

FROM THE GROUND UP

By Su Friedrich

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*Over opening credits and first pix:*

*I love coffee, I love tea*

*I love the Java Jive and it loves me*

*Coffee and tea and the java and me*

*A cup, a cup, a cup, a cup, a cup....*

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Su:

Pedro, can you pick up that bag?

I don't think I could.

Pedro:

No, no way...Just like this much...

Francisco:

It's like 110 pounds, more or less

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Su:

What's the (stock market) price?

Ricardo:

98.5 plus 65 cents...It's good

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Su:

You know, like what was that?

R. Herrera:

That's language, that's not Spanish.

Su:

Okay...

R. Herrera:

That's *K'iche'*.

**TWO SUBTILE CARDS:**

R. Herrera is a limo driver who once took me to the airport.

He's from Guatemala and agreed to work on the translation.

R. Herrera:

See, little kids are doing that.

Su:

Yea...

R. Herrera:

It's not easy. I used to work like that. I started working when I was ten years old, doing the same job.

Su:

Did you really?

R. Herrera:

Yea, my father died when I was nine and a half, so I had... Anyway, this isn't my story....

Su:

No, it's okay, go on!

R. Herrera:

I had six kids in the family, I had three sisters and three brothers, and I'm the biggest so I had to work. I started when I was ten years old, and not working like a kid, but working like a man...

Su:

And how long did you do that?

R. Herrera:

All the time, and then I came here when I was fourteen and kept working... So, my life was not easy.

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R. Herrera:

And I'm sure they get nothing for the job.

Su:

I know, I know, I think they said they get three dollars a day.

R. Herrera:

Right, and it's a hard job, too...

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**SUBTITLE:**

The workers' housing on the farm

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Francisco:

So here it is with the pergamino.

Su:

Pergamino is the parchment?

Francisco:

Yes

Su:

Oh, so it's still on it.

Francisco:

Right. And here is the green bean, see?

Su:

And how do you remove the skin?

Francisco:

By friction. But here is the pergamino. So we say: pergamino and gold coffee--*oro*.

Su:

And this one is dark...

Francisco:

Yes, it was damaged by the worms that we call broca. Here is the hole. And it's no good. But then—you will see—that the ladies get out all those beans by hand in the dry mill process. So it's a lot of work too. They take it out by hand, they break the beans, the dark beans and these others damaged by the worms. By hand!

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Su:

So actually what is it saying?

Pedro:

Well, it's about how after four years of crisis it's gonna be a good year, and everyone—the small producers and the big ones, the big exporting companies—they were expecting this for a long time. They're hopeful that the raising of the prices will continue after such a long time of not having enough money to grow the coffee.

And as for Guatemala—its economy depends especially on coffee. Like three years ago coffee was the first national income and then tourism after that. But after the crisis, coffee dropped down to the third place and only now it's positioning itself again in the second place in national income—after tourism.

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Dick: (all on phone, you only hear his side of conversation):

Hello, Balzac.

Ray just stepped out for lunch, who's this?

Ah, Dieter, how are you?...Dick Balzac here.

How are you, how are you? Well, you're hard to find!

Well, I haven't had a positive feedback yet. I believe it's still in the works. What may kill it is the inability to supply it monthly.

Well, it's a small roaster.

Well, the offer...he...he's had the option and we've been selling him various coffees from period to period, so he came up with this idea that he'd like to settle on probably 250, maybe 255 bags a month, from January to February of the following year.

Yea, I think that we're talking eleven over. You know, it's a very good price if we can get it. I don't know, maybe we can only get nine over, but we can get, we can get...

That's probably what he wants, yes.

And give me some time, I might be able to swing it.

Well, he doesn't play golf, unfortunately. I could always lose to him if he did.

Okay, thanks Dieter, it's always good to talk to you. And give my best to Holly as well. Tell her I was so grateful for that chicken dinner.

All right, well I'll tell Ray that you'll give him a call a little later.

