

Sin Padre

Free Rodriguez

May 26, 2021
Rewrite 13

EXT. SHIBUYA SKYLINE - DAY

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - POV SHOTS OF SHIBUYA SET TO A 90s HIPHOP ANTHEM.

EXT. SHIBUYA BACKSTREETS - DAY

MARVIN UZOCHI JAMES (Brooklyn native, black male, 42) walks through the deserted streets to his self owned barbershop. The shop looks like an apartment from the outside. UZOCHI wears a face mask, backpack and American style street clothes.

CUT TO:

INT. BROOKLYN BARBERSHOP - DAY

ATTICUS EVANS (Black British, 27) sits in the barber's chair while the barber UZOCHI cuts his hair. He is covered in the barber's cape.

EVANS

I am not sure bout a goddam ting man. You make these plans, send positive vibes, and in an instant the world becomes grim.

UZOCHI cuts EVANS hair.

EVANS (CONT'D)

You know I had gigs lined up. Yeah? I mean I was quids guaranteed with an olympic year. Now I can't play in the clubs, can't play overseas, can't play out in the streets. Shit is skint man. Worse time to bring a child into this godforsaken earth.

UZOCHI continues to cut EVANS hair.

EVANS (CONT'D)

Hell, you can't even witness your child brought into this world. It's shambolic. I mean the flu kills more people in a year.

UZOCHI

Nigga...why don't you wait a year.

EVANS

What do you mean?

UZOCHI re-examines the haircut he gives EVANS and returns to it as he speaks.

UZOCHI

You're talking that shit again.
Don't know the final verdict. Yet
jumping on that fake news wagon.

EVANS

It's not fake news man. Are you
not worried bout the police
shutting you down?

UZOCHI

Shit. They can't legally shut me
down. It's in Japan's
constitution.

EVANS

Tell that to the fucking
nightclubs and pubs. The local
koban is the law man.

UZOCHI

It's an apartment. The doors are
locked. I am not running anything
as far as the cops is concerned.

EVANS

Rightly so. Must be a good gig to
be a barber.

UZOCHI

No. If clientele don't pick up my
landlord will be the one shutting
me down.

EVANS

Still though. At least you were
there for the birth of your son.

UZOCHI

And at least you gonna see yours.
You don't want to be me nigga. I
am already on plan C for this
yen. Feel me.

EVANS

It might be time I pick up an
English teaching gig. Yeah?

UZOCHI

You taught English before?

EVANS

No. But I figured I could teach
these Japanese girls how to speak
some real English.

UZOCHI

What the fuck you trying to say?

EVANS

Just there is something real proper about a Japanese girl with a British accent...and a Jamaican wine.

UZOCHI nods in agreement.

SFX: Door bell rings

UZOCHI stops cutting hair and pauses for a moment. The bell RINGS again. UZOCHI goes to the door.

EVANS pulls out his phone and checks his messages.

UZOCHI opens the door.

UZOCHI

Can I help you?

JD (O.S.)

Yeah. I am here for a cut.

UZOCHI

How you find this place?

JD

Word gets around base.

UZOCHI

Not these days.

UZOCHI pushes door open and walks away dismissively. JD enters the apartment.

JD (NY native, Dominican descent, 33) wears a mask, jeans, and boots.

JD stands in the center of the room and looks around. EVANS returns to facing the mirror. UZOCHI sizes JD up.

UZOCHI

New York?

JD

BX. You?

UZOCHI

Born in Brooklyn. Raised in the A. Reborn in the BK.

UZOCHI walks away.

JD sits down.

JD

Reborn? What does that mean?

UZOCHI
 Cat's get nine lives. Sometimes
 God gives a man two. So what's
 your name?

JD
 (in a Dominican accent)
 Joan.

UZOCHI
 (in a Brooklyn accent)
 Jo-ann? Jo-Ann. Nigga, you got a
 bitch's name?

