

ELLIS ISLAND

FADE IN:

EXT. KONAK (IZMIR COUNTRYSIDE) DIRT ROAD - DAY

SHEEP and GOATS grazing on the side of a hill, dirt road lined on either side with orange orchards and roughly built shacks; beautiful, untamed and rugged landscape.

SUPERIMPOSE: IZMIR, TURKEY / KONAK DISTRICT 1897

STASIA (8) and THESPI (12) are walking down the middle of the dirt road giggling and laughing.

They are eating one very juicy ORANGE. The juice drips down their arms and chins, all over the front of their dresses.

The road is mostly dry with wet spots and mud puddles from a recent rain.

STASIA

... let's eat another one

THESPI

We already had two! We won't be hungry for supper!

STASIA

So what ... let's have another one anyway.

EXT. KONAK (IZMIR COUNTRYSIDE) ROADSIDE GULLY - DAY

Three boys, ERKAN (12), DAVID (10) and ADEM (9) are hiding in a roadside gully, waiting to ambush Stasia and Thespi.

ERKAN

Get them!

Adem shoots a glance at David.

DAVID

Let's go!

Adem and David jump out of their hiding place in the gully and ambush Stasia and Thespi.

EXT. KONAK (IZMIR COUNTRYSIDE) DIRT ROAD - DAY

Erkan moves toward Thespi and throws her down into a mud puddle. He sits on her and drizzles MUD into her hair and face.

Adem and David go after Stasia and a mocking game of chase ensues.

The other two boys coax Erkan while blocking Stasia from getting to Thespi by pushing her back.

STASIA

Get off her, you pig! Get off her! Get out of my way! That's my sister! Get out of my way!

Erkan torments Thespi.

ERKAN

Say it ... say it. Say: I'm a little Greek whore. Say it.

Thespi fights back.

THESPI

Get off me you piss ant!

Thespi struggles with Erkan on top of her. He leans into her face so their noses almost touch.

ERKAN

Say it.

Erkan spits on her.

THESPI

Erkan is a little Greek whore!

Erkan slaps Thespi. He tickles her to get her to bring her arms down to her sides.

ERKAN

This is what we do to little Greek whores in Crete, Thespi.

Adem and David are holding Stasia by her arms and cheering Erkan on.

STASIA

Let me go! Let me go, you maggots!

Stasia jerks backwards away from Adem and David. She spins around and looks for something with which to hit the boys.

The boys scramble to grab Stasia.

She picks up a stick and takes a swing at David.

STASIA

This one's for you, David!

Stasia hits David across the side of his leg.

DAVID

Arrrrggghhhh ...

David drops to the ground. Stasia positions herself for an attack on Adem. He sees what's coming and bolts across the road and into the orchard, slipping on mud. He scrambles to regain his balance and makes his escape up the orchard EMBANKMENT.

STASIA

You are the son of a chicken, Adem!

Erkan starts moving toward Stasia. Erkan grabs Stasia by her hair.

ERKAN

Drop it you little worm. Drop it or I'll ...

Stasia drops the stick and grabs Erkan's wrists with both hands. They struggle.

Stasia kicks him in the groin and lands a hard cuff across the side of his head.

ERKAN

Arrrrggghhhh ...

She runs over to Thespi and helps her up. The girls bolt toward their house.

INT. MAGOULAS' KITCHEN - DAY

DAPHNE (28) is standing at the SINK, rinsing out a coffee CUP with water coming out of the HAND PUMP.

LARIS (30) is sitting at the KITCHEN TABLE sipping COFFEE.

LARIS

So, I thought I'd move the grain bins to the other side of the feed room to give us more space to ...

Stasia and Thespi burst through the DOOR.

STASIA

Erkan, Adem and David attacked us on the road again. Erkan pushed Thespi down in the mud puddle and kept telling her to say something - I can't remember now. But I hit David on the side of his leg. Oh, I remember now ... what's a whore?

THESPI

We were getting some oranges and Erkan, Adem and David jumped on us again. Erkan sat on top of me and poured mud in my face and on my hair and then he slapped me and spit on me. He is such a donkey.

The room falls silent.

DAPHNE

Thespi, let's get you cleaned up. Laris, Stasia, start setting the table, please. There's some beef stew warming up on the STOVE.

LOUD KNOCK at the door.

Laris opens the KITCHEN DOOR.

ISMET (17) is standing on the porch.

ISMET

My uncle asks for your assistance with one of the sheep. She is giving birth and he says the lamb is backwards.

LARIS

Backwards? That is called breech, my young friend. She might be having twins. Don't wait for me. Stasia please set the table for your mother. I'll be home as soon as I can.
Let's go.

EXT. DIRT ROAD TO TABIB'S HOUSE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Laris and Ismet walk to the farm.

LARIS

When did this ewe go into labor?

ISMET

Mmmm - a few hours ago, maybe? I don't really know. I was helping my brother when my father called me and told me to get you.

LARIS

What happened to your brother?

ISMET

... hit the side of his head. He probably fell when he was wrestling with Adem and David.

INT. TABIB'S FARM - OPEN-SIDED BARN - AFTERNOON

Laris and Ismet walk onto Tabib's property.

