

RPCEV

A game for 3-6 players by Jason Morningstar. ©2014, CC-BY-SA-NC

Images by Adam Jones, CC-BY-SA 2.0 and US government.

Thanks to Tess Aquarium, Twyla Campbell, Colin Fahrion, Sean Nittner and Jackson Tegu.

PREP

Print this document (double sided, flip on long edge, ideally in color). Cut out the 27 cards and the character booklets. Fold the booklets. You will also need a timer - a watch or phone will work fine.

Find a place to play. Play in public, ideally in a moderate traffic area. A little bustling background noise and an occasional interruption or distraction is great. Bring name tags and sharpies. Spread out cards and booklets.

PRE-PLAY

Have a safety briefing. There's no reason to touch anyone in this game. Demonstrate safety metatechniques - I recommend "Brake" and "Cut", but use anything you are comfortable with. Don't skip this step.

Come together as a group, make contact, put your heads together, commit to sharing an intense experience and making each other look awesome. Shake it out, maybe warm up.

Choose characters. "T" is mandatory. There are more characters than there are players; discard those not chosen. Once everyone has chosen, the player of "T" should read this out loud:

You have returned from an 18 month volunteer commitment in Burkina Faso.

After a ten hour bush taxi ride, you flew from Ouagadougou to Dakar, then Paris, and now you are home, waiting for your final connecting flights. The terminal around you is freezing cold, spotlessly clean and crowded with busy travelers. You are pretty exhausted, and someone just threw away a perfectly good plastic container. The culture shock is just starting to hit you.

With you are other volunteers you lived and worked with. A ragged cluster of dirty, exhausted travelers.

The work was hard and often thankless. The poverty of Burkina Faso is crushing and the government is an oppressive dictatorship. But the people are wonderful - generous, hard working and smart.

You already miss the friends you made, but time as a volunteer also haunts you.

Everyone needs a name tag. Choose a name beginning with the letter of your character. Any gender is fine.

Each player other than "T" should choose a card, perhaps inspired by their character booklet. The player of "T" should choose an additional card to give to each player, so everyone but "T" will have two.

Introduce yourselves, in character, briefly telegraphing your role and past experience. When everyone is ready, the player of "T" should set an alarm for one hour (or any amount of time the group agrees on). It's a good idea to let "T" arrive a few minutes into the game, to give the volunteers a few moments to simmer.