JD
 Nah nigga. Not Jo-Ann. Jo-an.

EVANS
 It's John. That's the name in
 English.

JD
 Nah papi. Don't call me John.

UZOCHI
 What they call you on base?

JD
 Dolorosa.

JD removes mask.

JD (CONT'D)
 But just call me JD. How about
 you?

UZOCHI
 Uzochi.

JD
 Uzochi? What the fuck is that?
 Japanese?

UZOCHI
 No. It's African. It means God's
 way.

UZOCHI walks over to the kitchen for a drink.

JD
 God's way. Dale papi...

EVANS
 Do many Americans speak Spanish?

UZOCHI
 He is Puerto Rican.

JD
Do. Mi. Ni. Cano. Get it right.

EVANS
Dominicano? My family is from the
Caribbean too.

EVANS turns the chair to face JD.

JD begins unzips his jacket.

JD
Where is your fam from?

EVANS
Jamaica.

JD
Montego Bay nigga?

EVANS
Right on.

JD
Dale.

EVANS
Dale? What's that mean?

JD
Depends on the context. Like
ight. Dale. Let's go. Dale! Give
it to me mami. Dale mami.

UZOCHI
(talking to JD)
How long you been in Japan?

JD
5 years.

UZOCHI
5 Years? It took you 5 years to
find me?

JD
I was at a Japanese spot...til
shit shut down.

UZOCHI puts down his cup.

UZOCHI
See....that's cause you were
denying you were black.

JD
My nigga que?

UZOCHI walks over to the barber chair area.

UZOCHI

These Dominicans think they ain't black. Then wake up one morning smell el cafe and go hay coño..soy moreno. Now I need a black barber to fix my fucked up Japanese haircut.

EVANS

Hold up. What fucking non-sense is this?

JD

(in Spanglish)

Mira. Mira. That ain't some "I aint black shit" it's just some tribal thang (shit).

UZOCHI

Riddle me this then motherfucker. Why do Dominicans make their skin white? Like ya boy Sammy Sosa.

JD

What about ya boy MJ?

UZOCHI

That nigga had a disease. Ain't the same shit.

EVANS

True but he could have gone black. Instead he chose to go white boy on us.

JD stands up and takes his jacket off.

UZOCHI

Yo Sammy ain't the only papi denying their blackness.

JD

Yo papi don't endorse that shit. But if a nigga can cut his dick off and make himself a woman, please tell me why the fuck Sammy can't be white?

EVANS

Yo that cross around ya neck...

JD grabs his cross and looks at it.

EVANS

Let me just ask you. Do you believe Jesus is white, black, or Dominican?

JD

Nah. He is whatever brings out the best in you. If a Japanese Jesus saves you. Let him be Jesus-san. (Spanish pronunciation)

UZOCHI

(in a slow paced)
Jesus was black.

EVANS

He was Hebrew. That's if...he even existed at all.

JD takes a drink out his jacket.

JD

Are you the agnostic type?

EVANS

Me? Nah, atheist. But if I had to pick, which I don't, my values are more Buddhist.

JD

Yeeeeeah but Buddhism got a white Jesus dilemma too.

JD takes a drink.

EVANS

How's that?

JD

They turned an Indian nigga into a Chinese Buddha.

UZOCHI stops cutting hair.

UZOCHI

See that's why Muslims don't draw an image of Muhammad. So people don't fuck up the religion.

EVANS

Religion is still fucked though. I would never force my wife to cover up like a ninja. In Dominica, are there any Muslims?

JD

In the Dominican Republic... You'd be hard pressed to find a Dominican who won't eat chicharron.

EVANS

Chicha what?

UZOCHI clears the hairs from EVANS face.

UZOCHI

Pork nigga. But that don't stop a Muslim from being a Muslim.

UZOCHI turns to JD.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)

I know plenty that break their own rules.

EVANS

Like them everyday Christians?

JD agrees with a guilty pleasure.

