

CHICLE ' CHICLE '

FADE IN:

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN (TODOS SANTOS ISLAND, MEXICO) - DAY

Calm, pristine waters for miles and miles.

LINDA (V.O.)

You've got to love Mother Nature,  
toying with testosterone  
levels...she's such a bitch.

HUGE POWERFUL WAVES form off a remote island.

SURFERS line up on the horizon as jetskiers tow them into  
FIFTY-FOOT masses of liquid force. PHOTOGRAPHERS perch  
then,

CLICK. The moment's etched in time.

LINDA (V.O.)

Jetskiers are their accomplices.  
Photographers provide the evidence  
for an elite corps of big wave  
surfers. It's a synchronized buddy  
system that has no language barriers.  
The locals pick up where the  
jetskiers left off. No jokes or  
smart ass remarks... there'll be  
time for that later.

Local Mexicans in shoddy pongas recover the surfers. Their  
ringleader, RAUL, is sporting a Santa hat.

LINDA (V.O.)

The real kicker is I'm a native  
Californian but I just figured out  
that life is just one big beach.

Another surfer drops into a larger, nastier wave.

LINDA (V.O.)

It comes in big waves, little waves.

The surfer reaches a critical part of the wave.

LINDA (V.O.)

It can be hot, cold. Downright  
numbing at times.

The wave spits him out, churning him around like a lonely sock in a vicious washing machine.

LINDA (V.O.)

With sand everywhere. In places you didn't even know you had.

The surfer hurls upward, gasping for air. Relieved, scared and exhilarated. All at the same time.

Raul and his crew pluck him up, sparing him a watery grave.

Up next--HAYDEN WEST, 21. The tall, dark, attractive jock broods his way through life. Women love him. Men hate him.

His fear is transparent being towed into a FIFTY-FOOT WAVE of uncertainty by jetskiers, TIM and MATT, early 20's.

Tim is a wiry, baby-faced daredevil, always ready to please. Matt's ego is as big as his broad shoulders.

LINDA (V.O.)

Hayden was surfing at Todos Santos, a remote island off the coast of Mexico. Translation: If there's a medical emergency, you're in deep...

TIM

Shit!

Matt turns to see---

Hayden drops into a ferocious wave, then pulls back out. Visibly shaken. He paddles to Raul's ponga in record time.

MATT

What a wuss! He always chokes. He'll never do it.

TIM

Shut up, asshole.

LINDA (V.O.)

Thank you. I couldn't have said it better myself. Hayden's been surfing since he was in diapers. But I never realized 'til now...standing up is the easy part. But boys will be

boys. I know. I have three of them.  
If you count my husband, Dave.

In another ponga, DAVE WEST, a passive middle-aged surfer, vents his frustration on the seas, slapping it with his hand.

DAVE

Damn.

Hayden's scrawny brother, EVAN, lives in his shadow, literally. The gangly 16-year-old videotapes his every move.

THROUGH EVAN'S LENS: Raul fishes Hayden back into the ponga. Dave looks on with a disappointing silence.

SEVERAL MASSIVE WAVES LATER

Photographers focus on Hayden being towed into another wave.

MATT

Come on, you pussy.

LINDA (V.O.)

Anyway, this isn't about a bunch of surfers who can't put a sentence together. It's about a kid, with a problem. Not the usual stuff about getting laid, getting even or being cool.

Hayden hinges a moment, then...

LINDA (V.O.)

We teach our kids to walk, talk, play by the rules. We nag at them not to smoke, drink or use the 'F' word. Floss once in a while. And always, always use a condom. But--

Hayden stands, drops down the face of a monstrous wave and

DANGLES

like a spider on a turquoise web. CLICK.

LINDA (V.O.)

There's one thing we never teach  
them.

Hayden executes a hard bottom turn and rides off to the  
middle of nowhere. But what a great place to be. He throws  
up his hands in victory.

CHEERS drown out grinding jet skis doing laps around pongas  
filled with Hayden's family and CHEERING MEXICANS.

Hayden's laughter floods the ponga. He crawls onboard,  
stands upright, towering over Dave and Evan.

DAVE

You did it. That was incredible.

HAYDEN

(to Evan)

Did you get it?

Evan films with one hand, waves 'yes' with the other.

HAYDEN

It was so damn fun...but scarier than  
shit. A good scary.

Dave gets Hayden in a headlock, laughing and joking. Evan  
stops filming as a tinge of jealousy washes over his face.

DAVE

I'm guessing fifty-plus. What do you  
think, Evan?

EVAN

Forty-eight. At the most.

HAYDEN

Oh come on. At least fifty.

DAVE

Your sponsors are going to shit  
bricks.

HAYDEN

I think I already did.

DAVE

This should keep them happy a while.

HAYDEN

God, I hope so.

Hayden rips off his wetsuit, dries off. Suddenly, he grabs his chest, wrenching in pain. His bronzed skin fades to white.

HAYDEN

Damn...must be the adrenaline rush.

EXT. ORPHANAGE (ENSENADA)- DAY

No one should live here, let alone kids.

Dave rips open a big plastic bag like a shattered pinata. Out comes tennis shoes, t-shirts, trunks and a few women's things. ORPHANS eagerly dive for the goodies.

Hayden and Tim helps the kids try them on while Evan films the goodwill gesture. It's hard to tell who's having more fun.

Matt stands outside the car with MUSIC blaring.

INT. WEST HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Decor is Tommy Bahama on a very slim budget. Vibrant tiles in summer colors warm the impeccable room.