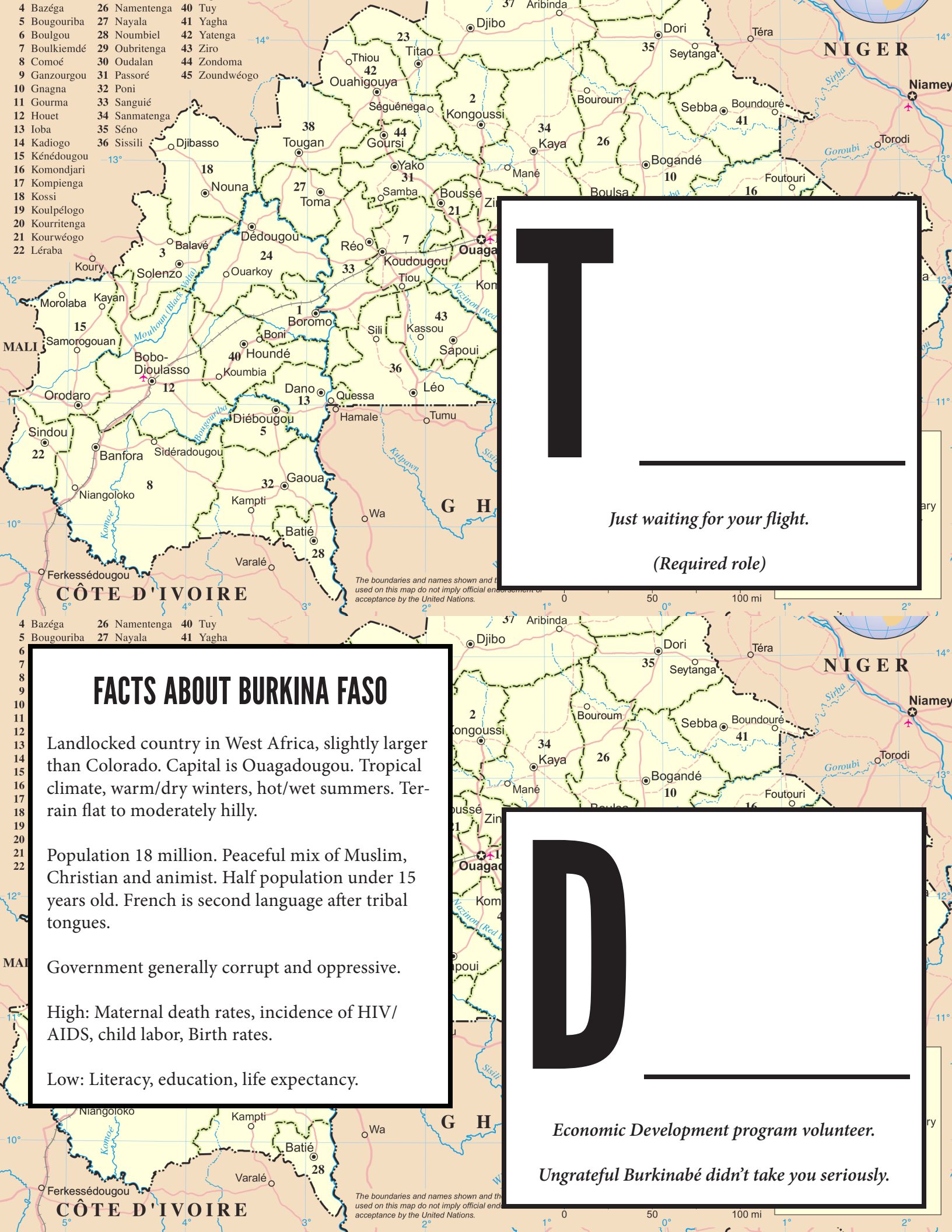
PLAY

Play begins immediately.

When the alarm goes off, someone's flight is ready for boarding. Every five minutes thereafter, another flight is called and a character must depart, until only one person remains. Then the game ends. Plan time for a debrief.

DEBRIEF

Take this seriously. De-role by tossing your character booklets in a pile. Don't tell war stories - instead talk about what you felt and how the game's themes resonated with you.



- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 Bazéga | 26 Namentenga | 40 Tuy |
| 2 Bougouriba | 27 Nayala | 41 Yagha |
| 3 Boulgou | 28 Noubiel | 42 Yatenga |
| 4 Boulkiemde | 29 Oubritenga | 43 Ziro |
| 5 Comoé | 30 Oudalan | 44 Zondoma |
| 6 Ganzourgou | 31 Passoré | 45 Zoundwéogo |
| 7 Gnagna | 32 Poni | |
| 8 Gourma | 33 Sanguié | |
| 9 Houet | 34 Sanmatenga | |
| 10 Ioba | 35 Séno | |
| 11 Kadiogo | 36 Sissili | |
| 12 Kénédougou | | |
| 13 Komondjari | | |
| 14 Koupélanga | | |
| 15 Kossi | | |
| 16 Koulpélogo | | |
| 17 Kouritenga | | |
| 18 Kourwéogo | | |
| 19 Léraba | | |

T

Just waiting for your flight.

(Required role)

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, warm/dry winters, hot/wet summers. Terrain flat to moderately hilly.

Population 18 million. Peaceful mix of Muslim, Christian and animist. Half population under 15 years old. French is second language after tribal tongues.

Government generally corrupt and oppressive.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, Birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy.

D

Economic Development program volunteer.

Ungrateful Burkinabé didn't take you seriously.

INITIAL QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK

Is Burkina Faso a country?

What did you do there?

