

L.A. Vida

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A new musical

By David Wendell Nelson

Contact:

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CAST OF CHARACTERS  
All Latino Cast

**LUPE PADILLA** - 25 year old Latina female, alto  
**JAKE RUIZ** - 26 year old half-Mexican, half-Caucasian male,  
son of Francisco Ruiz (plant owner), tenor  
**RAFAEL INFANTE** - 24 year old Mexican male, tenor  
**JOSE MARÍA PADILLA** - 17 year old Latin male, Lupe's  
brother, singing/rap, tenor. Always wears a t-shirt with the  
image of Vicente Fernandez. Pop/lock dancer.  
**GABI TORRENTERA** - 45 year old Latina female, Lupe's  
aunt, alto  
**CONCHISE OCHOA** - 27 year Latina female, Gabi's neice, alto  
**NACHO CHAVEZ** - 26 year old Latino male, Conchise's  
boyfriend, baritone. Pop/lock dancer.  
**MR. PADILLA** - 55 year old Mexican male, Lupe's father and  
manager of the meat plant, baritone  
**MRS. PADILLA** - 52 year old Mexican female, Lupe's deceased  
mother, soprano  
**ROSA MEDINA** - 45 year old immigrant Mexican woman, Toni's  
wife, alto  
**ANTONIO MEDINA** - 47 year old immigrant Mexican man, Rosa's  
husband, baritone  
**PINTO** - 25 year old male, gang member, baritone  
**INS AGENT #1** (speaking only)  
**INS AGENT #2** (speaking only)  
**GANG MEMBER #1** (non-speaking)  
**GANG MEMBER #2** (non-speaking)  
**LAWYER #1** (speaking only)  
**LAWYER #2** (speaking only)  
**STUDENT #1** (speaking only)  
**STUDENT #2** (speaking only)  
**STUDENT #3** (speaking only)  
**SLEEPING LUPE:** any female

**COMPANY:** sing/dance  
**PANCHO**-tenor  
**CHUY**-tenor  
**JESÚS**-baritone  
**ELVIA**-soprano  
**CIERRA**-alto  
**XOCHITL** (Xochi)-alto

Combined roles:

**ELVIA:** MRS. PADILLA  
**PINTO:** INS AGENT #1, STUDENT #1  
**NACHO:** INS agent #2  
**ANTONIO:** LAWYER #1  
**CHUY:** LAWYER #2  
**JESÚS:** GANG MEMBER #1  
**PANCHO:** GANG MEMBER #2  
**JAKE:** STUDENT #2  
**RAFAEL:** STUDENT #3  
**LOUDSPEAKER VOICE:** ANYONE

SETTINGS

One act, 12 scenes.

Scene 1-Inside the Basilica de Nuestra Señora de la Soledad in Oaxaca Mexico

Scene 2-Plaza de la Danza, the outdoor performance venue next to the Basílica

Scene 3-Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles at the Padilla family home and Gabi's panadería

Scene 4-The Ruiz meat packing plant in East Los Angeles

Scene 5-Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles at the Padilla family home

Scene 6-The Ruiz meat packing plant in East Los Angeles

Scene 7-Gabi's panadería

Scene 8-The Ruiz meat packing plant in East Los Angeles

Scene 9-Gabi's panadería

Scene 10-The Ruiz meat packing plant in East Los Angeles

Scene 11-The Padilla home in Boyle Heights

Scene 12-St. Mary's church in East Los Angeles and the Padilla home

## PRODUCTION NOTES

The story takes place in present day Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles with occasional flashbacks to a few days ago in Oaxaca, Mexico.

SCENE 1

1

*Present day East Los Angeles. LUPE is dreaming of her recent trip to Oaxaca. On stage there is a single pew, a coffin, and rack of devotional candles burning in a dimly lit church. On stage right is a barely visible bed with a female form lying on her side, back to the audience. It is sleeping LUPE (played by someone other than the real LUPE). MRS. PADILLA'S coffin is barely visible. LUPE, GABI, RAFAEL, (in his traje de charro outfit), JOSÉ MARIA, and MR. PADILLA quietly enter. EVERYONE passes in front of the coffin, deposits a flower, makes the sign of the cross, and says a few words. **Start Cue 1-NOW YOU'RE GONE** here. EVERYONE sits down except LUPE who lights a candle and begins to sing as if her mother were actually there. Sleeping LUPE is still visible.*

LUPE

*(LUPE picks up the candle)*

For you, querida madre mia. We miss you so much.

*LUPE and MRS. PADILLA sing **Cue 1-NOW YOU'RE GONE.***

LUPE (CONT'D)

EVERYDAY, SINCE YOU WENT AWAY  
I SAY A PRAYER, I HOPE YOU CAN HEAR ME  
I SAY A PRAYER, SO YOU'RE ALWAYS NEAR ME

*LUPE lights the candle.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

YOUR WHOLE LIFE LONG, SO KIND AND STRONG  
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO HELD US TOGETHER  
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO LOVES ME FOREVER  
BUT NOW YOU'RE GONE, NOW YOU'RE GONE

*LUPE holds the candle up with a distant look on her face and tears in her eyes.*

*MRS. PADILLA appears as an ethereal figure, dimly lit, and dressed in white. LUPE puts the candle down. SHE hears her mother but does not see her.*

MRS. PADILLA

I HEAR YOU EACH DAY, WHEN YOU COME HERE TO PRAY  
NOW YOU'RE THE ONE TO KEEP US TOGETHER  
I PROMISE TO HELP, I'LL BE HERE FOREVER

*MRS. PADILLA puts her palm on LUPE'S heart.*

MRS. PADILLA (CONT'D)

YOUR FAMILY IS HERE, DON'T LET ANYTHING INTERFERE  
TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER  
'CAUSE I'VE GOT A GOOD FEELING  
THINGS WILL WORK OUT  
IF YOU JUST START BELIEVING

LUPE

LIGHT MY WAY, SHINE EACH DAY  
I'LL BE THE ONE BUT YOU HAVE TO HELP ME  
I'LL BE THE ONE TO KEEP US A FAMILY  
FAMILIA Y FE, FAMILIA Y FE

LUPE (CONT'D)

FAMILIA, FAMILIA, FAMILIA

*LUPE makes the sign of the cross.*

MRS. PADILLA

Mi preciosa Lupita. Que sueñes con los angelitos. Y no te olvides nuestros esperanzas. (My precious little Lupe. May you dream with the little angels. And don't forget our hopes and dreams)

*MRS. PADILLA slowly disappears into the background.*

LUPE

I promise.

*The scene slowly fades to black.*

SCENE 2

2

*In East Los Angeles LUPE is still dreaming of her trip to Oaxaca. The three chairs on stage left remain, but the coffin is removed. A single chair in the middle of the stage is added for RAFAEL. Sleeping LUPE is still visible. RAFAEL comes on stage with his guitar in a solo spot and sits down. RAFAEL is the guitar player for the folklorico band. After his guitar intro, the dancers appear in full light. LUPE, JOSÉ MARIA, GABI, and MR. PADILLA watch the performance from their chairs at the side of the stage. During the performance a teary LUPE hangs her head in sorrow. The Ballet Folklorico de Oaxaca (COMPANY) is dancing on stage. **Cue 2-BALLET FOLKLORICO.** After the ballet concludes, RAFAEL puts his guitar down and rushes to embrace LUPE passionately. DANCERS leave the stage.*

RAFAEL

*(to LUPE)*

Amorcito!

*LUPE can't respond. LUPE and RAFAEL slowly separate. HE takes HER by the hands. GABI, MR. PADILLA, and JOSÉ MARIA all gather around RAFAEL.*

RAFAEL (CONT'D)

*(to LUPE)*

Thanks for coming. I hope it helped.

*LUPE can only nod.*

RAFAEL (CONT'D)

*(to MR. PADILLA)*

My condolences Mr. Padilla. She was a wonderful lady.

MR. PADILLA

Thanks Rafael. She loved the ballet. It's a wonderful memory. We appreciate the invitation.

*GABI gently takes both JOSÉ MARIA and MR. PADILLA by the arm and begins to lead them offstage.*

GABI

*(with concern)*

Come on, let's give these two some space.

*GABI, JOSÉ MARIA, and MR. PADILLA leave the stage.*

RAFAEL

I'm so sorry about your mom. I can hardly believe it.

LUPE

*(whispering)*

Me too.

RAFAEL

When do you go back to L.A.?

LUPE

Tomorrow.

RAFAEL

*(pause, softly)*

I have some news. I'll be back in L.A. in November with the ballet tour.

*LUPE dries her tears but can't muster much enthusiasm.*

LUPE

Great. Just in time for Dia de Los Muertos.

*RAFAEL nods and then pauses for a moment and becomes more serious.*

RAFAEL

You know, there's something I need to say.

LUPE

To me?

RAFAEL

Solamente para ti. (Just for you)



*RAFAEL picks up his guitar. HE and LUPE  
sing Cue 3-PARA SIEMPRE.*

RAFAEL (CONT'D)

BEFORE YOU HAVE TO GO  
THERE'S SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW, AMORCITO  
I HOPE THAT WHAT I SAY  
WILL MAKE YOU WANT TO STAY GUADALUPE  
IF YOU STAY HERE WITH ME  
I PROMISE IT WILL BE  
A LOVE SO ENDLESSLY, PARA SIEMPRE  
IF I COULD MAKE YOU MINE  
I KNOW WHAT WE WOULD FIND  
A LOVE THAT LASTS ALL TIME, FOREVER

LUPE

YOU ALREADY KNOW  
THAT I DON'T WANT TO GO, 'CAUSE I LOVE YOU  
I DREAM OF YOU AND ME  
TO LOVE UNSELFISHLY, IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE  
SO DON'T ASK ME TO STAY  
'CAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT I'LL HAVE TO SAY  
THERE'S SOMETHING IN MY WAY, AMORCITO  
THEY SAY THAT LOVE IS BLIND  
IT'S TRUE BUT NOT THIS TIME  
I SEE THEM IN MY MIND, MI FAMILIA

RAFAEL/LUPE

YOU ALREADY KNOW  
THAT I LOVE YOU SO, AMORCITO  
I DREAM OF YOU AND ME  
TOGETHER ENDLESSLY, PARA SIEMPRE

LUPE

I WISH I COULD STAY  
BUT FOR NOW I HAVE TO SAY  
THAT THERE MAY COME A DAY, WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER  
SO DON'T ASK ME TO CHOOSE  
'CAUSE EITHER WAY I LOSE  
SO FOR NOW I MUST REFUSE, MI RAFFA

RAFAEL

PARA SIEMPRE?

PLEASE DON'T ASK ME  
LUPE

PARA SIEMPRE?  
RAFAEL

DON'T YOU ASK ME  
LUPE

PARA SIEMPRE?  
RAFAEL

*LUPE just shakes her head.*

PARA SIEMPRE?  
RAFAEL (CONT ' D)

LUPE  
*(In a sad, tearful voice)*  
It's only a dream.

RAFAEL  
*(tenderly)*  
Stay here. With me.

*LUPE can only shake her head.*

RAFAEL (CONT ' D)  
You said you loved me.

LUPE  
It's not that simple.

RAFAEL  
*(a little annoyed)*  
What about us? You said yes but we haven't even set a date yet. Aren't we engaged?

LUPE  
I can't leave my family now. Don't ask me to do that.

RAFAEL  
If you really loved me, you'd stay.

LUPE  
That's not fair. Don't say that. What about what I want?

*LUPE separates from RAFAEL, sits down in a chair, and puts her head in her hands in frustration. GABI returns to the stage and gathers up both RAFAEL and LUPE.*

GABI

Come on you two, we're going to be late.

*Scene ends and fades to black.*

SCENE 3

3

*We now move to the Boyle Heights Padilla house in the early morning of the present day. There is a small bedroom adjacent to the kitchen. In the darkness before the lights come up, the sleeping LUPE is replaced by the real LUPE. The lights gradually come up. LUPE is in bed and awakens slowly, still lost in her dream of Oaxaca. The house is an aging 1920s tract home. LUPE sits up in bed with a wistful look on her face. SHE gets dressed for work in her waitress uniform. JOSÉ MARIA knocks on her bedroom door. HE is wearing a T-shirt with a picture of Vicente Fernandez on it. JOSÉ MARIA, LUPE, and MR. PADILLA sing **Cue 4-GOOD MORNING LUPE No. 1.***

JOSÉ MARIA

LUPE, GUADALUPE, LUPE, GUADALUPE

MR. PADILLA

DON'T KNOCK ON THE DOOR  
GIVE HER A FEW MINUTES MORE

JOSÉ MARIA

I THINK WE CAN GUESS WHAT SHE'S DREAMING ABOUT  
THAT'S NOT VERY HARD TO DO

MR. PADILLA

IN DREAMS SHE CAN GO ANYWHERE  
ESCAPE HER SORROW AND CARE

*LUPE comes out of the bedroom to the kitchen.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

LUPE

LUPE

Morning Papi.

MR. PADILLA

Mi corazón.

GUADALUPE

JOSÉ MARIA

Hermanito!

LUPE

*LUPE hugs JOSÉ MARIA.*

MR. PADILLA

HOW DID YOU SLEEP?

LUPE

FINE, YOU WANT SOMETHING TO EAT?

JOSÉ MARIA

I do!

MR. PADILLA

THAT'S OKAY.  
I'LL STOP AT GABI'S ON MY WAY

JOSÉ MARIA

LUPE ARE THERE ANY TAMALES FOR ME?

LUPE

I THINK I CAN FIND A FEW

MR. PADILLA

WALK YOUR SISTER TO WORK.

JOSÉ MARIA

Sure.

LUPE  
*(referring to JM's Vicente Fernandez shirt)*  
DON'T WEAR THAT SAME OLD SHIRT

JOSÉ MARIA

But it's Chente!

MR. PADILLA

ONE THING MORE  
SOMETHING FOR NUESTRO SEÑOR  
LUPE CAN YOU STOP BY ST. MARY'S TODAY  
LIGHT A CANDLE FOR YOUR MOM

LUPE

Si si.