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**LOWELL (OVER TV)**

We lucked out on getting it, yea.

Right! The market right now is about eight and a half...the prices you're hearing.

Let me put it this way: people are willing to buy.

Because one company's down there bidding at eight and a half for regular strictlies, and then for Nestle deliveries they're about ten over.

And oh, those coffees also wouldn't be available till February. Yea, January is too early...

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Lowell:

What's that? See, that's a sixteen. There's a screening requirement on that.

Ray:

Oh, there was a screening requirement?

And he can do a 17 or 18.

Lowell:

He can do whatever he wants, yea.

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**SUBTITLE CARD:**

Customers from Moonbeam Café

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Lowell:

Andrew, this is Ray...I'll give you the explanation in a minute...Oh, you haven't met before?

I got a good representative sample of all different kinds of coffees—a couple of the Guatemalan and Salvadoran Rainforest Alliance...um, this is a Brazil...yea, this is a Brazilian coffee...This coffee's from Indonesia, it's a Sumatra Mandaling grade one.

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**Lowell:**

What do you think of the Sumatran? Be as critical as you want, no personal feelings are hurt here.

**Casey:**

It's good, but the ones that we get....these don't look quite as...

**Lowell:**

Yea, these don't look as clean. When they came in I was a little...not as happy with the appearance as it should be, I don't think the grade is up to what it should be.

We don't have the Rainforest Alliance Brazil, we're trying to get it, but we're bringing in some beautiful eighteen-screen Brazils, they should be very soft and great in the cup...

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**Lowell:**

He's gonna bring the two regular back and we'll take two of these.

**Sam:**

Two of these?

**Lowell:**

Yea, we just want two bags. Want me to grab them and pull them down instead of pulling the whole thing down? Can we do that or no? I'll help you.

**Sam:**

Let me get the forklift.

**Lowell:**

Okay, okay, let's do it with machines!

**Casey:**

I need some of that happy mix there!

**Lowell:**

I wonder what's in it? It's right next to the coffee out of Colombia!

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**Casey:**

Thank you for having us.

**Lowell:**

Oh, any time!

**Casey:**

I'm glad you could meet Andrew.

**Andrew:**

Nice to meet you.

Lowell:

Pleasure meeting you.

Casey:

And we'll get back down some time, whenever we get the chance.

Lowell:

Anytime you want, come on down. And do you know where you're going now?...Make a left...

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Lowell in car:

See, within Miami we get the containers, drop them all off, get them all sampled, cup them and then say, "Okay, move that one to New York, move that one over to here, do this one..." and you have options about how to do it. With Maersk, it's like you leave it in Miami maybe because the freight is much more expensive to say okay, now turn around and move it to New York... versus having Seabord do it—it's much cheaper because they have an all-water service that goes to New York, so you route your coffee going up to New York.

Su:

I see....

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Foreman:

Vakili, how long you working here?

Vakili:

Twenty five years.

Foreman:

I think more than twenty five...I think about twenty five, twenty six years...

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Foreman:

Nick, how long you worked here?

Nick:

Thirty.

Foreman:

Thirty!? Thirty years...

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John:

This is from Mitsubishi—they're in the coffee business.

Su:

Hmm! Cars and coffee?

John:

Cars, coffee, everything. And they send this diary out every year at Christmas. It's got some really neat pictures in here...

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John:

There's a group called Oxfam...

Su:

Yea

John:

They've made a statistic that says that coffee directly and indirectly employs eight percent of the world's population.

Su:

That's impressive!

John:

It really is. I mean, that includes the waitresses that serve it and everything...

Su:

Right.

John:

Because each coffee tree only really produces about a pound, or a pound and a half, of coffee.

Su:

Really?!

John:

Yea!

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Su:

It looks like you do more work than he does.

Diagga:

(note—he has very funny syntax—I wrote this as spoken but I'm not sure it can be translated to preserve that wackiness, especially the last part, so if you feel it's better to correct it, then go right ahead)

No, he doesn't do nothing. Those people, they just come pick up the money and left. You see, this is business: When you open a business, the people who work do everything.