JD

Facts. The Koran has never been changed. The Bible on the other hand, bro...es Latino.

UZOCHI

Nigga don't add that guala guala shit to the holy book.

JD

Guala nada my nigga. Our story got missing pages...and so does the book.

JD takes a seat further from the group.

EVANS

Man. This is beginning to feel like a Bible study session or something.

UZOCHI

Weren't you raised Christian?

EVANS

Catholic. Definitely not raising my kids that way though.

JD

Yo familia. I didn't catch ya name.

EVANS

Evans.

UZOCHI

Motherfucker. Your mother called you Atticus. So I am gonna call you Atticus Evans from Nottingham. But you just want to be called Evans-san like a Japanese person.

UZOCHI removes the barber cloak off EVANS.

EVANS

First of all I am from London.
Second off. That's my stage name.
The fuck if I Japanize it. We
live in Japan. Gotta adapt. When
in Tokyo nigga.

JD

Yo Evans-san. How many kid's you
got?

EVANS

None yet.

UZOCHI

And you think you already know
what it is like to be a father.

UZOCHI wipes down cloak.

EVANS

I will in a few hours. Besides
don't you Christian's believe
life starts at conception.
According to y'all, I been a
father for nine months.

JD

You going be papi in a few hours?

EVANS quietly nods.

UZOCHI puts cloak on shelf.

UZOCHI

Shit. This pandemic is keeping
father's out the hospital.

JD shakes his head to UZOCHI.

JD

(JD talks to EVANS)

You plan on staying in Japan or
raising your family back home?

EVANS

I am staying in Japan. Fuck if I
ever return to all the nonsense
back home. The place has gone to
shit.

UZOCHI

Keep turning Japanese and your
kids will probably be Shinto or
into Happy Science bullshit.

EVANS

How bout fuck all. They don't need to be taught bedtime stories for adults. Besides, what kind of example of a father is God? To leave his only son to die on the cross?

UZOCHI turns the chair for EVANS to look at himself in the mirror.

UZOCHI

What makes you think you gonna be any better father than God?

EVANS looks at himself with much consideration.

EVANS

Real talk. I believe in myself. Not in God. Not in Jesus or any other prophet.

UZOCHI removes the folded neck piece off EVANS and puts it in the trash.

EVANS pulls out yen folded out his pocket with his right hand.

EVANS (CONT'D)

As far as I see, the only profit...the church, the government, or any other institution cares about is this right here.

UZOCHI takes the money off his hand and grills EVANS.

EVANS

What?

UZOCHI

You moving in nigga? Andale.

EVANS rises from the the barber's chair and pulls a vape to go smoke outside.

UZOCHI motions for JD to take a seat.

UZOCHI turns JDs chair towards mirror.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)

So papi. Que quieres? You know I still remember that Spanish shit.

JD

Mira quien hablas español?

UZOCHI grabs neck guard.

UZOCHI

Tu sabes papi. Them Puerto Rican
mami's kept a nigga bilingual.

JD

Tape it up. Keep it tight ight.
Hair up. Beard low. Entiendes
papi?

JD ties up his hair.

UZOCHI

Nigga you think you a Dominican
samurai or some shit?

UZOCHI places neck guard on him.

JD

Ya tu sabes.

UZOCHI grabs the other cloak.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)

Shit. Another month of this and I
will have to close the shop.
Maybe find my way elsewhere.

JD

Where else would you go?

UZOCHI

I don't know. Maybe New Zealand.
Shit has already hit the fan.
Probably the place to be. You
know.

JD

So you wouldn't go back to New
York?

UZOCHI

Hell nah! Why would I go back to
a country where a cop can blast a
nigga with no foul?

UZOCHI puts the cloak on JD.

JD

What makes you think you're safe
in New Zealand? I heard cops
don't even need warrants out
there.

UZOCHI

Yo. You think that shit matters
back home? Where the fuck have
you been?