Did you see a lion?

Where did you stay?

How did you communicate?

What are the people there like?

How did the experience change you?

What is the jungle like?

Do a lot of people there have AIDS?

Are you glad to be back?

What's the best thing that happened?

What's the worst thing that happened?

Were you ever afraid?

T

You are waiting for a connecting domestic flight and bumped into these interesting people.

You aren't stupid but you are ignorant to the point of insult - you know nothing about Africa and have never even heard of Burkina Faso. The people you are waiting with have had a grand adventure and you are intensely curious. Find out about where they have been and what they have experienced.

For each of the other players, choose a photo you find interesting and give it to them.

Set a timer for one hour. When one hour has passed, someone's flight is ready for boarding.

Every five minutes thereafter, another flight is called and a character must depart, until only one person remains. Then the game ends.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you all were in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, and guilt hangs like a weight around your neck. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence?

Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

Make sure you talk about the night of the party, because that needs to be dragged out into the light, but never discuss what happened on the Bouka-Orumbindi path.

D

You were sent to the village of Bouka to support a new Community Economic Development (CED) program.

Your biggest accomplishment was building fruit drying racks. You built them yourself, and that's why they got finished. Teaching Bouka's orchardists small business management techniques that would make them more money for their mango crop was supposed to be your goal, but that was a joke. Nobody came to your classes.

Choose the photo you kept of the one villager who frustrated you the most.

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, warm/dry winters, hot/wet summers. Terrain flat to moderately hilly.

Population 18 million. Peaceful mix of Muslim, Christian and animist. Half population under 15 years old. French is second language after tribal tongues.

Open, welcoming, curious, fun-loving people.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, Birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy.

G

Education program volunteer.

You had fun, at least. The kids liked you.

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, warm/dry winters, hot/wet summers. Terrain flat to moderately hilly.

Population 18 million. Peaceful mix of Muslim, Christian and animist. Half population under 15 years old. French is second language after tribal tongues.

Lack of basic sanitation and education critical.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, Birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy.

B

Community Health program volunteer.

You worked your ass off, unlike some people.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you were all in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, and regret consumes you. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence? Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

You should probably talk about what happened on the Bouka-Orumbindi path, but never bring up the night the Gendarmes came.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you were all in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, although the blame does not lie with you, not by a long shot. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence? Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

If you want to, talk about the night the Gendarmes came. It happened, why avoid it? But never speak about the “Djibissé Boys”

G

You were sent to the village of Bouka to support the Education program.

You were told your impact would be small and hard to identify, so you just went with the experience, did your best, and had a good time. You started a chess club, and it became a hub of activity after school. You were supposed to use it to teach life skills and healthy behaviors but it rapidly devolved into just hanging out.

Choose a photo you kept of your favorite little hang-out buddy.

B

You were sent to the village of Bouka to support the Community Health program.

Your biggest accomplishment - there were so many. Providing HIV/AIDS education, for one. Anti-malaria activities like your bednet distribution campaign. Building a handwashing station. You worked your ass off, which is more than you can say for your fellow volunteers.

Choose a photo you kept of your friend, the community health care worker.

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, blazing winters, swampy inferno summers. Terrain flat as a pancake and choked with dust, just awful.

Everyone is desperate and running some con.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy, access to Internet and telephones, privacy, clean water, comfort, level of support from host agency.

S

Community Health program volunteer.

Burkina Faso was hell on Earth. You hated it.

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, warm/dry winters, hot/wet summers. Terrain flat to moderately hilly.

Population 18 million. Peaceful mix of Muslim, Christian and animist. Half population under 15 years old. French is second language after tribal tongues.

The nicest people you've ever met, and the poorest.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy.

A

Education program volunteer.

You partied a lot. A whole lot.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you were all in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, but if you are being honest you don't much care. The others are absolutely torn up with guilt and shame, though. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence? Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

Feel free to talk about your friends the "Djibissé Boys", but never speak about what happened to Omar Sawadogo. Talking about that is not OK.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you were all in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, and you are deeply ashamed of what happened and your role in it. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence? Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

Go ahead and talk about what happened to Omar Sawadogo, it's on everybody's mind anyway, but never speak about the twins, Raogo and Poko.

