

Cable Series

~ ***InternVentures*** ~

*Pilot Episode*

**PART ONE: 'CAPE CAPER'**

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Based on the Intern book series by Robert Khoury

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INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

The MASTER MENTOR at *Exotic Global Internships* (50, tough, kind, calm) is sitting upright, silent and unmoving, looking out across her big desk.

We HEAR a door open - confident footsteps enter the room.

MASTER MENTOR

Welcome, Jake. Good to meet you in person. I've reviewed your interviews. It seems you have an inventive imagination that sometimes gets you into trouble. You tend to idealize love. You score low on self-restraint. You become excited and passionate - but you can also get depressed and quit projects. If you were a bottle of wine I'd call you complex with undetermined highlights.

JAKE GARCIA (22, alert, eager but also a bit disgruntled) is standing in casual clothes in front of the desk.

JAKE

Hmm. Sounds like you've turned me into a cliché.

MASTER MENTOR

We've just done our best to see if you fit into our unusual intern program. I understand you are just now emerging from a startup disaster.

JAKE

(a bit defensive)  
My family seems to spawn inventors. And yeah, I get bummed sometimes when things don't work out. Don't you?

MASTER MENTOR

(slight smile)  
No, I'm more even keel. But I admire your type - if I might use that term.

He smiles back.

JAKE

Help yourself. I've studied enough psych to know they don't really comprehend the complexities of a personality.

MASTER MENTOR

I see you interned with your father's finance firm and quit halfway through.

JAKE

I hate being bored. I gave it a try but my dad's firm did bore me.

She glances down at her notes.

MASTER MENTOR

So - your beloved uncle died last year, your tech start-up flopped. There's a mention here of your love life in turmoil. Are you feeling okay inside, ready for a new challenge?

JAKE

(fairly slick)

I've got the usual dents in my emotional armor but I'm okay - I'm feeling hungry to explore someplace new - jump into things that really interest me.

MASTER MENTOR

Well I'm still not sure about you, Jake Garcia - but I'm willing to risk. Are you packed, ready to fly?

JAKE

Yes Ma'am. But - where to?

MASTER MENTOR

Ah yes. My team has determined, in our mostly-intuitive process, that the optimum apprenticeship for you is located near the most southern tip of South Africa.

JAKE

Oh!

MASTER MENTOR

We're dropping you into a 400 year old small but, up until recently, thriving family winery near Cape Town - a situation where you might be of considerable help. Your flight takes off tomorrow morning at ten. You'll find info in an email. Just go jump in.

JAKE

With pleasure.

She grants Jake a supportive smile.

MASTER MENTOR

Well pleasure should be secondary. Focus on service and discovery. Enthusiasm, compassion, courage - those will be key virtues on your odyssey. South Africa is a most beautiful country. Part of my own heart will always be in Cape Town. Please enjoy and respect every person you encounter.

JAKE

(sincere)

Ah. Will do.

MASTER MENTOR

One of our consultants you talked with on a zoom call thinks you're a bit bipolar, you swing high and you swing low. I recommend during this coming internship that you pay close attention to your mood swings. Get honest about yourself - grow.

JAKE

Ah. The bipolar thing, I know. People tell me. And yeah, I'm working on that. But those peak highs are where my best ideas pop in. I'm not prepared to lose all that, it's what I run on.

MASTER MENTOR

Well we shall see. We're considering you an experiment - don't let us down. And Jake, any time you need input or advice from me, call my private number. I mean that. Any further questions?

JAKE

Well I've been wondering why you do this *Exotic Global Internships* work. What's in it for you?

She cocks her head, eyes him for a moment.

MASTER MENTOR

I myself suffered through a most terrible internship when I was your age. Then twenty years later my daughter was seeking a meaningful internship but couldn't find one, so I set up *EGI* to help her, and the rest just unfolded on its own.

JAKE

Okay. That makes sense.

MASTER MENTOR

So do give my deep-heart hallo to Cape Town. Now off with you!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIRLINER - DAY

Jake has his laptop open, he's reading reports about Cape Town, South African wine-making, export figures etc.

Glancing out the passenger window, he sits upright with pleasure at the view - and turns on a Spotify channel of South African music. The early upbeat Zulu band *Ladysmith* starts up with well-recorded tribal drumming and singing.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF CAPE TOWN - CONTINUOUS

Looking out his window, listening to the music in his earbuds, Jake sees the magnificent dominant vision of Table Mountain towering over the small city, suburbs and vineyards of Cape Town.

JAKE

Okay - Cape Town! Let's see what's happenin' down there.

INT. CAPE TOWN AIRPORT - DAY

A young woman, JULEE HIGGINS (21, looking serious in work clothes and boots) hurries impatiently through the airport. She carries a cardboard sheet in one hand.