JD

It sure don't fucking matter in
New Zealand.

UZOCHI

Then niggaz better go to Ghana or
some shit.

JD

The fuck? Ghana?

UZOCHI

Yo. If you're black, they give
you a citizenship. Off rip.

JD

How the fuck do they judge that?

UZOCHI

Man. If you black you black
nigga. Maybe it's about time papi
figure that shit out. Santo
Domingo!.. Negro nigga!

JD

Shiiiiiiit. Papi gets a stamp too?
Dale. Ghana is on the bucket
list. Gotta let these niggaz know
that I am moreno too.

UZOCHI

Nigga. Ain't no flights anywhere.
What you plan on paddling to
Africa? Is your ass Cuban too?

JD

Nah but I am flying off this
fucking island. On a one way trip
back to NYC. Ain't no mata ne for
me my G.

UZOCHI

Is you loco or a baka gaijin?
Tokyo maybe on lockdown but New
York looking like the next fall
of Rome. Shit WTF.

JD

Maybe. But what makes you think
Japan won't go back to that Edo
bullshit and ban all these
motherfuckin' gaijins.

UZOCHI

I doubt that shit. They got too
many old people. Whether they
like it or not, they need us
foreigners.

JD

For what? To run a dying economy.
Capitalism ain't forever. Come
another crisis and the yen in
your pocket wont be worth nada.

UZOCHI steps over to JD.

UZOCHI

Ight then. So why don't you run
me all your fucking yen now
nigga.

JD

Cojelo fucking suave.

UZOCHI

Yeah. That's what I fucking
thought.

JD

(in Spanglish)

All I am saying is this free
world ain't free no mas. Places
is going a hard right or an
extreme left. Y tu sabes que the
nigga that stands up, gets
hammered down.

UZOCHI

That's what makes this country
peaceful man. Gotta break a few
eggs to make a tamagoyaki nigga.

JD

Tamagoyaki taste like shit. And
this country got nothing but
skeletons in the closet. At least
America admits to slavery.

UZOCHI

And they prolly goin return to
it.

JD

Whatever nigga.

Silence for a moment. UZOCHI cutting hair.

JD (CONT'D)

You still got fam in NY?

UZOCHI

My shit all over the place man.
Mom's raised me with three other
half brothers. She still down in
Atlanta but them half siblings is
somewhere in New York.

JD
And your pops?

UZOCHI
Never met that fool in my life.

EVANS steps out of the window.

UZOCHI turns to see him.

EVANS salutes with a vape in his hand and opens the window. He sits outside the balcony and contemplates his predicament. He takes a puff from his vape and blows the smoke to the outside. He examines his wedding ring. He looks inside and grabs the Bible laying on the shelf. He flips to a bookmarked page with a picture of a young NATALIE FRATECELLI (3).

UZOCHI is cutting JD's hair.
EVANS steps into the room with the Bible and photo of NATALIE.
UZOCHI is looking through a cabinet.

EVANS
Uzi. Who this girl?

UZOCHI stops his work and looks up with a pause.

UZOCHI
My daughter.

EVANS
I thought you only had a son.

UZOCHI
I never said I only had a son.

EVANS
How old is she?

UZOCHI returns to the barbershop spot.

UZOCHI
She turned fifteen today.

EVANS
Today? Fifteen?

JD turns his face to look over to UZOCHI.

JD
Is she in Japan?

UZOCHI looks at JD with a look of recognition to his question.

JD (CONT'D)
Yo! Is she in Japan?

UZOCHI
New York nigga...

JD
Is she ight?

UZOCHI walks over to EVANS and reaches his hand out to grab the PICTURE. Leaves EVANS with the BIBLE in hand.

UZOCHI walks to the shelves in the corner looks at the photo and puts it in his back pocket.

UZOCHI raises his head to both EVANS and JD.

UZOCHI
If you niggaz ask me another motherfucking question, I am kicking ya'll both out.

