

Captions:

# CUBA

## « *HAY QUE LUCHAR...* »

(You have to keep fighting...)

Photographic essay by  
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Photo 01 - In a poor area of Havana. Alfredo, 60 years old, is alone. No family, no friends, only a few distant neighbours. Fired from the civil service, he has no pension either.



Photo 02 - In his home, dreams and illusion : Che and rum: a litre a day and newspaper to smoke when he has no cigarettes. And always with that inner violence: destroying himself to forget the past, the disappointments, and to flee his own failures.



Photo 03 - Three years ago, he had a fall: serious injuries to his neck and back.....How does he get by? Every day, he fills a big bag of empty cans (beer, cola...) which he sells at a recycling depot for around 20 centimes.



Photo 04 - Near Camaguey. A “finca” (isolated farm) in the middle of nowhere. Apart from a starving horse, there is no other way to get here.



Photo 05 - In the kitchen, Fernanda burns the beans coming from the coffee plantation beside the *finca*, on an ancient stove : a wooden structure, lined with refractory bricks, open hearth, built seventy-five years ago, at the same time as the cabin. The walls and ceiling, blackened by the smoke, bear witness to an ancestral tradition.



Photo 06 - The coffee filter that used to be a sock. An old piece of cloth, in service for the past thirteen years, and excellent coffee with a lovely aroma.



Photo 07 - Oscar. His debonair manner hides his anxiety about drought. There is not enough grass for his small herd of a few heads and so there is not enough milk. Nevertheless the administration will come to collect the milk quota that they have imposed; he will have to give them the portion normally reserved for his family in order to comply with the rules.



Photo 08 - The price of a file to sharpen a machete : roughly one euro. Too expensive, so you use any old stone you find on the ground.



Photo 09 - Despite the terrible living conditions, Nora took in the little Alejandro after he had been abandoned by his mother.



**Photo 10 -** Havana, Frederica's house. When it rains, the water comes in everywhere into the tiny space, accessible only by a ladder.



**Photo 11 -** Twenty-two years old, no job, mother of a two-year-old girl, abandoned by the girl's father when she was six months pregnant. A plastic barrel and a saucepan serve as running water.



**Photo 12 -** When her pimp calls, Frederica goes to spend the night at a tourist hotel. During that time, her mother takes care of her daughter.



**Photo 13 -** In the region of Trinidad, Guillermo, 92 years old, is proud to have fought alongside Che and Fidel Castro during the revolution.



**Photo 14 -** Now, bent down under the weight of the years, Guillermo is helped by his niece Angela, who he brought up.



Photo 15 - Angela, sixty, cruelly disappointed and disenchanted with life.



Photo 16 - Their home.



Photo 17 - A television from another age: a single channel carrying only propaganda



Photo 18 - The bedroom.



Photo 19 - On the outskirts of Havana. Carlos, seventy-three, had both legs amputated after a road accident when he was twenty-one. He is in his "wheelchair", bought second-hand for thirty euros. His handicap allowance : 7,50 euros monthly.



Photo 20 - Carlos goes out every day, whatever the weather. The kerbs can sometimes be quite high in Havana, but that is no problem to him: he lets himself fall to the ground, crawls along on his elbows, drags the wheelchair up onto the footpath, gets back into the wheelchair and continues his journey. It is an operation that he has performed several times a day, for more than fifty years.



Photo 21 - Carlos lives alone and has no family. To get into his house, he uses the same technique as for the footpaths.



Photo 22 - His only furniture: a coffee table and a camp bed for the night. Nothing else.



Photo 23 - Carlos spoke to me of his life, always with modesty and humour... but that day, feeling overwhelmed by emotion, he took a cloth that was nearby and pretended that he was wiping his forehead, oh... it didn't last long, three or four seconds.....When he looked at me again, the cloud had passed. You could still see the scars on his elbows from climbing over footpaths or from when his wheelchair gets stuck in the cracks between the paving stones.