Someone bumps into her and she reacts - she's on edge - but she controls herself.

Jake comes walking confidently but also on guard toward Julee - and sees her hand-written sign.

SIGN: "*Jake Garcia*"

Jake stops in front of her - they eye each other. He reaches, takes the sign from her - tosses it in a trash bin.

JULEE  
(hurried)  
So this is you. Luggage?

He tugs at his stuffed backpack.

JAKE  
Just this - I'll buy some local clothes. I like to travel light. So who are you?

JULEE  
I'm Julia, most people down here call me Julee and I'm in a rush, we need to get back.

JAKE  
Oh?

JULEE  
Don't ask - my mother. And our manager, he's sick. To be honest, I don't think hosting an intern right now is a good idea - but you're here, so let's make the best of it.

JAKE  
(defensive)  
Oh, well thanks for the warm welcome.

JULEE  
(softening slightly)  
Sorry. I'm a bit on edge. Let's get going, I hate airports.

She turns and walks quickly out of the terminal. Jake grins a curious grin, shrugs his shoulders, stays positive and follows her.

INT. PICKUP ON FREEWAY - DAY

Julee drives fast in a beat-up mud-splattered pickup, making Jake nervous as she swerves through traffic.

JAKE  
(making conversation)  
So - I hope I'm not intruding into anything. I'm just here to help.

JULEE

Well I hope the hell you can. But for now please, just let me be, things are tense today.

JAKE

Whatever. But might we slow down just a bit so I can enjoy my first take on this strange new country?

JULEE

Oh - I'm driving fast?

JAKE

(smiles)

Flamin' bat out'a hell, as my uncle would have put it.

JULEE

(easing up)

So is this your first time down here? I didn't have time to read what they sent. We'll be out of the burbs soon, then it opens up. Developers are gobbling the small wineries nonstop. Makes me want to scream.

She glances hotly at him - and Jake fully meets her eyes for the first time. It's an intense mutual gaze. She breaks away, and puts on some contemporary Cape folk-rap tune that she likes -

Jake watches her profile as she gets into the music. She even sings a few lines with the band. He smiles to himself - then looks out the side window.

EXT. PICKUP ON ROAD - CONTINUOUS

In a aerial collage we are flying like a bird above some utterly magnificent landscapes:

- congested city with lots of fairly relaxed people and painted city houses, with Table Mountain in the background

- sprawling suburbs and thinning traffic, and quite a few people out and about

- a beautiful valley opening up, with rolling-hill vineyards and stands of woods and quite expensive estates

INT. PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

Jake looks enthralled by the scenery.

JAKE

Ah, is this the Constantia Valley, heart of your wine country? I was reading up - seems the biz is doing just fine down here, exports growing and such.

JULEE

(frowning)

If it were only that simple.

JAKE

Your accent, it's real nice. Not quite anything I've heard before. Did you grow up down here?

JULEE

On and off. I'm not talkative today, sorry. I knew this was a bad idea.

JAKE

Hey, give me half a chance. (beat) Do you work at the Higgins Winery?

JULEE

(gruff)

My family owns it, we've run it for three centuries, believe it or not.

JAKE

That's impressive. And what about my intern manager - I think I'm supposed to report to someone named Walter.

Her scowl deepens.

JULEE

What a mess - Walter got sick yesterday but refused to go to the hospital. Maybe we should just ship you back, I don't have time for you.

JAKE

(reacting)

I told you, I'm here to help.

JULEE

I don't know how - but right now please be quiet so I can think.



JAKE

Whatever.

So - he just watches more scenery go by his side window - more luxurious homes under a canopy of towering trees, plus well-tended healthy vineyards, tasting rooms, big old barns.

The architecture is mostly early Cape Dutch, two-story white-washed buildings with thatch-style dark sloping roofs and white-plaster walls, small windows with dark shutters, curvy ornament white facades and geraniums in window boxes.

EXT. LONG PRIVATE DRIVE - CONTINUOUS

Julee takes a side road, driving fast in silence - then abruptly speaks:

JULEE

It was my father who suggested an intern, and Walter agreed. Can you perhaps do accounting?

JAKE

Uhm - yeah, a bit.

JULEE

Well that might help.

JAKE

I know about the business side of wine-making. Just aim me at a problem and I'll see what I can do.

She takes a deep breath, grants him a slight smile.

JULEE

Well you seem friendly enough. I'm over my head here - I only got back a month ago when my father died.

JAKE

Oh - that's terrible.

JULEE

(tough again)

I don't need your sympathy - but if you can look over the books that might help. I was studying viticulture in college - picking up on the new research - but I don't do bookkeeping at all.

EXT/INT. HIGGINS WINERY - CONTINUOUS

Julee drives fast up to a modest-looking old but well-tended winery - early Dutch-style buildings with a main house, barns, gardens, parking lot for visitors, and then vineyards stretching up a gently-sloping hillside. In the other direction, to the south, the blue ocean is soft in a haze.