Tabib's property consists of a SMALL HOUSE, and an OPEN-SIDED BARN with a covered HAY storage area on the side. A VEGETABLE GARDEN sits across the ROADWAY from the front yard and a HAND PUMP water station is next to it. No grass or flowers.

A few CHICKENS pecking on the ground in front of the house. Rough WOOD FENCING runs around the backside of the barn, creating a small paddock area. SHEEP grazing in the distance.

Inside the barn, BALES OF HAY along the wall, a covered GRAIN-BIN and some ROPES and leather HALTERS hanging from

NAILS on the wall. There are two, THREE-LEGGED STOOLS lying on their sides near a wall and a few PAILS stacked in a corner. The floor is DIRT.

LARIS

Tabib, old friend, how can I help you this time?

ISMET

Uncle, I'm going to finish my chores then do some reading unless you have something else for me to do.

TABIB (O.S.)

What?! You don't want to stay? This is raw science.

Ismet shakes his head and smiles.

Laris continues walking into the barn and grabs a BALE OF HAY. He drops the bale next to Tabib (32) and stands to one side of the EWE. Tabib is a slightly balding, robust fellow with a generally jolly disposition. His dark eyes sparkle when he talks and like other Turks, his speech is quite flowery.

TABIB (CONT'D)

Laris, I'm delighted you are here! Can you help me with this? I'm not ... good ... with this sort of thing.

Tabib withdraws his hands from the ewe's birth canal and steps out of the way. He reaches for a dirty RAG lying on a bale of hay. Laris kicks the bale behind the ewe.

LARIS

Help me get her legs up.

They gently prop the rear legs of the sheep up on the bale; Laris reaches into a near-by PAIL of water to rinse his hands. He moves to the rear of the ewe and enters her birth canal and works to pull out the rear hoofs.

LARIS

So, how are things going? Ismet is growing like a weed I see.

TABIB

Yes, and he's a complete gentleman.
Very smart, reads a lot. Everything he
can get his hands on. And does well
with the mathematics, too.

LARIS

And Erkan? How's he doing? He must be
getting big.

Tabib squirms amid the SOUNDS of the birthing process which
are getting louder and more violent.

TABIB

I, I'd say so ...

Tabib brings a PAIL of drinking WATER with a LADLE in it.

LARIS

Help me get her down.

They gently lift the ewe off of the bale and onto the
floor.

Laris picks up the dirty rag to wipe off his hands.

The ewe takes over the rest of the process.

LARIS

Is he staying out of trouble?

TABIB

Ach, he gets into the usual trouble
with his friends, David and Adem. You
know. Boys.

LARIS

He and his friends attacked my girls on
the orchard road today. Pinned Thespi
down in a mud puddle and called her a
whore. And Stasia - I don't know how
she did it - gave him that crack across
the side of his head.

Laris tosses the rag to the ground and reaches for the
ladle in a pail of drinking water. He takes a sip.

TABIB

Ach, Laris, my apologies. I will speak to him. I don't know what I'm going to do with him.

LARIS

Tabib, I can't have my daughters afraid of walking on the road or being called names they haven't earned. So, if you don't mind, I would appreciate it if you did have that talk with Erkan. Otherwise I will personally have that talk with him myself. And I assure you - the message will be quite clear.

Laris takes another sip of water and returns the ladle to the pail. The men walk toward the open side of the building and look toward the sun setting behind the orchards.

TABIB

You have my word, Laris.
(beat)

The government issued an order that there will be another crackdown on Greeks living in Turkey. I would never do anything, but I don't want to see harm come to your family. You have always been very respectful to my family.

LARIS

It's getting late. I should go.

EXT. FARMYARD - LATE-AFTERNOON

The men walk out of the barn and across the property.

TABIB

You know Laris, you might give some thought to finding a safer, maybe more hospitable place to live. Maybe someplace where you have more in common with the people living around you.

LARIS

- more in common? I grew up here. How much more in common can I have? It's a lot to think about, Tabib, but thank you for the warning. We'll be on our guard.

Laris starts walking toward his house.

EXT. DIRT ROAD IN FRONT OF MAGOULAS' HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Laris walks onto the porch and opens the door to the house.

INT. MAGOULAS' KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Laris (30) walks through the front door and across the kitchen to kiss Daphne (28) who is ironing CURTAINS.

DAPHNE

... well, were you the hero?

LARIS

Of course! But I have other news as well. Where are the girls?

Laris pours himself a GLASS of WATER and drinks half the glass in one gulp.

DAPHNE

With Angelo and Eva, why?

LARIS

Tabib told me that there is going to be another crackdown and suggested that we might consider leaving Konak.

Laris finishes the rest of the glass of water as Daphne stops ironing and looks up.

DAPHNE

Are you kidding?

Laris pours himself another glass of water.

LARIS

You think I would joke about this?

DAPHNE

Laris, I'm telling you, I can't go through another episode like we had; I just can't do it again.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. FARMHOUSE FRONT YARD - DAY

A group of 10 MEN (30's-40's) on HORSES from the Turkish Public Security Patrol ride onto the farm.