I REMEMBER WHAT SHE WOULD SAY  
NO TE OLVIDES FAMILIA Y FE

MR. PADILLA

She was right.

I BETTER BE ON MY WAY  
SEE YOU AT THE END OF THE DAY

LUPE

*(with concern)*

You okay Papi?

*MR. PADILLA can only manage a rueful smile.*

MR. PADILLA

You look just like your sweet mother.

LUPE

Que le vaya bien Papi.

*MR. PADILLA leaves the stage.*

JOSÉ MARIA

I bet you were dreaming about Oaxaca last night. And someone that plays guitar.

LUPE

*(teasing)*

Oh really? Like who?

JOSÉ MARIA

*(teasing)*

Uh-huh. Like your fiancé maybe?

LUPE

*(playfully)*

Aren't you late for school?

JOSÉ MARIA

You know you love me!

LUPE

*(laughing)*

Okay, okay! How old is that Chente shirt anyway?

*LUPE brings a plate of food to JOSÉ MARIA at the table. HE eats quickly.*

JOSÉ MARIA

Gracias, Lupita!

LUPE

You gonna work at the plant after school?

JOSÉ MARIA

Like I have a choice. We need the money.

LUPE DO YOU THINK ABOUT MOMMY A LOT?

LUPE

OF COURSE I MISS HER EVERY DAY

JOSÉ MARIA

Yo se.

I FEEL LIKE I'M MAD ALL THE TIME

TO LIVE THIS WAY IS SUCH AN UPHILL CLIMB

*The kitchen dissolves into the street, consisting of GABI'S panadería, St. Mary's Church, and Bishop Mora Salesian High School. JOSÉ MARIA finishes his food, then stands and starts to walk with LUPE.*

LUPE

That's true.

BUT DON'T FORGET ALL THAT WE STILL HAVE

WE'RE STILL A FAMILY YOU ME AND DAD

JOSÉ MARIA

It's not all that easy with the vato fools. At school. On the street.

LUPE

You remember what Mom used to say. Familia y fe. That's all you need.

JOSÉ MARIA

I know, I know. But that's easier said than done. Especially in this part of town.

*PINTO appears with two of his GANG MEMBERS.*

*THEY block LUPE and JOSÉ MARIA'S way.  
THEY sing Cue 5-PINTO No.1.*

JOSÉ MARIA (CONT'D)

*(to Lupe)*

Like these clowns.

LUPE

It's your old friend.

JOSÉ MARIA

Not any more.

PINTO

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

¡Qué onda, güey!

WANNA MAKE SOME MONEY? NEED A LITTLE CASH?  
I CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN, YOU JUST GOTTA ASK

LUPE

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

Watch this.

*LUPE goes over to PINTO seductively and  
begins to rap in a provocative style.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

HEY PINTO, IS THAT YOUR RIDE?  
SHOW ME WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE ON THE INSIDE?

PINTO

OOO, I'D BE GLAD TO TAKE YOU ANYWHERE AT ALL  
STICK WITH ME WE CAN STEAL SHIT AT THE MALL

*LUPE comes right up to PINTO and puts  
her finger inside his belt and pulls him  
closer.*

LUPE

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH SUCH A TINY LIMOUSINE?

*LUPE looks sadly at PINTO'S crotch.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

WHY DON'T YOU CALL ME WHEN YOU GET A FULL SIZE MAN MACHINE



*LUPE pushes PINTO away and walks away  
in disgust.*

PINTO

Ooo! Hijole.

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

YOUR SISTER'S SUCH A TEASE, I'LL PLAY THE FOOL

JOSÉ MARIA

JUST STAY AWAY FROM HER, YOU FUCKIN' TOOL

PINTO

LOSE THE ATTITUDE MY LITTLE DUDE  
WANNA EARN SOME MONEY? I GOT A JOB FOR YOU

LUPE

LEAVE US ALONE MISTER PINCHE CABRÓN

PINTO

ANYTHING YOU SAY, BUT DON'T GET IN MY WAY

*LUPE and JOSÉ MARIA try to get by  
PINTO and the two GANGBANGERS but  
they can't.*

LUPE

*(annoyed)*

Come on.

PINTO

YOU CALL THIS LIVIN'  
YOU'RE STUCK IN HELL  
YOU SHOULD HANG  
WITH CREATIVE CLIENTELE

*PINTO points to himself.*

PINTO (CONT'D)

WORK WITH ME A LITTLE  
FOR MONETARY GAIN  
YOU COULD HELP YOUR FAMILY  
HELP THEM EASE THE PAIN

LUPE

You don't know anything about us, pendejo.

PINTO

*(sarcastically)*

Me? Pendejo? I thought we were still friends.

JOSÉ MARIA

That was a long time ago. Out of the way dude.

*PINTO and his two GANG MEMBERS block their way for a few moments and then step aside and let THEM pass. PINTO opens his arms wide as if to invite them to pass by.*

PINTO

Have a nice day.

*PINTO and GANG MEMBERS then leave the stage. LUPE and JOSÉ MARIA continue walking to the high school.*

LUPE

It's sad he's turned into such a fool. You two used to be real close.

JOSÉ MARIA

Yeah. I can't believe Dad lets him work at the plant.

*LUPE just shakes her head.*

LUPE

After what happened to his dad, it was the right thing to do.

*LUPE and JOSÉ MARIA arrive at the high school.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

Stop by Gabi's on your way home. I'll save you some pan dulce.

*JOSÉ MARIA just nods. LUPE gives HIM a big hug. HE enters the high school gate and disappears. LUPE heads back down the street to Gabi's panadería. It is her first day back to work since the Oaxaca trip. SHE enters the panadería.*

*It is early and ROSA, ANTONIO, and COMPANY (ELVIA, XOCHI, CIERRA, PANCHO, CHUY, JESÚS) are seated at the tables chatting softly. NACHO and CONCHISE enter the stage dressed in white aprons. GABI remains in the kitchen and observes from there. While GABI, LUPE, CONCHISE, and NACHO visit, JOSÉ MARIA is violently attacked by three HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (STUDENTS #1, #2, and #3) on the other side of the stage in dim light. HIS attack takes place in silence. JOSÉ MARIA puts up a good fight but THEY take all HIS money.*

It's Lupe!  
CONCHISE

She's back!  
NACHO

*NACHO and CONCHISE hug LUPE.*

How are you Lupita?  
CONCHISE  
*(with concern)*

Okay, I guess.  
LUPE  
*(sadly)*

Everything go alright?  
NACHO

Yeah. She's buried right next to grandma at Santo Domingo.  
LUPE

But she's so far away now.  
CONCHISE

It's where she grew up. She wanted to be there. I promised her.  
LUPE

*LUPE looks down at the ground and whispers. GABI comes out of the kitchen.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

I promised her a lot of things.

*GABI puts her arm around LUPE.*

GABI

I know. She had big dreams for you.

LUPE

*(exasperated)*

They're my dreams too. Like college.

GABI

You just have to believe.

LUPE

*(despondent)*

Yeah, I believe there's no hope.

GABI

Have a little faith mija. Qué te dijo tu mamá?

LUPE

I know, I know. Familia y fe.

GABI

Trust your tia.

CONCHISE

And your cousin.

NACHO

And your cook!

LUPE

Thanks guys.

NACHO

How's your dad holding up?

LUPE

Hard to say. He barely talks now.

GABI

Don't worry, we'll bring him around.

LUPE

*(sadly)*

I hope so.

*LUPE tries to shake off her sadness.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

So. What about you guys? What did I miss?

CONCHISE

*(trying to get some juicy gossip)*

Not so fast girlfriend. Did you see Rafael?

LUPE

*(softly)*

Yeah.

GABI

*(under her breath to CONCHISE, with concern)*

Bad idea. She's had a rough week.

CONCHISE

Yeah what girlfriend? Dish!

NACHO

Hey, leave her alone.

CONCHISE

Inquiring minds want to know!

NACHO

No seas metiche! (busybody)

CONCHISE

Me? Señor mandón! (bossy)

NACHO

I think your nopales are burning.

CONCHISE

Chale! (Hell no!)

*CONCHISE turns to LUPE and gently asks.*

CONCHISE (CONT'D)

So how is the macho mariachi? I promise not to tell.

Oh yeah! NACHO

I saw him a lot. LUPE

I knew it! Musicians are so hot! CONCHISE

What about cooks? NACHO

So what did you guys do? (suggestively) CONCHISE

Conchise! Enough already! GABI

Rafael and I just hung out. LUPE

Oaxaca is so romantic. Hijole! Me puedo imaginar. (practically swooning) CONCHISE

It wasn't exactly a vacation. And, there was some stuff too with Rafael. LUPE

Stuff? Come on Lupita, your cousin wants to know all about... CONCHISE

*CONCHISE immediately stops talking as JOSÉ MARIA walks into the panadería. EVERYONE looks at JOSÉ MARIA. HE is bruised, disheveled, and obviously very angry.*

Hermanito! What happened? LUPE

I had a little trouble at school. JOSÉ MARIA

What kind of trouble? LUPE

JOSÉ MARIA

I got jumped. Those assholes took all my money.

*GABI comes over to inspect JOSÉ MARIA.*

GABI

You okay?

JOSÉ MARIA

Yeah, but I made them work for it.

GABI

Let me see.

*GABI looks at JOSÉ MARIA'S face. JOSÉ MARIA turns away. JOSÉ MARIA, LUPE, COMPANY, GABI, NACHO, and CONCHISE all sing/rap Cue 6-YA NO TENGO NADA.*

JOSÉ MARIA

IT'S NOT ENOUGH, WITH ALL THIS LAME ASS STUFF  
YOU HAVE TO DEAL WITH DAY TO DAY  
THE SHIT AT SCHOOL, AND ALL THOSE VATO FOOLS  
"QUÉ ONDA, GÜEY?" (HOW'S IT GOIN' DUDE)

*GABI and LUPE come over to JOSÉ MARIA to see if he is okay.*

LUPE

Let's see.

*LUPE tries to inspect him but he walks away.*

JOSÉ MARIA

Really. I'm okay. Just pissed.

THEY DEALIN' DEATH, WITH COKE AND WEED AND METH  
IT'S HARD TO STAY OUT OF JAIL  
YOU WANT A JOB, IT'S ONLY GANGS AND MOBS  
IT'S LIKE THEY WANT YOU TO FAIL  
YOU GET A LITTLE  
THEY TAKE A LOT  
SO GET CREATIVE  
JUST DON'T GET CAUGHT  
TRY TO KILL THE PAIN

WITH SMOKE AND BOOZE  
WHEN YOU GOT NOTHIN'  
YOU GOT NOTHING TO LOSE

LUPE  
YOU HAVE A FAMILY, YOU, ME, AND DAD  
AND CRAZY AUNT GABI

GABI  
That's right!

LUPE  
NOW THAT'S NOT SO BAD

JOSÉ MARIA  
Yeah, yeah.

LUPE  
WE HAVE EACH OTHER AND HEARTS FULL OF LOVE  
THERE'S NOTHING THIS FAMILY CAN'T RISE ABOVE

JOSÉ MARIA  
BUT LOOK AROUND US, THE WAY WE HAVE TO LIVE  
IT MAKES ME ANGRY ALL THE TIME  
PINTO PIMPS ME, WE LIVE IN POVERTY  
IT'S SUCH AN UPHILL CLIMB  
YOU GET A LITTLE  
IT COSTS A LOT  
IT'S ALWAYS WAY MORE  
THAN WHAT YOU GOT  
BETWEEN LA MIGRA AND ALL THE COPS  
IT'S LIKE A WAR ZONE  
THAT NEVER STOPS

LUPE  
REMEMBER WHAT MOMMY ALWAYS WOULD SAY?  
WHEN YOU CAME HOME ANGRY  
WHEN YOU HAD A BAD DAY  
IT DOESN'T MATTER, YOU'LL BE OKAY  
YOU NEED ONLY TWO THINGS  
FAMILIA Y FE

JOSÉ MARIA  
That's about all I do have!



NACHO

Come on dude.

*NACHO tries to cheer JOSÉ MARIA up by doing a pop and lock move.*

NACHO (CONT'D)

Check this.

*NACHO does a pop and lock move but JOSÉ MARIA doesn't respond.*

NACHO (CONT'D)

So?

*NACHO does another pop and lock move and JOSÉ MARIA finally starts to laugh and smile a little.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(laughing slightly)*

You're pathetic homes!

