseeing but then he finally focuses on her.

Madeline has seen enough she draws a sharp breath, turns and leaves.

104. EXT/INT SANTO TOWN: MANSION EVENING

Madeleine blindly hurries away from the heaving house.

CHRISTOPH

Madeleine! Wait!

Madeleine runs straight into the bush over the boundary, fighting her way through.

Christoph follows.

CHRISTOPH

Madeleine, stop! I'm sorry!

Christoph chases her, eventually catching up with her

His body envelops her as they fall to the ground.

105. EXT/INT SANTO TOWN: MANSION EVENING

The shrieking and merry making from the house continues unabated.

106. INT LONDON: FLAT (1992) EARLY MORNING

Spike is snoring softly alone in the bed.

Madeleine quietly closes the door on the scene. She walks silently down the hall, and picks up the cheap backpack that she arrived with.

At the front door she pauses and listens [beat], then opens the door and slips outside.

107. EXT LONDON: FLAT EARLY MORNING

Outside she blinks at the sudden bleak light. She almost trips over Wazza huddled on the stairs. He stirs, wakes himself. He's still half hung over.

WAZZA

Lost me fuckin' key again didn't I?

He looks inside through the open door then stops short, peers at his watch.

WAZZA

Going somewhere?

MADELEINE

Yes.

WAZZA

Spike up already?

MADELEINE

No.

Wazza now sees her knapsack.

WAZZA

So he doesn't, now about this?

MADELEINE

No.

WAZZA

Oh? That's sad.

MADELEINE

Is it?

WAZZA

Yeah. You sort of - grow on people. Like ivy.

MADELEINE

Poison?

Wazza smiles.

She turns to look at the sight of the London Bridge in the far distance. Wazza draws a breath.

WAZZA

Keep in touch?

Madeleine shrugs.

MADELEINE

Maybe.

Wazza shuffles from one foot to the other.



Madeleine turns then stops.

MADELEINE

Oh, could you give Spike something for me.

Wazza nods.

She reaches into a knapsack pouch and hands Wazza something.

MADELEINE

Thanks. [beat] Tell him I'll see him in  
paradise.

Madeleine has a last look at the flat, steeling herself against the emotions flooding her, then turns towards London Bridge and begins to walk briskly away.

Wazza looks down in his hand to see a smallish conch shell.

Madeleine almost immediately brushes into an INEBRIATED MALE meandering across the footpath.

MALE

[Irish]  
Go home you Kaffir.

Wazza bellows from somewhere.

WAZZA [OFF]

You watch your tongue you fucken Irish twat!

Madeleine skirts a large fountain that is cluttered with rubbish.

She walks along the Thames Embankment as a HYDRANT TRUCK sluices the down nearby walls.

She walk past a homeless woman wrapped in cardboard and rags in a boarded up storefront.

She walks into an London Underground Station without looking at the advertising hoarding of a pristine landscape that pronounces 'New Zealand. 100% pure'.

**FTB.**

**UP THEME AND END TITLES.**