UZOCHI turns to JD

UZOCHI
With half a fucking haircut.

EVANS
Ight do you man.

EVANS steps back

EVANS (CONT'D)
I would just do different man.
Just saying.

UZOCHI
That's cause your life is different. You don't know me outside these walls nigga.

EVANS
I know what it is to be a fatherless child. And maybe my father did too. But my son won't.

UZOCHI
I hope and pray you and ya wifey stay together my nigga. Cause I am a tell you right now that divorced niggaz in Japan, see their kids as often as jail niggaz in the states. But you don't know that yet.

EVANS gives a hardened look to UZOCHI.

SFX: EVANS' phone RINGS.

EVANS
Moshi moshi. Evans desu.

EVANS walks to the back of the room and his responses are heard in the background.

UZOCHI turns to JD.

UZOCHI

That nigga stays trying to be Japanese man.

JD

Bro. I got my own niña in NY. Ain't held her since she was two though.

UZOCHI

Oh word. You gotta baby too? So that's why you heading back to New York. Got you.

JD

Yeah I am heading back...and just maybe I will get a chance to see her if her mami let's me.

UZOCHI

Why wouldn't she let you see your own daughter.

JD

She got her boyfriend playing daddy. Last time we spoke, she gave me some shit, about how if I return home, it will only confuse our daughter.

UZOCHI

So hold up. She got your baby girl believing some other motherfucker is her daddy. The fuck.

JD

Can I blame her?

UZOCHI

Bet you're blaming somebody though.

JD looks at himself in the mirror and nods his head.

JD

(in Spanglish)

Call it intuition but if my daughter saw me, I believe she would recognize our connection. Like on some biological shit, perhaps something spiritual. She may not understand it pero los vas a sentir.

UZOCHI nods to himself a familiar feeling.

UZOCHI
You ever think that she might be
better off without you?

UZOCHI & JD remain silent.

EVANS speaks a loud in Japanese and English over the phone.

EVANS
(with almost tears of
emotion)
Oh my God! I am so happy you are
ok. Honto ni ureshii...kare wa
dou?...That's absolutely amazing.
Oh my gosh. Yeah I can't wait to
meet him... Hai mochiron... Yes
of course... I love you too. You
two. The both of you... I can't
wait... Ai shiteru... bye bye.

EVANS stands leaning against the wall with relief and pride.
He puts his phone away.

EVANS walks over with a big smile to both UZOCHI and JD.

EVANS
We got ourselves a baby boy. The
wife is fine, my son is healthy,
and I am one happy husband and
father.

JD nods with a smile. UZOCHI acknowledges his words with a
straight face.

UZOCHI
Ight my dude. Go out there and be
a husband and father.

EVANS puts on his hat.

EVANS (CONT'D)
Look what I was trying to say
earlier was... I can't imagine
not knowing if my child is alive
or not.

UZOCHI
What makes you think I don't
know?

EVANS
I don't know. Do you?

UZOCHI

You and I got a different roll of dice. Black in America ain't the same as Black in Manchester. Feel me.

EVANS

Black, divorced, or America wouldn't stop me from being a father. Besides, we both niggaz in Japan. With Japanese sons.

UZOCHI

You think Japan will accept your son as Japanese?

EVANS

It doesn't matter if they do or don't. I will raise my son to be a global citizen. It's the world we live in now.

UZOCHI

My nigga. You can't even travel to another country. So that global citizen shit is already dead. You're a gaijin in Japan. And your son, even though he is half Japanese, won't be treated like a Japanese. So you better let him know now that he is dominant trait. He is fucking black!

EVANS

My son will be raised in Japan, so culturally he will be more Japanese than British or Black. I mean isn't that the same that is happening with your son?

UZOCHI

Nigga. I ain't raising my son to be Japanese.

EVANS

But you live in Japan. Not America. Why can't you see that?