JOSÉ MARIA	COMPANY-MEN/NACHO	LUPE
I REMEMBER	YA NO TENGO	
WHAT SHE USED TO SAY	NADA Y LA	
BUT IT'S NOT THAT EASY	LUCHA NEVER	
REMEMBER THIS IS EAST L.A.	STOPS	
IT'S A DAILY BATTLE	YA NO TENGO	FAMILIA
WITH THE VATO FOOLS	NADA CON LA	
ESTOY ENOJADO	MIGRA AND	Y FE
EVERY DAY AT SCHOOL	THE COPS	
WE GOT SO LITTLE	YA NO TENGO	FAMILIA
THEY TAKE A LOT	NADA Y LA	
MIGHT AS WELL GET WASTED	LUCHA NEVER	Y FE
THERE'S ALWAYS BOOZE AND POT	STOPS	
I DON'T REALLY MEAN THAT	YA NO TENGO	FAMILIA
I JUST FORGOT	NADA CON LA	
MOM ALWAYS SAID	MIGRA AND	Y FE
DON'T BE WHO YOU'RE NOT	THE COPS	

COMPANY-MEN/NACHO	LUPE
YA NO TENGO NADA Y	
LA LUCHA NEVER STOPS	
YA NO TENGO NADA CON	FAMILIA Y FE

LA MIGRA AND THE COPS  
 YA NO TENGO NADA Y  
 LA LUCHA NEVER STOPS  
 YA NO TENGO NADA CON  
 LA MIGRA AND THE COPS

FAMILIA Y FE

FAMILIA Y FE

JOSÉ MARIA

WE GOT EACH OTHER  
 I GUESS IT'S TRUE  
 IT'S NEVER EASY  
 LIVIN' HERE THE WAY WE DO  
 I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL  
 FOR WHAT I GOT  
 I REALLY AM  
 YOU JUST THINK I'M NOT  
 COULD BE WORSE  
 AT LEAST I'M FREE  
 FREE TO GET MY ASS KICKED  
 BY VATOS STONED ON PCP  
 I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING  
 FAMILY IS THE KEY  
 NO VOY A OLVIDARLO  
 CLARO QUE SI

JOSÉ MARIA (CONT'D)

I GUESS IT'S TRUE  
 IT'S NEVER EASY  
 LIVIN' HERE THE WAY WE DO  
 I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL  
 FOR WHAT I GOT  
 I REALLY AM  
 YOU JUST THINK I'M NOT  
 I WOULD NEVER MAKE IT  
 THROUGH THE DISARRAY  
 CUZ THERE'S ONLY TWO THINGS  
 MI FAMILIA Y MI FE  
 I WOULD NEVER MAKE IT  
 THROUGH THE DISARRAY  
 CUZ THERE'S ONLY TWO THINGS  
 CUZ THERE'S ONLY TWO THINGS  
 MI FAMILIA Y MI FE  
 MI FAMILIA Y MI FE  
 MI FAMILIA Y MI FE  
 MI FAMILIA Y MI FE

LUPE/GABI (CONT'D)

YOU'VE GOT YOUR FAMILY  
 WE'RE NOT SO BAD  
  
 AND NACHO AND CONCHISE  
  
 WHEN YOU'RE FEELIN' MAD  
  
 IT DOESN'T MATTER  
  
 YOU'LL BE OKAY  
  
 REMEMBER THOSE TWO THINGS  
  
 FAMILIA Y FE  
  
 REMEMBER THOSE TWO THINGS  
 REMEMBER THOSE TWO THINGS  
 REMEMBER THOSE TWO THINGS  
 REMEMBER THOSE TWO THINGS

LUPE

*(tenderly)*

Ya tu sabes hermanito.

JOSÉ MARIA

Okay, I get the idea. I'm going to the plant. And see Dad.

*LUPE hugs JOSÉ MARIA.*

GABI

Let me get you something to eat. Pan dulce?

JOSÉ MARIA

Si,si!

*GABI goes to the kitchen and gets the pan dulce.*

NACHO

*(to CONCHISE quietly)*

Let's have some fun with veggie boy!

*JOSÉ MARIA, the men from the COMPANY, LUPE, GABI, CONCHISE, and NACHO rap Cue 7-WHAT'S THE BEEF?*

CONCHISE

*(to NACHO)*

Leave him alone.

NACHO

You want some menudo?

JOSÉ MARIA

Dude, I work in a meat plant. You know what's in that?

NACHO

Yeah. Peppers, garlic, cilantro.

JOSÉ MARIA

*(almost laughing)*

You don't want to know.

SEE ALL THAT PORK AND BEEF SITTING ON THE TABLE  
GO AHEAD AND READ THE STUFF THAT'S ON THE LABEL

NACHO  
NOT TO WORRY, IT'S FDA

JOSÉ MARIA  
YOU BELIEVE THAT?

NACHO  
I'M SURE IT'S GOT TO BE OKAY

JOSÉ MARIA  
NITRATES, SORBATES, PHOSPHATES, I REST MY CASE

NACHO  
MENUDO, PUERCO, CONEJO, YOU LAME-O

JOSÉ MARIA  
NITRATES, SORBATES, PHOSPHATES, IN YOUR FACE

NACHO  
MENUDO, PUERCO, CONEJO, EVEN BUFFALO. MEAT!

JOSÉ MARIA  
NO THANKS

NACHO  
WHAT'S THE BEEF?

JOSÉ MARIA  
YOU WANNA KNOW?

NACHO  
YEAH!

JOSÉ MARIA  
MEAT!

NACHO  
THAT'S RIGHT

JOSÉ MARIA  
IT'S NOTHIN' BUT GRIEF

NACHO  
NOT SO. MEAT!

GOTTA PASS JOSÉ MARIA

WHAT'S THE BEEF? NACHO

I GOTTA SAY, MEAT! JOSÉ MARIA

LOVE IT NACHO

I CAN'T GET NO RELIEF JOSÉ MARIA

NO WAY. VEAL? NACHO

IN A CAGE? JOSÉ MARIA

REALLY? DON'T YOU LIKE THE TASTE? NACHO

NO! I JUST CAN'T EAT IT! JOSÉ MARIA

WHY? NACHO

CUZ IT'S GOT A FACE! JOSÉ MARIA

SO? NACHO

THINK ABOUT IT HOMES JOSÉ MARIA

I AM NACHO

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT JOSÉ MARIA

NACHO  
SO WHAT?

JOSÉ MARIA  
COME AND SEE THE PLANT

NACHO  
OKAY

JOSÉ MARIA  
YOU'LL NEVER TOUCH A PIECE MEAT

*GABI comes back from the kitchen with the pan dulce.*

COMPANY-MEN  
CARNE AL CARBÓN BARBACOA (BARBECUED MEAT)

JOSÉ MARIA  
*(to NACHO)*  
So my friend, are you really gonna eat that shit?

COMPANY-MEN  
ME ENCANTA LA COMIDA MEXICANA (I LOVE MEXICAN FOOD)

NACHO  
Yeah, and so are a lot of your sister's customers!

JOSÉ MARIA  
Animals are my friends. I don't eat my friends.

NACHO  
*(teasing)*  
Yeah, but you'll carve them up and put them in a package!

COMPANY-MEN  
CARNE AL PASTOR A LA PARILLA (MEAT ON THE GRILL)

GABI  
*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*  
Here's something to keep you going.

*GABI hands JOSÉ MARIA a bag full of pan dulce.*

JOSÉ MARIA

Thanks Gabi.

LUPE

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

See you tonight. And I'm not making anything with meat!

COMPANY-MEN

QUE LASTIMA JOSÉ MARIA (SO SORRY JOSÉ MARIA)

JOSÉ MARIA

Thanks sis.

NACHO

So, check this out.

*NACHO proudly delivers the next rap refrain.*

NACHO (CONT'D)

POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO, CONEJO, FAJITA, PUERCO!

COMPANY-MEN

CARNE AL CARBÓN BARBACOA

JOSÉ MARIA

*(pretending to be ill)*

I GOTTA GO

COMPANY-MEN

ME ENCANTA LA COMIDA MEXICANA

NACHO

POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO, CONEJO, FAJITA, PUERCO!

*JOSÉ MARIA puts a finger to his mouth as if to vomit.*

JOSÉ MARIA

I'M GONNA BLOW

COMPANY-MEN

CARNE AL PASTOR A LA PARILLA

*JOSÉ MARIA starts to leave the stage.*

NACHO  
POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO,  
CONEJO, FAJITA, PUERCO, SABROSO

COMPANY-MEN  
QUE LASTIMA JOSÉ MARIA

*CONCHISE comes over to NACHO with her  
hands on her hips, glaring.*

NACHO  
POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO  
CONEJO, FAJITA, PUERCO, SABROSO  
POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO  
CONEJO, FAJITA, PUERCO, SABROSO  
POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO  
CONEJO, FAJITA, PUERCO, PERRO?

CONCHISE  
Perro? You're a sick man Nacho. Good thing I love you.

NACHO  
What about fish?

*Laughter. Fade to black.*



SCENE 4

4

*A little later on the same day. The scene is the Ruiz meat processing plant in East Los Angeles. It is a dirty, noisy, and dangerous place. There is a small office above the stage on stage left and a conveyor belt where the workers do line work. There are a few small lockers on stage right. The workers (COMPANY, ROSA, ANTONIO, PINTO, MR. PADILLA) all wear work jumpsuits. JOSÉ MARIA walks in carrying his bag of pan dulce.*

MR. PADILLA

Mijo, why so early? Qué pasó?

*JOSÉ MARIA doesn't respond. MR. PADILLA inspects JOSÉ MARIA'S face.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

*(with concern)*

What happened to your face?

*JOSÉ MARIA turns away.*

JOSÉ MARIA

Ask Pinto.

MR. PADILLA

*(concerned)*

What do you mean?

*Points to PINTO.*

JOSÉ MARIA

Nothing, but that dude's a loose cannon. And he hassles Lupe.

*JOSÉ MARIA starts to walk over to PINTO as if to confront him. MR. PADILLA stops him.*

MR. PADILLA

*(thinking and responding slowly)*

I'll deal with him.

JOSÉ MARIA

And besides, that fool is always high. He's gonna get hurt in here.

*MR. PADILLA goes over to a locker and gets PINTO'S clothes. HE marches over to PINTO and grabs his shoulder and spins him around. The workers watch as they continue working.*

PINTO

*(annoyed and with an attitude)*

Hey!

MR. PADILLA

Why are you harassing my family?

PINTO

I harass nobody.

MR. PADILLA

That's not what I hear.

PINTO

Oh, like from your idiot son?

*MR. PADILLA, JOSÉ MARIA, and PINTO sing/rap Cue 8-PINTO GETS FIRED.*

MR. PADILLA

I cut you a serious break when I gave you this job. This is how you repay me?

PINTO

*(with attitude)*

Am I supposed to be grateful? This place wasted my old man, remember?

MR. PADILLA

We all remember. And we've all lost someone. I understand how you feel.

PINTO

*(with attitude)*

Really? Fuck off.

MR. PADILLA

So that's how it is?

PINTO

*(challenging him)*

That's right. Better be careful man.

MR. PADILLA

YOU GOT TWO MINUTES, HERE'S ALL YOUR STUFF

*MR. PADILLA throws PINTO'S clothes in HIS face.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

NOW GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE

PINTO

Say what?

MR. PADILLA

You're done fool!

LEAVE MY FAMILY ALONE YOU GANGBANGIN' CABRÓN  
DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?

*JOSÉ MARIA comes over to MR. PADILLA and PINTO. MR. PADILLA motions for PANCHO and JESÚS to leave their workstations and come over to him.*

PINTO

I WOULDN'T DO THIS, DON'T PISS ME OFF  
DON'T FORGET WHO I AM  
I GOT FRIENDS OF MY OWN  
THESE DUDES ARE BAD TO THE BONE  
DON'T BE CRAZY OLD MAN

MR. PADILLA

Don't threaten me.

I TOOK A CHANCE, GAVE YOU THIS JOB  
IT WAS ALL UP TO YOU  
IF YOU HASSLE MY SON, THERE'LL BE NOWHERE TO RUN  
IT'S THE LAST THING YOU'LL DO

PINTO

Te arrepentirás!

MR. PADILLA

Muévete.

*MR. PADILLA motions PINTO to leave.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

Pancho. Jesús. Make sure Mr. Malinche here leaves the building.

*PANCHO and JESÚS try to take PINTO by the arms but PINTO fights them off and whips out a knife. PANCHO and JESÚS back off of PINTO in fear. PINTO starts to move off stage.*

PINTO

*(to JESÚS)*

Hey, back off Jack! If you know what's good for you. Sácate güey! (Get outta here dude)

*PINTO waves the knife at PANCHO and JESÚS.*

PINTO (CONT'D)

DON'T BE A FOOL LIKE YOUR IDIOT SON  
BETTER LISTEN UP JACK  
I MEAN WHAT I SAY, THERE'LL BE HELL TO PAY  
BETTER WATCH YOUR BACK

*PINTO backs away and starts to leave the stage.*

PINTO (CONT'D)

I don't need you guys! This place is a major health hazard. I'm calling la migra. They'll bust this shit hole!

JOSÉ MARIA

*(sarcastically)*

You can always steal shit at the mall.

*(pause)*

Have a nice day!

*JOSÉ MARIA bows just like PINTO did earlier in the day. MR. PADILLA reprimands JOSÉ MARIA.*

MR. PADILLA

Ya basta!

*PINTO leaves the stage and gives THEM the finger as HE goes. Over the plant loudspeaker we hear a message.*

LOUDSPEAKER

Señor Padilla please come to the office. Señor Padilla, ahora mismo.

*MR. PADILLA goes upstairs to the office and disappears inside. PANCHO and JESÚS go back to their work stations. JOSÉ MARIA goes over to ROSA.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to ROSA, referring to the loudspeaker message)*

Que es eso?

ROSA

No se. Vamos a ver.

JOSÉ MARIA

*(with attitude)*

Ya se fue Pinto.

ROSA

*(exasperated)*

Ay, pobrecito.

*MR. PADILLA comes out of the office. His face shows his surprise. HE stops at the top of the stairs.*

MR. PADILLA

*(calling to him across the room)*

José Maria. José Maria.

*JOSÉ MARIA comes up the stairs. MR. PADILLA whispers something to JOSÉ MARIA. JOSÉ MARIA runs down the stairs to the workers. JOSÉ MARIA motions to the workers to gather round.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to the workers)*

Shut it down. I can't hear.

*The factory noise dies down. The workers gather round. HE says something quietly to the workers that we can't hear. Some gasp in surprise and concern. THEY immediately start to talk animatedly in Spanish. MR. PADILLA sings, ELVIA, XOCHITL, JESÚS, CHUY, and ROSA speak **Cue 9-ANNOUNCEMENT**. MR. PADILLA sings from half way down the stairs. Workers are at the bottom of the stairs.*

What does that mean? JESÚS

No me diga! Que lástima. Cuando? ROSA

Ayer. CHUY

*MR. PADILLA comes half way down the stairs and calls to the workers.*

People. People. Over here please. MR. PADILLA

*The workers gather around the bottom of the stairs.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)  
GATHER ROUND EVERYONE, I HAVE SOME NEWS  
IT AFFECTS EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM  
I'M SORRY TO SAY, THAT AFTER TODAY  
THINGS HAVE TO CHANGE ALL TOO SOON

*WORKERS start to grumble.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)  
MOST OF YOU KNOW THAT THE OWNER  
WAS HERE AT THE PLANT EVERYDAY  
YOU SHOULD ALL KNOW THAT ONE DAY AGO  
SEÑOR RUIZ JUST PASSED AWAY

*Some of WORKERS gasp. The following conversation takes place while the other workers talk quietly in Spanish.*

ELVIA

Creo que tenía un hijo.