S

You were sent to the village of Bouka to support the Community Health program.

Burkina Faso was not a good fit for you and you basically writhed in misery for a year and a half. Your biggest accomplishment was not killing yourself or anyone else. The country is truly a hell-hole. The people are all smiles but they'll steal anything not tied down. After a few months trying to teach about sanitation you just gave up and drank beer.

Choose a photo you kept to show people back in the world how awful Burkina Faso was.

A

You were sent to the village of Orumbindi to support the Education program.

Your biggest accomplishment was administrative - in the school every day, you encouraged gender-equitable teaching practices, mentored students, and gently built the capacity of local teachers. Every night you partied, and every weekend you took the bush taxi over to Bouka to hang out with other volunteers.

Choose a photo you kept of the local you partied with the most.

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, warm/dry winters, hot/wet summers. Terrain flat to moderately hilly.

Population 18 million. Peaceful mix of Muslim, Christian and animist. Half population under 15 years old. French is second language after tribal tongues.

Wonderful, hard-working, kind, giving people.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, Birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy.

M

Community Health program volunteer.

You saved children's lives. The rest is trivia.

FACTS ABOUT BURKINA FASO

Landlocked country in West Africa, slightly larger than Colorado. Capital is Ouagadougou. Tropical climate, warm/dry winters, hot/wet summers. Terrain flat to moderately hilly.

Population 18 million. Peaceful mix of Muslim, Christian and animist. Half population under 15 years old. French is second language after tribal tongues.

Kind people dealt a terrible hand.

High: Maternal death rates, incidence of HIV/AIDS, child labor, Birth rates.

Low: Literacy, education, life expectancy.

R

Education/Health program volunteer.

You fought the good fight. You did good.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you were all in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, and the weight of your culpability is crushing. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence? Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

Reminisce about your friends the twins, Raogo and Poko, but never bring up the motorcycle. Just don't talk about the motorcycle.

SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

...while you were all in Burkina Faso. Lives were destroyed. You were complicit in it, either directly or indirectly, and you are feel a sense of loss and betrayal, as well as deep personal failure. Whatever it was, you all share the blame.

It would be nice if you could put it behind you before the group is broken up forever. Do you need forgiveness? Reassurance? Punishment? An apportionment of proper blame? A promise of silence? Whatever it is, you only have a short time to get it.

So get it.

Feel free to talk about what happened with the motorcycle, but never speak about the night of the party. Why the hell bring that up?

M

You were sent to the village of Orumbindi to support the Community Health program.

Your biggest accomplishment was your tireless work in the nutritional rehabilitation of moderately malnourished children. This was the most pressing need in Orumbindi and you took it on as your personal crusade. It's true you had other responsibilities on paper, but tell that to the suffering children.

Choose a photo you kept of the child whose life you saved.

R

You were sent to the village of Orumbindi to support the Community Health and Education programs.

Your biggest accomplishment was encouraging families to send their daughters to school - when you arrived it was seen as a poor investment, but when you left girls were starting to be enrolled. Some of the more traditional types didn't like this, but it is the twenty first century now. You made a lot of enemies - a lot - but it was worth it.

Choose a photo you kept of the local who became your best friend.



Seydou

Hervé

Eric in the truck

Raogo, chilling

Rabbit

Idriss cutting class

Bouka-Orumbindi path

The window

On the Kindé road



NGO bush taxi

Wash day in Orumbindi

Bouka

Aicha ready to go

Market day

Omar Sawadogo

The "Djibissé Boys"

Digging the grave

Couldn't stop





Rasmata, Kadi & Grace

Waiting for the nurse

Gendarmes at Gora

Poko, wedding day,

Florence!

Mariam, PISSED OFF

Hélène and Lamoussa

Djènèba

Aicha, road warrior!