LINDA WEST, 44, scrubs grout lines with a vengeance. She can be pretty or pretty determined, depending on her mood.

She finishes up, scans her beloved Day-Timer, checks an item.

She grabs a packing box and marks it: HAYDEN'S HOPE CHEST. She raids the cupboards, tossing dishes and nic nacs in the box with a brutal determination.

MEGAN, her 15-year-old, struts in. Sarcastic as she is beautiful.

MEGAN

Hayden's Hope Chest? I'm hoping he moves out real soon.

LINDA

He is. Right after Christmas.

MEGAN

Are we taking bets?

LINDA

You have another meeting after school tomorrow? Seems like you have a lot of meetings these days.

MEGAN

I'll let you run the DMV if you let me run my sophomore class.

Linda eyes a souvenir mug and dabbles with her Spanish.

LINDA

Pe-dos vi-e-jos surf club?

MEGAN

Pedos viejos. It means: old farts.  
(then)  
Gee, I'm really going to miss him.

Linda hauls off the box with glee until she steps over an UNFINISHED TILE floor. It only needs a few more tiles.

LINDA

I wish he would finish this.

MEGAN

We're talking about Dad here.

A muffled TELEPHONE RINGS. Linda realizes she packed it in the box. She digs it back out.

LINDA

Hello?...How much have you been drinking?

INT. TIJUANA CANTINA - NIGHT

Nobody's feeling any pain in the rowdy bar.

THROUGH EVAN'S LENS: Santa's SEXY HELPERS tease Hayden, Tim and Matt with lap dances amidst fatigued laughter.

Dave's on his cell phone. He motions them to quiet down. Every time Dave drinks, his Texas accent sneaks back in.

DAVE

Two shots of to-kill-ya. One Margarita. But I was damn good. No salt.

INTERCUT LINDA/DAVE

LINDA

What about Evan?

DAVE

Hasn't touched a drop. He's our designated camera man--and driver.

LINDA

Rachel's called Hayden three times but can't get through? Were we ever that bad?

DAVE

Damn straight.

Linda smiles. He's right.

LINDA

What time will you be home?

DAVE

Who knows. The border's a mess.

EXT. US BORDER CROSSING (TIJUANA, MEXICO) - NIGHT

Border gridlock. PEASANTS assault tourists' with Christmas pinatas, piggy banks, blankets, gum. Anything tacky.

A van loaded down with surfboards crawls through traffic.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(thick Spanish  
accent)

Chicle' chicle'.

INT./EXT. TIM'S VAN

Evan sits in the driver's seat. Tim rides shotgun.



TIM

There he is...UNO. AQUÍ.

Hordes of vendors charge towards the van.

TIM

No...UNO SANCHEZ.

EVAN

Why do they call him Uno?

HAYDEN

Holy shit. What the--

UNO, early 20's, with severe deformities hobbles towards the van. He has one disfigured arm and no legs. Only stumps... but his CAPPED SMILE lights up the Tijuana skyline.

The side van door glides open. Uno YELPS.

UNO

(in Spanish)

There he is, Tim and the gringos.

Uno flails his arm at Hayden, sizing him up.

UNO

(in Spanish)

Who's this?

TIM

(in Spanish)

This is Hayden. He came for the big waves.

UNO

(in Spanish)

A big, handsome guy? With big balls?  
I don't like him already.

Laughter erupts. Tim pinches two fingers together.

TIM

(in Spanish)

No...small balls.

Uno and the gringos roar with laughter.

Uno tosses CHICLE' at Tim. Tim stashes them on the console - that's already crammed with gum and board wax.

Dave leans out and tucks a 'twenty' in Uno's mangled hand.

THROUGH EVAN'S LENS: Uno grins up into the camera.

UNO

(in Spanish)

Thank you. Thank you. Good-bye my friends. God be with you.

He hobbles away, weaving through heavy traffic then... disappears behind a stack of sombreros.

MATT

Shit, the guy can't even get any play.

HAYDEN

Hell, for all you know he could be getting it more than you.

More LAUGHTER. Hayden pops a Chicle' in his mouth.

TIM

No, Matt's right about this one. He has no family, either. They named him Uno, then they bailed on him.

HAYDEN

(chewing gum)

That sucks. So I don't get it. Why he is so happy?

DAVE

Because he's still got his soul.

It's a pensive moment, even for inebriated Americans.

Suddenly Hayden lightens up, nudges Dave.

HAYDEN

Hey, tell Mom I want one of those for Christmas.

A 3D PICTURE OF JESUS with shifting eyes follows the van as it crosses over the U.S. border.

TIM

Duders, those are so cool.

EXT. MAIN STREET - (SOLANA BEACH, CA) - DAY

Mayberry at the beach. A 60's throwback embedded in surfing.

The Farmers Market is laced with burned-out hippies selling incense. Still.

Dave totes around bags as Linda buys up flowers and veggies.

LINDA

He's twenty-one, that's why. When you were his age, you were in Vietnam.

DAVE

Maybe that's why I don't understand what the big hurry is.

Dave admires an old surfboard for sale. He strokes the board and nods at a HIPPIE salesman with a mutual respect.

LINDA

He's not a kid anymore, he's an adult. Sort of. He needs to move out and go to school so he doesn't end up--

DAVE

Like me? A loser tile setter?

She stops him.

LINDA

I didn't say that.

DAVE

I don't know what more you want. He's going to school. So what if it's a commuter college.

LINDA

And at the rate he's going, he'll be commuting another ten years.

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