XOCHITL

I remember him. He used to work here.

CHUY

So do I. He's just another fresa.

JESÚS

So does that make the son dude the new owner?

CHUY

His father was a total pendejo. He couldn't even speak Spanish.

ROSA

Que vamos a hacer? (What will we do?)

*MR. PADILLA motions for the workers to settle down.*

MR. PADILLA

BEFORE WE ALL HERE START TO PANIC  
THERE IS ONE PIECE OF GOOD NEWS  
RUIZ HAD A SON NOW JAKE IS THE ONE  
IT'S ALL UP TO HIM WHAT TO DO

Some of you may remember Jake. He used to work summers here as a boy. As Ruiz' only heir, this plant is now his. Jake and his father had a falling out years ago and we don't know his whereabouts. Or if he even wants this plant.

ALL THAT WE KNOW IS OUR FUTURE  
AND JOBS ARE UP IN THE AIR  
IF JAKE EVER SHOWS I'LL LET YOU KNOW  
WITHOUT HIM WE DON'T HAVE A PRAYER

*More low chattering by the workers.*

PANCHO

We never had prayer anyway.

JESÚS

*(exasperated)*

Great. Another Ruiz.

*Fade to black.*

SCENE 5

5

*The next day. Again, there is a single bed with the dimly lit sleeping LUPE. SHE is dreaming of a visit from RAFAEL about nine months ago. The lights come up on the dining room table in the PADILLA house with LUPE, RAFAEL (in his mariachi outfit), MRS. PADILLA, MR. PADILLA, CONCHISE, NACHO, ROSA, ANTONIO, GABI, PANCHITO, CHUY, JESÚS, ELVIA, XOCHI, JOSÉ MARIA, and CIERRA all seated and chatting softly in Spanish. RAFAEL gets up from the table and motions for LUPE to follow. THEY move to the edge of the stage and talk animatedly.*

RAFAEL

So, what do you think? I've already talked to your dad. Should we do it now?

*LUPE shrugs.*

LUPE

I'm the only other girl in the family. And, you know, it's gonna be hard on mom.

RAFAEL

You're not exactly a child anymore.

LUPE

If we're gonna do this...

*RAFAEL interrupts.*

RAFAEL

If?

LUPE

*(more forcefully now)*

If we're going to do this, I'm still going to college and I'll need to come back here at least three times a year. At least.

RAFAEL

Or they could come to Oaxaca.



LUPE

It's not the same. I grew up here. My family's history is here.

*(pause, with concern)*

Are we really ready to do this?

*RAFAEL takes LUPE'S hand and looks into her eyes and nods.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

Are we agreed then?

RAFAEL

Seguro amorcito.

*RAFAEL and LUPE walk back over to the table. LUPE whispers something to her father. LUPE and RAFAEL remain standing while everyone else continues to sit. MR. PADILLA stands and begins to tap on his glass with a spoon.*

MR. PADILLA

Everyone! Everyone please!

*Everyone becomes quiet.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

Most of you here know Rafael. He's visiting us from Oaxaca.

*Everyone politely claps and cheers.*

PANCHO

Hey, hey, it's El Rey!

CHUY

You look just like Chente dude!

*RAFAEL graciously bows.*

MR. PADILLA

Okay, okay you two. Rafael has a little announcement.

*MR. PADILLA sits down. RAFAEL takes LUPE'S hand.*

MRS. PADILLA

*(to MR. PADILLA, concerned)*

José, what are you talking about?

RAFAEL

Estimados. I've known most of you for a long time, ever since the ballet started coming to L.A. Lupe and I are so glad you are all here today, especially Mr. and Mrs. Padilla.

*MRS. PADILLA is getting nervous as she begins to understand the nature of RAFAEL'S announcement. SHE puts her hands to her face in concern. RAFAEL pauses dramatically.*

RAFAEL (CONT'D)

Lupe and I are engaged.

*EVERYONE cheers. MRS. PADILLA looks questioningly at LUPE. Everyone stands up, except MRS. PADILLA, and congratulates RAFAEL and LUPE.*

MRS. PADILLA

*(to LUPE. She can barely speak)*

Mi preciosa Lupita, is this what you really want?

LUPE

*(feeling a little guilty)*

Don't worry Mamá.

MRS. PADILLA

*(softly, with great concern)*

Y tus esperanzas?

*LUPE can't respond but hugs her mother tightly. The light slowly fade to black. Sleeping LUPE is replaced by the real LUPE. EVERYONE except LUPE leaves the stage. As the lights come up, we are still in the PADILLA home. LUPE slowly wakes up. JOSÉ MARIA and MR. PADILLA are in the kitchen. MR. PADILLA is reading La Opinión while JOSÉ MARIA is going through the refrigerator for something to eat with no success. HE wears his ubiquitous Chente T- shirt.*

*LUPE'S nightstand is covered with photos of the family, especially HER mother. SHE sits up slowly on the edge of the bed with a distant look on her face. SHE slowly brushes her hair while inspecting the photos. After a few moments, SHE slowly stands up, gets into her waitress uniform, and then sings Cue 10-IT WAS JUST A DREAM.*

LUPE

SAME SWEET DREAM  
 SAME OLD ROUTINE WORK AND BE A FAMILY  
 SINCE MOM'S GONE  
 FROM NOW ON  
 IT'S ALL UP TO ME  
 SACRIFICE  
 PAY THE PRICE  
 I DO IT 'CAUSE I LOVE THEM  
 THEY DON'T KNOW  
 I WANT TO GO  
 BUT I DON'T KNOW WHEN  
     SO WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO CHOOSE  
     EITHER WAY I STILL LOSE  
     I WON'T BE THE REASON WHY  
     MY FAMILY FALLS APART  
     WHAT I HOPED MY LIFE WOULD BE  
     I'LL GIVE UP RELUCTANTLY  
     SOMEDAY I WON'T HAVE TO SAY  
     IT WAS JUST A DREAM  
 SO CARRY ON  
 PRETEND I'M STRONG  
 DON'T THINK ABOUT WHAT COULD BE  
 I CAN'T BETRAY  
 MY FEET OF CLAY  
 I CAN'T LET THEM SEE  
 THAT IT'S SO TRUE  
 I'M SPLIT IN TWO  
 IF ONLY MOM COULD HELP ME  
 IF I PRAY  
 PERHAPS SOMEDAY  
 I'LL BE FANCY FREE  
     SO WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO CHOOSE

EITHER WAY I STILL LOSE  
I WON'T BE THE REASON WHY  
MY FAMILY FALLS APART  
WHAT I HOPED MY LIFE WOULD BE  
I'LL GIVE UP RELUCTANTLY  
SOMEDAY I WON'T HAVE TO SAY  
IT WAS JUST A DREAM  
SOMEDAY I WON'T HAVE TO SAY  
IT WAS JUST A DREAM

*LUPE exhales in frustration.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

I don't think this is the dream Mom had in mind. Laundry and cooking. Not exactly the stuff dreams are made of.

*SHE picks up the photo of HER mother and smiles weakly. SHE, JOSÉ MARIA and MR. PADILLA sing **Cue 11-GOOD MORNING LUPE No.2.***

LUPE (CONT'D)

Lo siento mucho mamá, but I just can't. We just don't have the money.

*SHE puts down the photo in frustration.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

Besides, what would I major in? Limpiando la casa?

*LUPE slowly walks to the kitchen.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

MORNING

MR. PADILLA

Good morning mija.

*MR. PADILLA hugs LUPE.*

JOSÉ MARIA

MORNING

LUPE

You hungry hermanito?

*JOSÉ MARIA nods.*

MR. PADILLA

LUPITA ARE YOU ALRIGHT  
ANOTHER RESTLESS NIGHT?

*LUPE nods.*

LUPE

I'M OKAY  
I WAS DREAMING OF A PLACE FAR AWAY

JOSÉ MARIA

I think I know where.

*LUPE shakes her head sadly.*

LUPE

I HEARD WHAT HAPPENED AT THE PLANT YESTERDAY  
IS IT TRUE THAT JAKE INHERITS IT ALL?

MR. PADILLA

IT'S TRUE THAT THE PLANT IS ALL HIS  
BUT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE HE IS

JOSÉ MARIA

*(resentful)*

Must be nice having a meat plant fall into your lap. At least his pendejo father is gone.

MR. PADILLA

SHOW SOME RESPECT FOR THE DEAD  
A KIND WORD WOULD BE NICE INSTEAD

LUPE

ANYBODY HUNGRY THERE'S PLENTY TO EAT?

JOSÉ MARIA

I am!

MR. PADILLA

NO THANKS MI CORAZÓN.

JOSÉ MARIA

Is there any of that veggie chorizo left?

LUPE

Sure.

*LUPE brings JOSÉ MARIA the veggie chorizo. HE eats quickly.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to LUPE, while eating)*

Dad fired that lame-o Pinto yesterday.

LUPE

Glad to hear it.

JOSÉ MARIA

The guy's a loose cannon.

MR. PADILLA

Let me know if he bothers either of you again.

*MR. PADILLA gets up from HIS chair.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

I BETTER BE ON MY WAY  
WITH RUIZ GONE THERE'LL BE HELL TO PAY  
See you tonight.

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

And take care of your sister.

JOSÉ MARIA

Sure.

LUPE

Que le vaya bien Papi.

MR. PADILLA

Adios.

*MR. PADILLA leaves the stage.*

LUPE

I wonder what will happen to all of us now?

JOSÉ MARIA

He'll probably make the plant a big mall.

LUPE

He would never do that.

JOSÉ MARIA

*(sarcastically)*

Oh really?

LUPE

I know him better than you.

*JOSÉ MARIA finishes off the veggie chorizo  
with a very large mouthful.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

You ready?

JOSÉ MARIA

*(barely able to speak through the chorizo)*

Sure.

LUPE

*(referring to his lack of manners)*

Charming.

*LUPE and JOSÉ MARIA get ready to go.  
The kitchen and bedroom disappear,  
revealing the street scene with St. Mary's,  
the high school, and GABI'S cafe. THEY  
begin to walk slowly.*

JOSÉ MARIA

I GUESS I BETTER START LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB

LUPE

YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW THAT YET

JOSÉ MARIA

I BET JAKE IS BAD AS HIS DAD  
THE SAME THING WE'VE ALWAYS HAD

LUPE

YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO REALLY KNOW  
DON'T SAY THAT 'CAUSE I KNOW IT'S NOT SO

JOSÉ MARIA

I guess we'll find out soon enough. Didn't you guys used to be a thing?

LUPE

That was a long time ago.

JOSÉ MARIA

So what are you going to do about Rafael? And your compromiso? (engagement)

LUPE

I can't just bail on the family and move to Mexico!

JOSÉ MARIA

You guys got a date yet?

LUPE

No. Nothing is simple.

JOSÉ MARIA

Yeah, those long distance things are casi imposible. (almost impossible)

*PINTO and his two GANG members appear and block their path. PINTO, JOSÉ MARIA, and LUPE rap/speak **Cue 12-PINTO No.2.***

JOSÉ MARIA (CONT'D)

*(to LUPE, annoyed)*

Didn't we just do this?

PINTO

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

¡Qué onda, güey!

LUPE

*(to PINTO)*

Out of the way loser!

PINTO

*(sarcastically)*

Nice to see you too Lupe.

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

TROUBLE AT SCHOOL, NOT TO WORRY  
I TOOK CARE OF ALL THAT, AND IN A HURRY  
NO ONE'S GONNA TOUCH YOU IF THEY WANT TO LIVE  
STICK WITH ME, I GOT A LOT TO GIVE



LUPE

Don't listen to him.

PINTO

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN, WITHOUT ME THERE'S NO GUARANTEE  
BETTER DO IT MY WAY, ESE YOU BELONG TO ME

LUPE

*(to PINTO, angry)*

I don't think so.

PINTO

THINK ABOUT IT HOMES  
YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE  
I'M THE ONLY ONE  
WHO'S GONNA HELP YOU

*PINTO lets JOSÉ MARIA pass. HE starts to walk into the high school.*

LUPE

See you tonight hermanito.

*PINTO calls after JOSÉ MARIA.*

PINTO

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

SO GO AHEAD  
SEE WHAT YOU GET  
TELL YOUR DAD  
I WON'T FORGET

Dude, you owe me!

LUPE

Stay away from my family.

*JOSÉ MARIA disappears into the high school and offstage. LUPE now turns and starts to walk back to GABI'S but PINTO now blocks her return path. LUPE is now beginning to anger and tries to push past PINTO but he stops her.*

PINTO

Ooo, I like strong women!

LUPE  
Leave me alone.

PINTO  
Hey, José Maria belongs to me.

LUPE  
Not while I'm alive.

PINTO  
Don't get in the way. Te lo advierto!

*LUPE flies into a rage and charges at PINTO. THEY struggle. PINTO pushes LUPE to the ground and rips her dress. PINTO and LUPE stare at each other for a moment as THEY realize a line has been crossed.*

PINTO (CONT'D)  
Hey, you all owe me. Especially your lame ass father. I mean it! No te olvidés!

*PINTO and GANG MEMBERS leave the stage. LUPE picks herself up and walks to GABI'S. GABI, LUPE, CONCHISE, and NACHO sing/speak Cue 13-GABI GETS MAD. When SHE arrives at GABI'S cafe GABI notices that a disheveled LUPE is fuming and her dress has been ripped.*

GABI  
(speaking)  
Lupe, que pasó?

LUPE  
I'm okay.

GABI  
Your auntie wants to know. Come on hija.

LUPE  
That cabrón Pinto hassles us all the time.

GABI  
He did this to you, that pinche little dude? I'll turn that rooster into a hen.