JD

Yo Ev.

EVANS turns his attention to JD.

JD (CONT'D)

We don't feel like Americans in America either bro. Feel me mano?

Silence among them.

SFX: Police sirens are heard in the distance and fade away.
They each look at one another.

EVANS begins to wrap a scarf around his face.

EVANS
Just saying. We have a chance for
a better life out here. I am
gonna make the most of it.

EVANS finishes wrapping his scarf.

EVANS (CONT'D)
Wish her a happy birthday yeah.

UZOCHI stares down EVANS.

EVANS exits without delay.

UZOCHI locks the door and turns back to JD with eyes that demand silence. JD turns to the mirror.

UZOCHI and JD reflect in silence. UZOCHI turns on the razor.

MONTAGE - UZOCHI cuts JD's hair as a 90s hiphop anthem plays.

YASUKE JAMES (Uzo's 3 year old son) picture is seen on the wall.

JD
Is that your son?

UZOCHI
Yeah. His name is Yasuke. I named
him after the first black
samurai.

JD nods.

JD
When was the last time you seen
him?

UZOCHI
A couple weeks ago. His mama went
on some paranoid shit and took
him to Tochigi.

UZOCHI raises the mirror behind JD's head.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)
You good?

JD
Bueno.

JD gets up from his chair.
JD takes the money out of his jacket.

JD
Do you think we would ever see
another prophet?

UZOCHI
According to the Muslims, no. And
if you're a Christian, it be the
return of Christ.

JD
Do you think God let it happen
again?

UZOCHI
Let what happen?

JD
Let Jesus be nailed to the cross?

UZOCHI
If I were God, I wouldn't let my
son die twice for humanity.

JD nods.

JD
So you ain't goin' back?

UZOCHI walks over to the Brooklyn Bridge picture.

UZOCHI
JD. You ask a lot of fucking
questions.

JD smiles.

JD
And you talk like you got all the
answers. So I might as well get
em here and now, if not I will
see you in Ghana.

JD hands UZOCHI money.

UZOCHI
Nigga...I ain't goin to Ghana.

JD
You see. You was just talkin'
shit bout never bein' Japanese.

UZOCHI
Nah. I was serious.

UZOCHI sits down on the barber's chair. Removes gloves.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)
This place will never be my home.
(MORE)

UZOCHI (CONT'D)

But I am goin' do what the fuck I gotta, to make it home for my son.

JD proudly smiles.

JD

Ight. Now we talking...Can I ask..what about your daughter?

UZOCHI gives him a disagreeable look.

JD (CONT'D)

Papi is out the door anyway fam. And with a haircut. Dimelo?

UZOCHI sucks his teeth.

UZOCHI

Dimelo...How bout you hit me up one day..And let me know..how it goes for you and yours.

JD

Tato familia.

JD exits.

UZOCHI sits and ponders. He unties his dreads. He goes over to the back window and lights up a cigarette. UZOCHI pulls out the picture of his daughter. He lays it down and pulls out his phone. He dials a number. As the phone rings, he takes one more pull and puts the cigarette down. The phone is answered by the voice of a half asleep teenager.

NATALIE FRATECELLI (15) estranged daughter of UZOCHI.

NATALIE (O.S.)

Hello?

UZOCHI remains silent as he slowly exhales.

NATALIE

Hello?

UZOCHI

Hello. Is this Natalie?

NATALIE

Who's calling?

UZOCHI

Uzochi. Your mama might have mentioned this name.

NATALIE remains silent on the line.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)
On your birth certificate, the
name reads Marvin James.

NATALIE continues to be silent on the line.

UZOCHI (CONT'D)
You know who I am?

NATALIE
Yeah I know. What do you want?

UZOCHI
I'm calling... I am calling
because I thought you should
know..I think you should
know...that you got a baby
brother.

NATALIE remains silent. UZOCHI looks out the window. The
sound of the train is heard.

End.