CAPTAIN

Laris Magoulas! Laris Magoulas! Present yourself by order of the Turkish Public Security Patrol!

Laris (27) emerges from the house and walks to the Captain.

LARIS

I am Laris Magoulas.

CAPTAIN

Laris Magoulas where is your family? All members of the household residing at this property must present themselves.

LARIS

What do you want?

CAPTAIN

Silence!

Captain slaps Laris with his WHIP from atop his HORSE. Laris drops to the ground.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

You will speak only when spoken to.

Daphne (25), Eva (25), Angelo (29), Thespi (9) and Stasia (5) cautiously emerge from the house and walk toward Laris.

The Patrol circles their horses around the group until the family is closed tightly into the middle of a DUSTY circle with Stasia and Thespi in the center.

CAPTAIN

Laris Magoulas: did you and your family
just return from Izmir?

LARIS

Yes, we were making -

CAPTAIN

Silence!

Captain slaps Laris again.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

You will answer only yes or no.

Three men get off their horses. One approaches Angelo and
throws him to the ground and the other two start kicking
Angelo and beating him up. Angelo curls up into a ball.

LARIS

Stop! Stop! Can't you see he's
crippled? He can't defend himself!

Another man grabs Thespi, puts her on his horse, remounts
and rides off. The farm is in chaos.

Daphne and Eva scream for the man to bring Thespi back.

The third man grabs Stasia, but she fights back by kicking
him, screaming in his ears, spitting and scratching at his
eyes and face. He releases her.

STASIA

Bring my sister back you donkey's
asshole!

Daphne grabs her, covers her mouth and hushes her. Three
men with handguns dismount and pull Laris out and hold guns
to him.

CAPTAIN

Tell your whores to stop bellowing like
two cows.

The rest of the group starts vandalizing the farm, tipping
over the GRAIN BARRELS, tearing up the VEGETABLE GARDENS,
destroying the CHICKEN COOP, throwing the EGGS on the

ground, tipping over the wagon and throwing it down an EMBANKMENT, throw the HAND TOOLS and tack into a PILE OF MANURE, etc.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

This is just a warning. Make sure you keep your filthy family out of the city otherwise we'll be back with fire.

The Patrol regroups and rides out. Captain grabs Stasia as he leaves, but she spits in his face and slaps him across the side of his head. He drops her to the ground. Daphne grabs her and holds her.

Laris runs into the BARN and brings out the HORSE, he mounts bareback and rides after the men.

LARIS

Take care of Angelo - I'll get Thespi!

Eva helps Angelo up and walks him to the PORCH. Daphne sits Stasia next to Angelo. Daphne starts cleaning up the mess the patrol left.

Laris comes back with Thespi riding in front of him. She's crying and bruised.

LARIS (CONT'D)

She's all right - just a little shaken

...

END FLASHBACK

RETURN TO SCENE

LARIS (CONT'D)

Let's go talk to my brother.

Daphne leaves the iron standing up and they walk out the door.

EXT. MAGOULAS' FARM - LATE AFTERNOON

Laris and Daphne walk toward Angelo and Eva's house.

Laris playfully pinches Daphne's ass; Daphne spanks him in return and he laughs.

Stasia and Thespi see them coming and hide.

The girls trail far enough behind that they aren't noticed.

INT. KITCHEN OF ANGELO/EVA'S HOUSE - DUSK

Eva is seated at the table EMBROIDERING, Laris and Daphne are standing. Angelo lights a MATCH and limps over to the GAS LANTERN to light it.

Nobody notices the girls are peering through the window.

The adults talk and gesture as the girls watch through the window.

EXT. KITCHEN WINDOW INTO ANGELO/EVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Thespi is on her hands and knees with Stasia standing on her shoulders. Thespi struggles to stay balanced and not move.

THESPI

What are they saying?

STASIA

Shhh ... and stop moving! We might leave Konak.

THESPI

What?

STASIA

We might leave Konak.

THESPI

... and go where?

STASIA

Athens.

INT. CHURCH SERVICE - MORNING

Angelo and Eva are whispering during a church service. Stasia and Thespi are sitting behind them.

ANGELO

Leaving this place is not going to be easy. We're so comfortable here even if things aren't perfect.

EVA

What if they don't want us to go with them, Angelo? We don't own this property and they can refuse to take us. Then what would we do? I'm scared!

ANGELO

No, my brother would not do that. I'm the only family he has. They would never leave us.

Stasia takes her mother's hand.

EXT. VEGETABLE GARDEN - DAY

Eva and Daphne are weeding. Stasia and Thespi are helping close-by and listening.

EVA

I don't know how we're supposed to do this, Daphne. What I mean to say is that Angelo and I have a little money, but not enough for us to get all the way to Athens. And I have to tell you, my love, I'm scared. I'm scared that we will be left here to try to survive alone.

DAPHNE

What are you talking about? Who said anything about who will stay and who will go? What we should be talking about is what we're going to take between all of us and what we can do without.

EXT. FARMYARD - DAY

Laris and Angelo are fixing a WHEEL on the wagon. Stasia and Thespi are listening while pretending to play a GAME.

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