*Makes a gun with her hand.*

LUPE

It's not that bad. Don't tell José Maria or Dad.

GABI

I've got a cuete in the till just in case.

LUPE

*(examining herself)*

I look a mess.

GABI

Here, let's pin that. If he comes around again I'll break his face.

*GABI reaches into her pocket for a pin and starts to fix LUPE'S dress. NACHO and CONCHISE come over.*

LUPE

*(under her breath to GABI)*

Don't say anything.

CONCHISE

LUPE WHAT'S THE MATTER GIRL DO YOU FEEL ALRIGHT?

LUPE

*(lying and trying to cover up)*

I GUESS I'M WORRIED 'BOUT THE PLANT

NACHO

I KNOW EXACTLY THE THING THAT YOU NEED  
A CUP OF GABI'S TEPACHE TEA

*NACHO leaves to get the tea.*

LUPE

Thanks. I'm really okay.

*(aside to GABI)*

Just seriously pissed.

*(now to everyone)*

You guys always take such good care of me.

GABI

What's family for?

*NACHO comes back with the tea.*

NACHO

Here's your tea.

LUPE

Thanks Nacho.

CONCHISE

WHAT ABOUT THE FACTORY, YOUR DAD AND J.M.?  
WILL EVERYBODY LOSE THEIR JOB?

NACHO

IS IT TIME TO FIND A NEW CAREER?

LUPE

MAYBE THEY CAN ALL WORK HERE

GABI

I THINK ITS TIME TO GET BACK TO WORK

CONCHISE

*(to NACHO)*

YOU'VE GOT SOME CACA ALL OVER YOUR SHIRT

NACHO

You know you love me!

*During the scene change PINTO tags the  
factory wall.*

SCENE 6

6

*A few days later, just before lunch at the plant with workers (COMPANY, ROSA, ANTONIO, JOSÉ MARIA, MR. PADILLA) all in uniforms. There are a few table scattered around for workers. There is some ambient factory noise. JAKE walks slowly onstage. HE stands at the edge of the stage looking ruefully at the plant, as if caught in a dream. No one notices him. JAKE sings Cue 14- JAKE ARRIVES AT THE PLANT.*

JAKE

NOTHING IS DIFFERENT, NOTHING HAS CHANGED  
SEVEN YEARS IS A LONG TIME, TO BE BACK IS SO STRANGE  
I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD COME BACK HERE  
I THOUGHT I WAS FINALLY FREE  
BUT NOW I CAN SEE THE ONLY THING CHANGING IS ME  
THIS IS PART OF MY CHILDHOOD, LIKE IT OR NOT  
WE WEREN'T MUCH OF A FAMILY, BUT NOW I'M ALL THAT I'VE GOT  
I TOLD HIM THAT I DIDN'T WANT THIS  
I TOLD HIM BUT HE COULDN'T SEE  
THIS PLANT'S NOT FOR ME IT'S THE LAST PLACE THAT I WANNA BE

*MR. PADILLA recognizes JAKE and comes over excitedly to JAKE at the edge of the stage. The other workers (COMPANY), ROSA, JOSÉ MARIA, and ANTONIO don't notice and continue with their work.*

MR. PADILLA

Jake? Jake, is that you?

*THEY shake hands.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

Good to see you!

JAKE

Good to see you too Mr. Padilla. It's been a long time.

MR. PADILLA

*(in a fatherly way)*

How have you been son?

JAKE

I guess as well as can be. Considering.

MR. PADILLA

I was sorry to hear about your father.

JAKE

Thanks. I appreciate that. I can't believe Mrs. Padilla is gone. She was a wonderful lady. I'm so sorry.

MR. PADILLA

A bad month for us both, I think you'll agree

JAKE

No doubt. How's the family doing?

MR. PADILLA

It's been tough. Especially on Lupe. She misses her mother.

*MR. PADILLA looks sadly at the ground.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

We all do.

JAKE

Lupe.

*(pause)*

Is she here?

MR. PADILLA

She should be here in the roach coach anytime.

JAKE

*(trying not to show his increasing interest)*

How is she?

MR. PADILLA

Fine. She works for her Aunt Gabi. I remember when you used to work summers here. Lupe and her mother would bring us tamales.

JAKE

They were the best.

*The lunch horn sounds and the factory noise dies down.*

MR. PADILLA

Speaking of tamales, it's lunch!

LOUDSPEAKER

Señor Padilla. Please come to the office. Señor Padilla. Ahora mismo.

MR. PADILLA

*(not wanting to leave the conversation)*

I'll be right back. Don't go away.

*MR. PADILLA runs up the stairs to the office. JAKE sits down at an empty table at the edge of the stage unnoticed. The WORKERS (COMPANY, ROSA, ANTONIO, JOSÉ MARIA) leave their stations and come over to the tables waiting for LUPE to arrive with lunch. Some of THEM start to take notice of JAKE.*

JESÚS

*(under his breath)*

Quien es ese hijo de papi?(Who is this daddy's boy?)

XOCHITL

No se.

*XOCHITL turns to ELVIA.*

XOCHITL (CONT'D)

He's cute!

*JAKE smiles at XOCHITL.*

ELVIA

Creo que es el hijo de Ruiz. (I think it's Ruiz' son)

CHUY

Ruiz married that gabacha and had a pocho Jake.

*The men laugh.*

JESÚS

Maybe we should call them "Trio Los Pochos!"

*More laughter. JESÚS begins to poorly sing "Sin Ti" by Trio Los Panchos in an overly dramatic and hammy fashion.*

JESÚS (CONT'D)

Sin ti no podré comer jamás!

*The men laugh.*

CIERRA

You guys are mean.

PANCHO

*(to CHUY)*

Go over there and ask Loco Valdés if he knows anything about Infante, Negrete, or Solís!

JESÚS

Only Elvis! Or is it El Vez?

*The men laugh.*

CHUY

Some of us are real Mexicanos!

XOCHITL

Yeah, just look at your belly gordo!

ROSA

Déjenlo en paz you guys!

*JOSÉ MARIA and COMPANY (not ROSA and ANTONIO sing/rap/speak **Cue 15-CACA IN THE VACA**. JOSÉ MARIA comes over to JAKE, eyeing him warily. The workers (COMPANY), ROSA, and ANTONIO start to come over too.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to JAKE, with a little disdain)*

So now you're a factory owner. Must be nice.

JAKE

Nice to see you too José Maria.



JOSÉ MARIA

So what are you gonna do with this? Make it a mall?

JAKE

Hey, I've been working everyday for the last 7 years. What do you do? Gangbang?

JOSÉ MARIA

*(rapping with some attitude)*

SO CHECK THIS OUT  
IT'S WHAT YOUR DAD'S ABOUT  
IT'S LIKE A BOMB WENT OFF IN HERE  
CODE VIOLATIONS  
IT'S A NASTY OCCUPATION  
LAST WEEK A GUY LOST AN EAR!  
THE PAY IS LOW  
AS BAD AS MEXICO  
YOU GOT NO HEALTH CARE IF YOU'RE SICK  
YOU GOT CACA  
IN THE VACA  
BETTER STAY REAL HEALTHY THAT'S THE TRICK  
LAND OF THE FREE  
AND OPPORTUNITY?  
A PLACE OF PRIVILEGE IF YOU'RE RICH  
ME AND MY NEIGHBOR  
WE'RE JUST CHEAP LABOR  
YOUR FATHER DIDN'T GIVE A SHIT!

*The COMPANY starts to grumble.*

JOSÉ MARIA (CONT'D)

ASK ANY CEO  
YOU GO TO MEXICO  
TO GET THE LABOR THAT'S REAL CHEAP  
YOU CAN CROSS THE BORDER  
AND DO IT IN SHORT ORDER  
THE RIO GRANDE IS NOT THAT DEEP

COMPANY

WHEN THERE'S NO WORK BACK IN JALISCO  
THEN YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN TO SURVIVE  
TAKE ANY WORK YOU CAN FIND HERE  
IT'S A BATTLE TO JUST STAY ALIVE

JOSÉ MARIA

YOU SEE THAT GRINDER THERE?  
YOU BETTER WATCH YOUR HAIR  
YOU GET LAID OFF IF YOU GET HURT

IF YOU LOSE YOUR CONCENTRATION  
 BETTER FIND A NEW VOCATION  
 YOU CAN LOSE MORE THAN YOUR SHIRT  
 LAND OF THE FREE, NOT FOR A REFUGEE  
 THIS PLACE IS NO SALVACIÓN  
 ALL YOU WANT FROM MEXICO  
 IS LABOR AND A LITTLE BLOW  
 SO ALL YOU GRINGOS CAN GET STONED

<p>JOSE MARIA (CONT'D)          LAND OF THE FREE, IT'S          GANGS AND PCP. IT REALLY          SUCKS HERE ALL IN ALL          IF IT'S ALL YOU'VE EVER          HAD, IT'S NO WONDER          WE'RE SO MAD. WE GOT          BACK AGAINST THE WALL          THEY SAY WE'RE FREE,          IT'S A DEMOCRACY. WE'RE          FREE TO WORK HERE 'TIL          WE DIE. NO ONE CARES          THAT IT'S A CRIME WHEN          THERE'S MONEY ON THE          LINE, THERE'S PLENTY          MORE CHEAP LABOR YOU CAN          BUY</p>	<p>COMPANY          WHEN THERE'S NO WORK          BACK IN NOGALES          AND YOU CAN'T GROW CORN          LIKE BEFORE          I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE          OUR TO LEAVE MY COUNTRY          'TIL NAFTA PUSHED US TO          DEATH'S DOOR</p>
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COMPANY

I CAME HERE NOT FOR ME BUT FOR MY CHILDREN. TO GIVE THEM A  
 LIFE THAT'S BRAND NEW. TO GIVE THEM A CHANCE FOR A FUTURE,  
 THERE'S NOTHING I WOULDN'T DO  
 THERE'S NOTHING I WOULDN'T DO  
 THERE'S NOTHING I WOULDN'T DO  
 THERE'S NOTHING WE WOULDN'T DO

JOSÉ MARIA

Get the picture.

JAKE

Dude, I've worked here most of my life. Tell me something I don't know.

*MR. PADILLA returns from the office.*

MR. PADILLA

*(to the workers)*

Okay, okay. Very nice. You can all go on tour with Pedro Infante when he comes back.

*THE WORKERS return to their table and sit. MR. PADILLA goes over to JAKE'S table.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

*(apologetically)*

Don't mind José Maria.

JAKE

It's okay.

*LUPE enters the stage carrying two bags of food for the WORKERS. SHE doesn't see JAKE who remains seated at his table. SHE comes over to the tables where the WORKERS are seated.*

JESÚS

Ay Lupe! Lonche!

CHUY

*(to LUPE)*

Me first mi corazón!

LUPE

*(teasing)*

You're always first gordo!

*LUPE pats CHUY on the head and starts to distribute the food.*

PANCHO

*(teasing)*

You look good Lupe!

LUPE

*(teasing)*

Eat your heart out panzón!

JESÚS

Ay, ay, ay!

*LUPE slaps JESÚS good naturedly on the head.*

XOCHITL

*(reprimanding JESÚS)*

Bastante Mr. Cachondo.

MR. PADILLA

*(to LUPE)*

There's someone here I think you know.

*JAKE is watching intently from the other side of the stage. MR. PADILLA and JOSÉ MARIA sit down. LUPE doesn't see JAKE.*

LUPE

Oh really? Who?

*No response from MR. PADILLA or JOSÉ MARIA. LUPE continues to distribute the food without noticing JAKE. But JAKE quickly comes over to LUPE and surprises her.*

JAKE

*(to LUPE)*

You have any of those good tamales?

LUPE

*(a little stunned)*

Jake!

*They look intently at each other for a moment. They obviously have known each other from before.*

JAKE

Hi.

LUPE

*(pause and with a little disdain)*

Well, look who's back from the dead.

JAKE

Can I help?

*JAKE helps distribute the remaining food. LUPE is frozen with surprise and is speechless for a moment. SHE eventually starts to help again. The WORKERS, ROSA, JOSÉ MARIA, and ANTONIO start to eat while watching LUPE and JAKE with great interest.*

JESÚS

*(in reference to JAKE)*

El no sabe ni papa de la comida Mexicana.

PANCHO

Solo Taco Bell.

CHUY

Y Yumbo Yak!

*Laughter.*

CIERRA

Leave him alone fool. He's your new patrón.

ROSA

*(slowly, eyeing JAKE and LUPE warily)*

Creo que ellos dos ya se conocen. (I think those two already know each other)

*JAKE and LUPE finish passing out the food and have an awkward moment of silence before either one speaks.*

JAKE

I'm so sorry to hear about your mom.

*THEY become aware of the whole table watching THEM intently.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

Want to sit?

*JAKE motions to a more private table.*

LUPE

Okay.

*THEY move to a more private table and sit down. The WORKERS go back to eating lunch. MR. PADILLA and ROSA continue to watch both of them.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

I heard about your dad. So sorry.

JAKE

Well, you remember what happened. We had a huge fight. I told him I wanted nothing to do with this place. I never talked to him again.

LUPE

You just disappeared.

*(pause)*

I heard you were in Africa.

JAKE

The Peace Corps.

LUPE

You never even said anything. Not even to me.

JAKE

I just couldn't stay here anymore. I was furious.

LUPE

No word. Nothing. That was pretty heartless.

*JAKE becomes more reflective.*

JAKE

That was along time ago.

LUPE

Yes it was. But now you have no family.

*JAKE nods.*

JAKE

What about you? Did you go to college?

LUPE

No, family and work. Dad's still the plant manager. I work at my Aunt Gabi's panadería. José Maria's all grown up.

JAKE  
He's got a bit of an attitude.

LUPE  
Hey, it's East L.A. And he just lost his mother.  
*(pause, softly)*  
And so did I.

JAKE  
How you guys holding up?

LUPE  
Dad doesn't say much, he really is lost without her. José Maria is pissed off all the time. Gabi tries to hold us together.