You, you just come pick up the money and that's it. You know? This is life, but you know, they have an opening to open a business, we don't have that opening. Because we know the things better than he do, you know? So...

Anywhere you go this is like that. The most people who work hard, the most people who gets less money. People who work less, are smarter, make more than we do. And so...

This is life, but what are you gonna do?

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Random voiceover:

Andy, wait, wait!

Maha:

Hey, yesterday you didn't pay me for the wax paper! You just took the wax paper and left! You didn't pay.

Guy:

Okay, I'll pay you, no problem.

Maha:

Give me sixteen dollars---sixteen dollars and the three dollars...

Guy:

Is nineteen.

Maha:

Nineteen, yea...

Guy:

Here's nineteen...

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Su:

So what time do people actually start coming here?

Haroun:

Around five o'clock.

Su:

Around five?

Haroun:

Yea, around five o'clock I have some limousine customers, and some truck drivers, they cross from this street...

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Haroun:

The coffee's not ready. I can't invite you right now to take a coffee because it's not ready.

Su:

That's okay.

Haroun:

Sorry about that.

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Su:

And you know what? Now that you're counting your money, it makes me wonder whether there's ever a problem with you guys getting robbed, because it's kind of unsecure on these carts, right?

Sam:

Yea, but in the last eight years I work in this job, it never happened...Even the door is open and I'm counting my money, but I never had a problem with people. Even when I come at three in the morning, you know? Nobody's around, but thank god...

Su:

Why do you think that is?

Sam:

I don't know...Maybe it's because they think like, "Ah, this guy works for fifty cents, a dollar, so what's the most he can have?"

Su:

Right, right...And what about this sign you put up?

IMPOSSIBLE IS NOTHING

Sam:

Oh, there were two ladies, they came to me and said, "If you don't mind, we'd like to put this up just for two or three days" and I said, "All right, I don't have a problem with that" so they put it and I didn't take it off.

But I don't believe in this, because a lot of things are not possible, you know?

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### **INTERLUDE:**

Dedicated to the movement for even more than Fair Trade.

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Audio over tail creds:

Su:

He's got it all ready for you, eh?

First customer:

Yea, permanent customer...

Su:

So you know exactly when he comes and what he wants?

Sam:

Yes, he comes twice a day, one time in the rush hour around nine o'clock and second time around this time.

Su:

How many people do you know like that?

Sam:

Like 75 percent of them I know what they want.

Coffee, buddy?

Second customer:

Yea, small coffee.

Sam:

And what else?...What kind of pie?  
Thanks...  
Take care...  
Third customer:  
Iced coffee please.  
Sam:  
Iced coffee?  
Third customer:  
Please....  
Your coffee's wonderful. It's addictive.

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*(the full lyrics of the song, segments of which play throughout the film)*

### **JAVA JIVE**

I love coffee, I love tea  
I love the Java Jive and it loves me  
Coffee and tea and the java and me  
A cup, a cup, a cup, a cup, a cup

I love java, sweet and hot  
Whoops Mr. Moto, I'm a coffee pot  
Shoot me the pot and I'll pour me a shot  
A cup, a cup, a cup, a cup, a cup

Oh slip me a slug from the wonderful mug  
And I'll cut a rug till I'm snug in a jug  
A slice of onion and a raw one  
Draw one -  
Waiter, waiter, percolator

Boston bean (soy beans)  
Green bean (cabbage and greens)  
I'm not keen now for a bean  
Unless it is a cherry cherry bean (boy!)

Slip me a slug from the wonderful mug  
'An I'll cut a rug till I'm snug in a jug  
Drop a nickel in the pot Joe  
Takin' it slow  
Waiter, waiter, percolator

I love coffee, I love tea  
I love the Java Jive and it loves me  
Coffee and tea and the java and me  
A cup, a cup, a cup, a cup, a cup