JULEE

So this is us - definitely not a big hotshot winery, just our basic family operation - and it might not last long. Oh, and please, Jake, try to tolerate my mom. Ever since Dad got cancer she's been drinking a lot.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A middle-aged woman, EMILIE HIGGINS (42, healthy but looking scattered and drained) is sitting on a sofa in an expansive traditional-furniture living room with a picture-window view of the vineyards and hills beyond.

On the stereo she's listening to a classical piano concerto. A baby grand piano squats over in a corner.

Julee comes bursting fast into the room with Jake following.

EMILIE

(talkative)

Oh there you are. And what have we here - a genuine American intern, and quite handsome as well. Forgive me if I don't stand. Welcome to our humble abode. Would you like a drink?

JULEE

Mom, it's not even noon. Jake, meet my mother, Emilie Northrup Higgins. Mom, this is Jake Garcia.

EMILIE

Yes yes, I've read your bio. But the Garcia part - I was sent to college in California, you're Mexican by name but you hardly look it.

JULEE

Mom!

JAKE

It's okay, I'm proud of my Latino heritage, it's a quarter of my story.

EMILIE

(curious)

And the rest of your story? Oh, do sit down, please.

JULEE

(to her mother)

I'm going to see how Walter is feeling. Can you arrange lunch, I'm starving and I'm sure Jake is too.

Julee disappears out a side door. Emilie sighs, and reaches for her phone. Jake sits and looks around, uncomfortable but curious.

EMILIE

(into phone)

Darling, I hate to bother you but when is lunch? And we have a visitor. (beat) Good, I thank you.

She puts the phone down.

EMILIE (cont'd)

She's truly a darling and she can also cook to suit me. So then - I'm always curious about blood lines, I'm from Edinburgh but I have a touch of Irish and the West Indies in me, my grandfather's father was a great champion of mixing up the world's gene pools, I was in a band and also studying to become a lawyer, maybe follow in Grandad's footsteps. But I refused to have an abortion and so down here I came at twenty - and that's my entire life story - grapes grapes and eternally more grapes.

She waves her hand in the air.

EMILIE (cont'd)

But I know, I blabber - I'm on some becalming medication that doesn't mix well with wine - you must tolerate me. You're of course here to work, not to chat. Oliver and Walter came up with the intern idea. My brother-in-law, Rupert, he hates snooping consultants but he agreed to a naive intern like yourself. But tell me, Jake, why would a smart young man like yourself come all the way down to the dull hinterlands of the Cape?

JAKE

Well - a friend who was in the *Exotic Global Intern* program praised it, and I was at loose ends as my uncle would say. So yeah, I signed up - and here I am. They found out I love the wine industry, my uncle was involved up in Napa. So - here I am.

EMILIE

Well good luck to you, truly. My husband, who is gone now, he hit some very bad luck. Now what shall I get you to drink? Movement is good and I am here to serve. Tell me what you like to drink back stateside, I draw most of my favorite habits these days from a dear friend in Santa Cruz, he keeps me up to date. Tell me exactly what you'd drink this time of day.

JAKE

(grinning)

Okay, just for the fun of it. But usually I drink it a bit later. First of all, start with some good red wine, a quarter tall glass. Then a quarter-glass chilled white wine that melds well with the red. Add some fermented Kambucha plus some sparkling raspberry-lime soda or some such to top it off, plus some ice if it's warm.

Emilie sits upright and applauds.

EMILIE

Bravo - magnifique. In three minutes I shall return with your request.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WINERY - DAY

Julee is walking fast across an open expanse between the main house and the winery buildings and equipment barns.

She heads off along a path toward a shady old British-style cottage set back into some lingering old-stand woods.

## INT. WALTER'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The cottage is cozy, rather ancient - Julee knocks, gets no answer - goes in and quickly walks through the small living room into the bedroom.

JULEE

Walter, it's me - Walter?

The bedroom is empty.

## INT. MAIN HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jake and Emilie are sipping and talking.

EMILIE

(babbling emotionally)

Ollie - he just withered away right before my eyes, month after month for two impossible years before finally letting go and flying away. And - something in me flew off with him. I only worry about Julee, this has all been so very dreadfully unfair to her, she was off studying both viniculture and pre-law, trying to make up her mind what to do with her life - and now this!

Julee comes bursting in.

JULEE

Walter's just - disappeared! But his pickup is here.

EMILIE

Oh dear.

JULEE

I'm going looking for him. Jake, you can come with me, see the place. Oh, and you're going to need a hat.

## EXT. WINERY GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

Jake follows Julee outside in back. He's wearing a 'down-under' broad-brimmed hat that looks good on him.

JULEE

Fit you?