JAKE  
What about you?(LUPE gets a little teary)

LUPE  
It's been hard. Mom kept the family going. I don't know if I can do that. I miss her a lot.

*JAKE gives LUPE a big hug as SHE starts to cry slightly. ROSA notices, taps MR. PADILLA on the shoulder and points to LUPE and JAKE. JAKE holds LUPE for a moment and then THEY separate.*

JAKE  
*(trying to cheer her up)*  
Remember how she would bring us tamales?

*LUPE nods.*

JAKE (CONT'D)  
She never told my dad about all the crazy stuff I did.

LUPE  
*(still a little teary)*  
She liked you a lot.

JAKE  
Remember the meat fights?

*LUPE stops crying and smiles a little.*

LUPE  
You loco!

*LUPE pauses for a moment thoughtfully.*

LUPE (CONT'D)  
So what are you going to do with this place?

JAKE  
I don't know.

LUPE  
If this place gets closed down a lot of people would suffer. Think about that.

*JAKE nods.*

LUPE (CONT'D)  
I have to go. Back to Gabi's.

*THEY both stand up.*

JAKE  
*(with a bad Spanish accent)*  
Que le vaya bien Lupe.

LUPE  
Well, you still suck at Spanish.  
*(laughing)*  
Igualmente Yaik!

*THEY both laugh. LUPE gathers up the bags from the tables and exits the stage. JAKE watches her intently as SHE goes. EVERYONE is still eating. ROSA and MR. PADILLA have been watching LUPE and JAKE closely. CHUY ogles LUPE as she leaves.*

CHUY  
Ay! All that cake and it's not even her birthday.

*ELVIA slaps CHUY on the back of the head. JAKE walks to a corner of the stage and sings **Cue 16-LOVELY LUPE.***

JAKE  
LUPE, LOVELY LUPE  
STILL SO FINE AFTER ALL THIS TIME  
I ALWAYS HOPED I'D SEE HER SOMEDAY



I WONDER, IF SHE REMEMBERS  
HOW IT USED TO BE WITH HER AND ME  
AND ALL THAT TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER  
I WONDER IF SHE THINKS ABOUT ME  
IN SEVEN YEARS THINGS ARE BOUND TO CHANGE  
I DISAPPEAR AND NEVER EVEN SEE HER  
I'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN  
SHE MUST THINK I'M INSANE  
LUPE, GUADALUPE  
DOES SHE CONCEAL HOW SHE REALLY FEELS  
SHE PROBABLY THINKS I'M JUST A FOOL

JAKE (CONT'D)

Maybe I am just a fool.

*Fade to black.*

SCENE 7

7

*The scene now moves to GABI'S cafe a little later on the same day. CONCHISE and NACHO are working in the kitchen and peering into the oven. There are a few customers at the tables (COMPANY/ROSA/ANTONIO). GABI is cleaning a table and overhears CONCHISE and NACHO sing **Cue 17-OVEN PROBLEMS.***

CONCHISE  
DON'T BE ASHAMED

NACHO  
I'VE HEARD THAT BEFORE

CONCHISE  
IT GOES FLAT IF IT'S TOO COLD

NACHO  
I CAN'T TRY ANYMORE  
I DON'T THINK I LEFT IT IN LONG ENOUGH  
THE LONGER THE BETTER

CONCHISE  
AND THE HEAT OF YOUR STUFF

NACHO  
This has never happened to me before.

CONCHISE  
That's what they all say.

NACHO  
This thing is so old, I don't think it works anymore.

*HE looks at the oven.*

CONCHISE  
BETTER PULL IT OUT NOW

NACHO

IT JUST WON'T BE THE SAME  
I THOUGHT IT WAS SPECIAL

CONCHISE

IT'S NOT AS BIG AS YOU CLAIM  
Well, you'll just have to do it again.

NACHO

Anything you say.

*GABI goes to the kitchen.*

GABI

What *are* you guys talking about?

NACHO

This oven is no good.

*LUPE enters carrying some bags.  
NACHO, GABI, and CONCHISE come out of  
the kitchen. NACHO graciously takes the  
bags for LUPE and puts them in the kitchen.  
THEY gather around a table away from the  
customers.*

LUPE

Guess who I saw at the plant.

GABI

Do you mean Jake?

LUPE

How did you know? He just got here!

*GABI produces a cell phone from her pocket  
and smiles.*

GABI

I have my spies. So, I hear that pocho was happy to see you.

*GABI is clearly fishing for information. SHE  
circles around LUPE hoping to get some  
gossip.*

GABI (CONT'D)

Too bad about his father. What a waste.

LUPE  
They hadn't talked in seven years.

CONCHISE  
Does he get the plant now?

*LUPE nods.*

LUPE  
He's been in Uganda all this time.

NACHO  
*(being a smart ass)*  
That's right next to Viagra Falls.

*CONCHISE hits NACHO in the arm.*

CONCHISE  
Uganda tonto! Africa!

LUPE  
In the Peace Corps.

*GABI looks hard at LUPE.*

GABI  
And what else Lupita?

LUPE  
We talked about old times.

GABI  
*(suspicious)*  
Uh-huh. I remember all those summers you two were at the plant. I knew you guys had a thing going on!

CONCHISE  
*(to LUPE)*  
Ooo! With the new plant owner? Really?

GABI  
*(with disgust)*  
And then he leaves you without so much as a word.

LUPE  
True, but that's ancient history you guys.

So is there love in East L.A.?  
CONCHISE

*LUPE just smiles and shakes her head.*

Jake is just an old friend.  
LUPE

And Rafael's not here.  
(teasing)  
NACHO

*LUPE hits NACHO good-naturedly in the arm.*

Somebody's tamales are burning!  
(to NACHO)  
CONCHISE

*Fade to black.*

SCENE 8

8

*Back at the plant a few days later. WORKERS(COMPANY), ROSA, and ANTONIO are all busy. There is some factory noise in the background. MR. PADILLA, JAKE, and two lawyers in suits are sitting at a table just outside the upstairs office. JOSÉ MARIA is off stage.*

JAKE

I don't understand. Why is that a problem?

LAWYER #1

Two things. Money and time.

JAKE

Mr. P, did you know about this?

MR. PADILLA

I've noticed people looking around, but we never spoke of it.

LAWYER #2

You have three weeks.

JAKE

Three weeks?

LAWYER #2

That's right.

LAWYER #1

What's the plan here Jake?

JAKE

There's a village where I worked in the Peace Corps. I thought I'd use it to help the people there.

LAWYER #2

Pretty noble. Good luck.

LAWYER #1

Since your father died before the sale of the plant, you now have control over the outcome of the transaction. Escrow closes in three weeks. At that point you'll receive 5.2 million dollars.

JAKE

Holy shit.

LAWYER #2

However, if you decide to cancel the transaction before then, you can retain ownership of the property.

LAWYER #1

The bad news is that there's a cancellation penalty clause.

JAKE

How bad?

LAWYER #1

\$25,000.

JAKE

\$25,000?

*(to MR. PADILLA)*

Do we even have that much?

MR. PADILLA

Let's talk later.

*LAWYERS stand up to leave.*

LAWYER #2

Let us know what it's gonna be Jake.

LAWYER #1

And remember. Three weeks.

JAKE

Yes sir.

*LAWYERS go down the stairs and leave the stage. JAKE and MR. PADILLA follow them down. MR. PADILLA, JAKE, ROSA, ANTONIO, and COMPANY sing **Cue 18-ADVICE.***

MR. PADILLA

HOW MANY YEARS JAKE HAVE WE KNOWN EACH OTHER?

JAKE  
LONG TIME NOW, SINCE I DON'T KNOW WHEN

MR. PADILLA  
YOU'VE GOT A GOOD HEART  
YOU'RE KIND AND YOU'RE REAL SMART  
BUT HERE'S SOME ADVICE FROM A FRIEND  
WHY DID YOU SPEND ALL THAT TIME IN UGANDA?

JAKE  
I WANTED TO HELP, IT WAS SOMETHING I HAD TO DO

MR. PADILLA  
YOU HELPED PEOPLE THERE  
BUT ARE YOU AWARE  
YOU COULD HELP ALL THE PEOPLE HERE TOO?

JAKE  
What do you mean?

MR. PADILLA  
If this plant closes, lots of people's lives will change. And not for the better.

JAKE  
Lupe was saying the same thing.

MR. PADILLA  
YOUR FATHER MADE MONEY BY CUTTING EVERY CORNER

JAKE  
THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T STAY  
HE USED FOLKS LIKE TOOLS

MR. PADILLA  
I LEARNED LONG AGO  
SOMETHING HE DIDN'T KNOW  
BUT YOUR DAD SAD TO SAY WAS THE FOOL

JAKE  
I don't understand.

*The WORKERS(COMPANY, ROSA,  
ANTONIO) leave their work and start to  
gather around MR. PADILLA. Factory noise  
dies down.*



MR. PADILLA

Neither did your father. You will always get more out of people if you treat them right. And you'll make more money too.

JAKE

How do you go about doing that?

MR. PADILLA

KEEP THIS PLACE OPEN, TREAT PEOPLE RIGHT  
GIVE THEM FLEXIBLE HOURS BOTH DAY AND NIGHT  
AND PEOPLE NEED HEALTH CARE NO MATTER THEIR AGE  
AND WITH DAY CARE ON CAMPUS AND A GOOD LIVING WAGE  
AND MAYBE A CO-OP TO BUY INTO THE PLANT  
WITH NO MANDATED OVERTIME FOR THOSE WHO JUST CAN'T

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

AND THE ISSUE OF SAFETY,  
THERE'S SO MUCH THAT WE  
NEED, WITH SO MANY HURT  
WE SHOULD GET UP TO  
SPEED, GET EVERYONE  
GREEN CARDS ILLEGAL  
FOLKS TOO, WHEN THE INS  
GETS HERE, WE'LL TELL  
THEM FUCK YOU

COM./ROSA/ANTONIO

AH,AH,AH,AH

JAKE

That's a tall order. Is that even possible?

MR. PADILLA

IT'S NOT THAT HARD, SOMEONE COULD SHOW YOU

JAKE

IT'S A SERIOUS RISK, I COULD LOSE IT ALL

MR. PADILLA

IT'S A CAUSE THAT'S HUMANE  
BUT THINK WHAT YOU'LL GAIN  
WHEN THE RISK THAT YOU TAKE IS SO SMALL

JAKE

This is all so new to me. Ask me how to run the hopper. Or package a T-bone. I can do that. But I have no idea how to do something like this.

*JAKE motions towards the plant.*

MR. PADILLA

I do.

JAKE

But where am I going to get \$25,000?

*JOSÉ MARIA comes running on stage in a panic. HE is in his work clothes and charges up to MR. PADILLA.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to MR. PADILLA)*

Es la migra! They're just outside!

*The workers immediately start to panic, especially ROSA and ANTONIO who are undocumented workers.*

JAKE

What's going on?

MR. PADILLA

It's the INS. Your father had a habit of hiring undocumented people.

JOSÉ MARIA

What about Rosa and Antonio?

JAKE

Are they undocumented?

MR. PADILLA

Yeah. They're right over there.

*MR. PADILLA points to ROSA and ANTONIO.*

JAKE

What do we do?

MR. PADILLA

Your father didn't do anything.

JAKE

What do you mean?

MR. PADILLA

He would let the INS deport the illegals, pay the fine, and then hire new ones.

JOSÉ MARIA

But Dad, remember how we...

MR. PADILLA

*(interrupting)*

Chh. But now it's up to you Jake.

JAKE

*(to MR. PADILLA)*

I have an idea. Remember the crawl space below the office?

MR. PADILLA

Good idea.

*MR. PADILLA runs to get ROSA and ANTONIO.*

JAKE

José Maria. You need to stall them. Use the grinder to make a bunch of noise. Turn everything on! Whatever!

JOSÉ MARIA

Right.

*JOSÉ MARIA runs off stage. The grinder starts making a serious amount of noise. MR. PADILLA comes back quickly with ROSA and ANTONIO.*

MR. PADILLA

*(to ROSA and ANTONIO)*

Vayan con Señor Yaik (go with Mr. Jake)

*(now to the rest of the workers)*

Go back to what you were doing! You know the drill!

*(to JAKE)*

I'll try to slow them down. Go!

*JAKE runs up the stairs to the office followed quickly by ROSA and ANTONIO. ROSA and ANTONIO disappear into the crawl space. JAKE hurries back down the stairs just as the two INS AGENTS, JOSÉ MARIA, and MR. PADILLA appear on stage.*

*MR. PADILLA brings the AGENTS leisurely over to JAKE at the bottom of the stairs. Both MR. PADILLA and JAKE are suddenly very composed and relaxed.*

AGENT #1

*(almost shouting over the din)*

Mr. Padilla here tells me you're the new owner.

*JAKE shakes his head, indicating he can't hear.*

JAKE

*(almost yelling)*

Mr. P, can you shut the grinder down?

*MR. PADILLA runs over and shuts off the grinder. The noise subsides. The workers all stop and watch.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

*(to AGENT #1)*

Sorry. I'm Jake Ruiz.

*THEY shake hands.*

AGENT #1

So you're Ruiz' boy. Your dad liked to use undocumented workers.

JAKE

I wouldn't know. I just got here today.

AGENT #2

Mind if we have a look around?

JAKE

No problem. Go ahead.

*Both AGENTS start to question the WORKERS. MR. PADILLA helps translate. The workers show the AGENTS their papers. The WORKERS are nervous. JOSÉ MARIA goes over to JAKE. THEY sit down at a table and wait for the INS AGENTS to finish.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to JAKE, quietly)*

I have some of that pan dulce from Gabi's.

JAKE

Sure.

*JOSÉ MARIA goes to his locker and gets out a bag. HE returns to the table. THEY start to eat.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

*(quietly, so not to be heard by the AGENTS)*

So how long does this usually take?

JOSÉ MARIA

Not long. I've seen this before.

*JOSÉ MARIA and JAKE continue to eat until the AGENTS are through with the workers. The AGENTS come over to JAKE. HE stands up.*

AGENT #1

Glad to see you're not going to be a problem like your dad.

*JAKE nods. MR. PADILLA walks the AGENTS offstage. As soon as they are gone, JAKE sprints up the stairs and extricates ROSA and ANTONIO. THEY come out cautiously. ROSA is almost catatonic from being confined in such a small space while ANTONIO is ecstatic.*

ANTONIO

Muchisimas gracias Señor Yaik!

*ANTONIO enthusiastically shakes JAKE'S hand while ROSA gives him a big hug.*

JAKE

You guys okay?

*THEY don't understand.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

José Maria, help me out here.

*JAKE, ROSA, and ANTONIO walk down the stairs.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to ROSA and ANTONIO)*

Como están?

ROSA

Bien, bien. Gracias a Señor Yaik!

*MR. PADILLA comes back on stage and looks at the workers.*

MR. PADILLA

*(to WORKERS)*

Everybody! Take a break. Everything's okay!

*The WORKERS all sit down at the tables in relief. MR. PADILLA goes over to JAKE. ANTONIO shakes JAKE'S hand again.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to JAKE)*

They're fine. I think you're their new best friend!

MR. PADILLA

Well done Jake.

JOSÉ MARIA

Maybe there is hope for you ese!

JAKE

Who is ese?

*MR. PADILLA and JOSÉ MARIA laugh.*

MR. PADILLA

*(to JAKE)*

This Sunday is Dia de Los Muertos. We would be honored to have you.

JOSÉ MARIA

Gabi and Lupe are cooking!

JAKE

Thanks. That would be great.

*MR. PADILLA takes JAKE aside, speaking  
in a serious tone.*

MR. PADILLA

You did a good thing with Rosa and Antonio. I can see you haven't changed.

JAKE

Just trying to help.

MR. PADILLA

*(thoughtfully)*

One more thing. The other day. I saw you and Lupe. You know about Rafael, right? And be careful, she just lost her mother.

*JAKE nods. Fade to black.*

SCENE 9

9

*A few days later at GABI'S cafe. NACHO and CONCHISE are in the kitchen working. LUPE is waiting tables. There are customers (COMPANY, ROSA, and ANTONIO) on the patio. GABI is visiting with some of the customers. Tinny background music plays-*  
**SCENE 9 BACKGROUND MUSIC.**

NACHO

*(good-naturedly rapping like before in "WHAT'S THE BEEF")*

POLLO, BUTIFARRA, BISTEC, LOMO, MENUDO, PUERCO, CONEJO, PERRO

CONCHISE

Perro?

NACHO

MEAT. IT'S WHAT'S FOR DINNER. MEAT.

CONCHISE

But perro?

*CONCHISE hits NACHO in the arm and laughs. LUPE comes in from the patio to the kitchen.*

NACHO

MAKES MY DAY COMPLETE. MEAT.

CONCHISE

*(getting into the spirit)*

Nacho's a freak!

*LUPE comes back to the kitchen as her cell phone rings. SHE answers as NACHO and CONCHISE listen with great interest. It is RAFAEL calling from Oaxaca. LUPE's demeanor suddenly becomes more serious.*

LUPE

Hi.

*(dramatic pause)*



Hey. I'm working.

LUPE (CONT'D)

*LUPE pauses as she waits for a response.  
SHE is slightly annoyed.*

I can't do that. Not now. I thought we already talked about this.

LUPE (CONT'D)

*NACHO and CONCHISE are listening  
closely and talk quietly to each other.*

Uh-oh, trouble in paradise.

CONCHISE  
*(to NACHO)*

Don't say that. Of course I do. Can't you understand that?

LUPE

Sounds like more caca from Oaxaca.

NACHO  
*(to CONCHISE)*

I said I would think about it. Sure. Okay, okay. Me too. Bye.

LUPE

*LUPE exhales loudly with frustration as she  
puts her cell phone away.*

Ay!

LUPE (CONT'D)  
*(softly)*

*Two of LUPE'S student friends (STUDENTS  
#1 and #3) enter the cafe and sit down.  
LUPE notices immediately and goes over to  
greet them. THEY all hug.*

Hey you guys! Como están?

LUPE (CONT'D)

Great! How have you been Lupe?

STUDENT #1

Same old, same old I guess.

LUPE

STUDENT #3

So sorry to hear about your mom. I can hardly believe it.

LUPE

Thanks, I appreciate that.

*LUPE sighs and changes the subject.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

So, how's college?

STUDENT #1

Great. We thought you were going to join us this semester. That's why we came by, to check up on you.

LUPE

Well, things didn't work out.

STUDENT #3

Hey, there's always next semester.

LUPE

Right.

*Both STUDENTS stand up and get ready to leave.*

STUDENT #1

Good to see you.

STUDENT #3

Nos vemos, next semester, okay?

LUPE

*(trying to sound positive)*

Sure.

*The two STUDENTS leave the stage. GABI walks over to a despondent LUPE.*

GABI

I heard that.

LUPE

It's not fair. They're at school, Jake has a factory fall into his lap, and I'm just the hired help.

GABI

I know you have big dreams. And I'd help you if I could.

LUPE

I mean, I love my family and all, but I want more than this.

GABI

You sound just like your mother. She sacrificed everything to hold us all together. And have some faith mija, things will work out.

*GABI gives LUPE a big hug.*

LUPE

Gracias tia.

*JAKE enters the stage and sits down at a table unnoticed. GABI and LUPE return to the kitchen. CONCHISE notices that JAKE has just sat down.*

CONCHISE

Hey, hey, who's that? Lupe, check out this bombón!

LUPE

Oh my God. It's Jake.

*LUPE tries to pull herself together.*

CONCHISE

Jake, as in the plant owner Jake!

*LUPE nods and smiles slyly.*

CONCHISE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You and Jake were a thing?! He is so hot!

NACHO

Easy girlfriend.

CONCHISE

I wonder if he's hiring?

NACHO

Hey!

CONCHISE

Gee, tough choice. Macho mariachi or hunky jefe!

Conchise! LUPE

Go on over. He's here to see you. NACHO

Go on Lupe. Don't make me go over there. CONCHISE

Is Jake hitting on you? GABI

I told him we had good flan. LUPE  
*(making up an excuse)*

Oh, that must be it! NACHO  
*(sarcastically)*

*GABI'S protective instincts surface as she marches over to JAKE'S table.*

Gabi! Gabi, don't! LUPE

Oh this should be good. NACHO

*GABI arrives at JAKE'S table.*

May I help you? GABI  
*(curtly)*

Hi Gabi. You may not remember me but... JAKE

I remember. What can I get for you? GABI  
*(interrupting)*

I heard you had great flan. JAKE

Si. GABI

JAKE  
Let's try that. Is Lupe here?

GABI  
I think she's busy.

JAKE  
Could you tell her Jake says hello?

*GABI nods and goes back to the kitchen.*

GABI  
*(to LUPE)*  
Why is he here mija? This guy broke your heart!

LUPE  
*(becoming annoyed)*  
Jake is just a friend.

GABI  
And the new patrón! What about Rafael?

LUPE  
Gabi! This is my life you know!

*LUPE marches over to JAKE'S table. JAKE stands up and speaks tenderly.*

JAKE  
Hi.

LUPE  
Hi Jake. Sit down.

*THEY both sit.*

JAKE  
I don't think Gabi likes me bothering you.

LUPE  
She's a little protective.

JAKE  
Can you sit for a minute?

LUPE

Sure. Can I get you something?

JAKE

Gabi's getting me some flan. I just wanted to see you.

*(pause)*

And talk.

LUPE

*(with a touch of sarcasm)*

Sure you don't have to run off?

JAKE

*(with a smile)*

I guess I deserved that.

*In the kitchen GABI gets the flan ready.  
Then begins to walk over to JAKE'S table  
but CONCHISE takes it from her.*

CONCHISE

*(to GABI)*

Give that to me! I'm doing this!

*CONCHISE walks to JAKE'S table.*

JAKE

I talked to your dad. He thinks I should keep the plant.

LUPE

He would know.

CONCHISE

*(obviously interested in JAKE, and a little over the top)*

Hi! I'm Conchise. Here's your flan. Or anything else you might want!

JAKE

Thanks.

LUPE

*(to CONCHISE)*

Gee, is the menudo burning or is that just you?

CONCHISE

*(to JAKE)*

Bye!

*CONCHISE goes back to the kitchen. JAKE and LUPE laugh. CONCHISE and GABI continue to watch closely from the kitchen. JAKE eats as they talk.*

LUPE

Think of it this way. If the plant closes, most of these people won't find a new job for a long time. If ever.

JAKE

Your dad seems to know a lot about it. I'm really out of my element here.

LUPE

*(thoughtfully)*

So why the Peace Corps?

JAKE

I needed to get as far away from here as I could and do something productive.

LUPE

There were people here that cared about you. Did you ever think about that?

JAKE

I know it's no excuse, but my dad was making me crazy.

LUPE

He made a lot of us crazy.

*JAKE pauses, looks intently at LUPE, and changes the subject.*

JAKE

What about you? So what happened to college?

LUPE

Money always been tight and with Mom gone now, I have to look after my family.

JAKE

You remind me so much of your mom.

*LUPE takes a deep breath and changes the subject.*

LUPE

So, I heard what happened at the plant. You did a good thing.

JAKE  
*(joking)*  
I think Rosa likes me.

*JAKE becomes more serious and pauses deliberately.*

JAKE (CONT'D)  
You heard about the \$25,000?

*LUPE nods.*

JAKE (CONT'D)  
I have no clue where to get that kind of money.

LUPE  
Gabi always says you have to have a little faith.

JAKE  
I'm a little short on faith lately.

LUPE  
I know what you mean.

*GABI comes briskly over to the table.*

GABI  
*(to JAKE)*  
Well, I think that's enough.

*GABI turns to LUPE and speaks sternly.*

GABI (CONT'D)  
Come on mija.  
*(to JAKE in an overstated manner)*  
She's engaged!

LUPE  
Gabi!

*GABI goes back to the kitchen.*

JAKE  
It's okay. Everyone's told me. They don't want me bothering you.

LUPE  
You're not bothering me.



*THEY both stand up. JAKE looks intently at LUPE.*

I hope not.

JAKE

*LUPE pauses before responding.*

I should get back to work.

LUPE

Good to see you.

JAKE

Good to see you too. And think about what I said.

LUPE

Sure. Tell Gabi thanks for the flan.

JAKE

*JAKE leaves the stage. LUPE goes back to the kitchen.*

What are you doing mija?

GABI

*LUPE is becoming increasingly annoyed.*

Jake is just a friend. How is this a problem?

LUPE

I don't think Jake believes that. He's el dueño now!

GABI

He's trying to help.

LUPE

Did you tell him about Rafael?

GABI

I didn't have to! You and everyone else took care of that!

LUPE

It's my job as your tia!

GABI

LUPE

*(still annoyed)*

This is my life you know.

*Background music ends. GABI, NACHO, CONCHISE, AND COMPANY (no ROSA or ANTONIO) all gather around LUPE and sing Cue 19-ANCIENT HISTORY.*

CONCHISE

That boy is a total apachurro! (hunk)

XOCHITL

Cuantos novios necesitas?

NACHO

He's got that cachondo look.

LUPE

*(slightly annoyed)*

Nacho!

ELVIA

Stick with Rafael.

NACHO

You guys were a thing?

CIERRA

But he's the patrón!

ELVIA

I don't think he was here for the flan!

CONCHISE

Si yo tuviera la misma suerte!

EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT YOU GOT A PAST

NACHO

COME ON LUPE TELL US

CONCHISE

DON'T BE SO TIGHT ASSED!

NACHO

JAKE IS BACK IN TOWN

CONCHISE  
HE'S BOUND TO COME AROUND  
SO BETWEEN YOU AND ME  
WHAT'S IT GONNA BE  
COME ON LUPE TELL ME!

LUPE  
That's ancient history!

CONCHISE  
EVERYBODY WONDERS

ELVIA/XOCHI/CIERRA  
EVERYBODY WONDERS

CONCHISE  
WHAT YOU GONNA DO

GABI  
*(half-heartedly)*  
Leave her alone you guys!

CONCHISE  
BOTH OF THEM ARE SO HOT!

ELVIA/XOCHI/CIERRA  
BOTH OF THEM ARE SO HOT!

CONCHISE  
I WISH I WERE YOU  
RAFAEL IS COOL  
AND NACHO'S SUCH A TOOL

NACHO  
Hey!

CONCHISE  
JAKE IS REALLY HOT

NACHO  
YOU'RE SAYING THAT I'M NOT?

CONCHISE  
LET ME PUT YOU ON THE SPOT!

LUPE

You guys should be shot!

GABI

PAY NO ATTENTION TO THOSE TWO FOOLS YOU SEE  
STILL I'D BE CAREFUL OF THAT ANCIENT HISTORY  
DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART  
WHEN YOU GET CONFUSED  
BUT I SEE IT DEEP IN YOUR EYES  
JAKE IS HARD TO REFUSE  
AUNTIE GABI KNOWS EVEN THOUGH IT'S LONG AGO  
WHAT YOU FELT BACK THEN CAN FIND YOU ONCE AGAIN  
AND YOU NEVER WILL KNOW WHEN

CONCHISE

YOU KNOW THAT WE LOVE YOU

ELVIA/XOCHI/CIERRA

YOU KNOW THAT WE LOVE YOU

NACHO

WE DON'T MEAN TO PRY

CONCHISE

BUT WE HAVE A FEW THINGS

ELVIA/XOCHI/CIERRA

BUT WE HAVE A FEW THINGS

CONCHISE

WE'D LIKE TO CLARIFY  
IS IT RAFAEL OR NOT  
OR HAVE YOU JUST FORGOT  
DOES THE THOUGHT OF JAKE AND YOU  
HAVE YOU IN A STEW  
WHAT YOU GONNA DO?

LUPE

*(teasing)*

As if I would tell you!

COMPANY-MEN

EVERYBODY KNOWS

I heard Jake was hiring!	CONCHISE
EVERYBODY KNOWS	COMPANY-MEN
	XOCHITL
<i>(sexual reference)</i>	
I'd like to work under him!	
EVERYBODY KNOWS	COMPANY-MEN
	ELVIA
You got no skills!	
	CONCHISE
And I'm stuck with Nacho cheese.	
	<i>NACHO makes a face at CONCHISE.</i>
EVERYBODY KNOWS	COMPANY-MEN
	CIERRA
Lupe has all the luck.	
	ELVIA
Yeah, Rafael or Jake.	
EVERYBODY KNOWS	COMPANY-MEN
	XOCHITL
Tough choice.	
	CONCHISE
I think he liked my flan!	
EVERYBODY KNOWS	COMPANY-MEN
	CIERRA
I think he likes something else.	
	<i>CIERRA points and looks at Lupe.</i>

Enfermo de amor for sure.  
XOCHITL

EVERYBODY KNOWS  
COMPANY-MEN

So what's it gonna be Lupe?  
ELVIA

History can repeat itself!  
CIERRA

EVERYBODY KNOWS  
COMPANY-MEN

Ay! No me diga! Ándale pues!  
CONCHISE/CIERRA/ELVIA/XOCHITL

*THEY all laugh.*

CONCHISE/COMPANY-WOMEN

SO IS IT JAKE OR NOT  
OR HAVE YOU JUST FORGOT  
IS IT RAFAEL AND YOU  
YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE  
WHAT YOU GONNA DO?  
COME ON TELL US LUPE

*(joking)*  
LUPE

Let's see. Why not both?

EVERYBODY KNOWS!  
COMPANY/CONCHISE/NACHO

Or neither!  
LUPE

*EVERYONE leaves the stage. The scene shifts to the street outside of GABI'S panadería. PINTO and HIS crew are waiting for JAKE as he comes out. JAKE enters from stage left and PINTO and his GANG MEMBERS from stage right. THEY meet in the middle. PINTO blocks his path.*

JAKE  
Who are you?

PINTO  
Let's just say I'm a friend of the family. And one of your ex-employees.

*JAKE tries to push past PINTO but HE pushes HIM back.*

PINTO (CONT'D)  
Dude, is that the best you can do?  
*(sarcastically)*  
Gee, no daddy to help you now.

JAKE  
Sure you want to do this?

PINTO  
Your move jefe.

*JAKE tries to push past again but this time grabs PINTO, trips him with a Kung Fu move, and puts PINTO face down on the concrete. JAKE takes PINTO'S arm, extends it behind him, and twists it. JAKE then puts HIS foot on PINTO'S neck. PINTO cries in pain.*

JAKE  
You were saying?

*The two GANG MEMBERS draw a knife and a gun from their pockets and hold them up. One GANG MEMBER clicks his switchblade open. JAKE releases PINTO and backs away. PINTO gets up slowly, rubbing his arm.*

PINTO  
That some kind of Kung Fu pocho shit?

JAKE  
Next time I'll break it.

PINTO

Let me give you some advice carnál. Go back to your factory. That fuckin' place killed your dad and mine. And stay away from Lupe. You don't belong here anyway.

*JAKE doesn't respond. PINTO and his GANG MEMBERS leave the stage. Fade to black.*



SCENE 10

10

*A few days later in the evening at the factory. JAKE sits quietly in a chair just outside the office on the second floor. HE wears a T-shirt that reads "Ruiz Meats-Hecho en Boyle Heights." There is a small table covered with papers next to HIS chair. JAKE is studiously pouring over the papers. LUPE enters and calls for JAKE. The factory is dimly lit and quiet. LUPE is carrying a bag with four tamales inside. JAKE and LUPE sing **Cue 20-SO SORRY.***

LUPE

Jake? Are you here?

*(pause)*

Jake?

JAKE

I'm up here.

*LUPE goes up the stairs.*

LUPE

Hi.

JAKE

Hi.

LUPE

You're all by yourself every night up here. That's not good.

*(pause)*

So I brought you a little something.

*LUPE puts the bag down on the table and takes out a tamale to show him.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

Tamales!

JAKE

Thanks.

*LUPE takes out three more tamales and puts them on the table. SHE pauses for a moment and looks intently at JAKE.*

JAKE I'M SO SORRY  
ARE YOU ALRIGHT? LUPE

I am now. JAKE

You look tired. (concerned) LUPE

It's been crazy. JAKE

*LUPE'S cell phone receives a text message.*

Oh. Sorry. LUPE

*LUPE quickly silences her phone.*

Let me guess... JAKE

Yeah. He likes to keep in touch. (slightly exasperated) LUPE

*LUPE pauses and looks at all the papers on the table.*

What are you doing? LUPE (CONT'D)

Trying to decide. JAKE  
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU

YOU SHOULDN'T BE ALONE LUPE

JAKE

FOR THE FIRST TIME  
IN MY WHOLE LIFE  
I'M ALL ON MY OWN  
HE WASN'T MUCH OF A FATHER  
I SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN

LUPE

DON'T FORGET WHAT YOU HAVE  
BOTH GOOD AND BAD  
YOU'RE NOT THE ONE WHO'S TO BLAME

JAKE

I HAD NO CLUE  
ALL YOU WENT THROUGH

LUPE

THERE'S A PIECE OF MY HEART  
THAT I LOST WHEN SHE DIED

JAKE

I GUESS WE'RE THE SAME ME AND YOU

LUPE

I KNOW WHAT YOU FEEL  
IT SEEMS SO UNREAL

JAKE

YOU HAVE YOUR FAMILY  
TO HELP YOU BE STRONG

LUPE

IT'S A PAIN THAT WILL NEVER HEAL

JAKE

THIS PLACE IS A TRAIN WRECK

*JAKE motions towards the plant.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'VE GOT NO CLUE

LUPE

FOR THE PAST TWENTY YEARS  
MY FATHER'S WORKED HERE  
JUST ASK HIM  
HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO

*JAKE nods. LUPE takes JAKE by the arm.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

I'M HERE TO LEAN ON  
WHENEVER YOU NEED

*JAKE smiles at LUPE.*

JAKE

YOU'RE MY FAMILY OF ONE  
WHEN THERE'S NOWHERE TO RUN

*LUPE smiles back at JAKE.*

LUPE

THAT'S A EAST L.A. CHACHA'S GUARANTEE

JAKE

You're a sweetheart.

LUPE

I'm so sorry you have to go through this.

JAKE

I'm sorry we both do.

*JAKE looks out over the floor of the plant  
thoughtfully and pauses for a moment.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

I don't know how to run this place. I can barely run the grinder.

LUPE

I remember.

*SHE laughs slightly.*

JAKE

*(frustrated)*

I need all the help I can get.

LUPE

What does your heart tell you?

*JAKE takes LUPE by the hands and looks  
into her eyes.*

It tells me a lot about you.

JAKE

*THEY look at each other intently for a moment.*

You know, there's something I want to show you.

LUPE

What's that?

JAKE

There's something you need to see. I think it will help.

LUPE

Help me what?

JAKE

Decide.

LUPE

*LUPE suddenly stands up and takes JAKE'S hand. SHE leads him down the stairs to the plant floor. JAKE is unsure of LUPE's intent. THEY sing Cue 21-THE PLANT.*

WHERE YOU TAKING ME?

JAKE

JUST WAIT AND SEE  
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO SHOW YOU

LUPE

*JAKE looks around at the plant as they walk.*

I've seen this place too many times.

JAKE

*THEY walk among the machines and reminisce.*

REMEMBER WHEN WE USED TO BE TWELVE OR THIRTEEN  
AND THE HOPPER WAS A GREAT PLACE TO HIDE

LUPE

JAKE

I sure do.

GOOD THING THOUGH MY DAD DIDN'T KNOW  
I'M SURE HE WOULD HAVE TANNED MY BACKSIDE

LUPE

Oh yeah!

AND MOM WOULD ALWAYS BRING PAN DULCE

JAKE

Sure.

AND ALL THOSE GREAT TAMALES JUST IN CASE

LUPE

They were the best.

JAKE

WHEN DAD WAS GONE I'D RIDE INSIDE THE HOPPER

LUPE

IT'S SO STRANGE TO RETRACE  
OUR LIVES IN THIS PLACE

*JAKE and LUPE stop for a moment.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

*(looking around)*

This place touches a lot of lives. Yours *and* mine.

JAKE

We spent a lot of time here over the years.

*JAKE pauses thoughtfully for a moment and takes both of LUPE'S hands. HE looks in her eyes.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

You know, I never apologized.

*(pause)*

For leaving like I did. I didn't mean to hurt you. I'm so sorry.

LUPE

You and I were real close. And it did hurt me. I never said anything. But Mom knew.

JAKE

It was a tough time for me. With my dad.

*LUPE drops JAKE'S hands and starts to anger slightly.*

LUPE

I hated you for a long time. No letters, nothing. It's like you were ashamed of me. For being Mexican.

JAKE

No, never. It's just that I couldn't take it anymore. So I just ran away from it all.

LUPE

You left my family with your pocho dad. He treated us like caca and you didn't even try to help.

JAKE

I was only, what, 18 or so? I know that's no excuse. I only wish I could make it up to you.

LUPE

*(showing more empathy)*

I know. But that was a long time ago. Let's think about the future.

JAKE

Fair enough. But I have to say, you're more beautiful than ever.

*LUPE laughs a little.*

LUPE

Still the same old smoothie huh?

*SHE quickly grabs JAKE'S hand and starts to walk through the back door of the plant.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

So check this out. Follow me, Yaik!

*Song ends. THEY arrive at a large, well tended garden. It is the workers' fruit and vegetable garden. The workers (COMPANY), ROSA, and ANTONIO are working in the garden by lanterns. JAKE is amazed. LUPE, JAKE, ROSA, AND ANTONIO, sing/speak **Cue 22-THE GARDEN**. JAKE and LUPE stand at the edge of the stage and observe the workers.*

JAKE  
WHAT IS THIS?

LUPE  
IT'S A GARDEN YOU TONTO!

JAKE  
I NEVER KNEW THIS WAS EVEN HERE

LUPE  
Neither did your father!

JAKE  
THESE ARE ALL FACTORY PEOPLE

LUPE  
That's right.  
AND THEY WORK HERE ALMOST EVERY NIGHT

JAKE  
Makes for a long day.

LUPE  
THEY DO WHAT THEY HAVE TO  
TO GET BY IN THIS LIFE

JAKE  
AND THEY GROW ALL THIS ON THEIR OWN?

LUPE  
That's right.  
THIS FEEDS LOTS OF PEOPLE  
LIKE THE MEDINAS RIGHT THERE

*LUPE points to the MEDINAS.*

JAKE  
AND THIS IS ALL ON FACTORY LAND?

LUPE  
Yup, pretty amazing.

*JAKE and LUPE begin to walk closer to the garden unobserved by the workers for a few moments.*



*ROSA and ANTONIO see JAKE and come running over to HIM. THEY are very grateful.*

ANTONIO

Mira! Es el jefe! (Look, it is the boss!)

ROSA

Muchisimas gracias Señor.

*SHE hugs JAKE.*

ANTONIO

Si, si, le debemos todo! (We owe him everything)

ROSA

Es un hombre muy valiente! (Such a brave man)

LUPE

*(to ROSA)*

No entiende ni papa. (He doesn't understand a thing)

ROSA

Entonces di le en Inglés! (So tell him in English!)

LUPE

*(to JAKE)*

SHE SAYS YOU'RE VERY BRAVE

JAKE

*(to LUPE)*

Tell her I'm happy to help.

LUPE

*(to ROSA)*

DICE QUE LE ENCANTA AYUDAR.  
(He says he's happy to help)

ROSA

Antonio, traeme una bolsa para el patrón. (Bring me a bag for the boss)

*ANTONIO goes and gets a bag.*

JAKE

Is that like tequila?

*LUPE laughs.*

LUPE

YAIK IS YOU, LIKE YUMBO YAK  
IF YOU DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH AND YOU WANT A SNACK  
IT'S HARD TO LEARN TO HABLA INGLÉS  
WHEN NO PUEDO HABLAR  
IS ALL OVER YOUR FACE

*ANTONIO comes back with a bag and gives  
it to JAKE.*

ROSA

Tenemos un regalo para Señor Yaik

LUPE

THEY HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU

ANTONIO

Hortalizas, frutas mas finas (Fine fruits and vegetables)

LUPE

*(Translating)*

Fruits and veggies.

*JAKE holds the bag as they put in fresh  
vegetables and fruit.*

ANTONIO

Fresas! (Strawberries)

JAKE

THANK YOU

ROSA

Muy buena para amantes! (Good for lovers)

LUPE

*(Indignantly)*

Rosa!

ANTONIO

Jalapeños!

GREAT!	JAKE
	<i>ROSA points at JAKE.</i>
Es un tipazo! (He's a hunk!)	ROSA
What?	JAKE
Manzanas. (apples)	ANTONIO
FINE!	JAKE
Son novios, no? (You're sweethearts, right?)	ROSA
WHAT DID SHE SAY?	JAKE
Lo veo. (I see it)	ROSA
Peras. (Pears)	ANTONIO
THANKS!	JAKE
Rosa!	LUPE
In tus ojos. (In your eyes)	ROSA
SHE THINKS I'M GAY?	JAKE
Amantes.	ROSA
Mango.	ANTONIO

*ANTONIO makes the shape of a women's hips with his hands and smiles.*

MANGO

Hijole.

No,no!

HÍJOLE

Antonio!

Hijole que mango! (What a cute woman!)

Antonio!

WHAT DID HE SAY?

Dulce. (Sweet)

Oh no.

DULCE

Sin decir. (You don't even have to say it)

Como Lupe, no? (Like LUPE, right?)

JAKE

ANTONIO

LUPE/ROSA

JAKE

LUPE/ROSA

ANTONIO

*ANTONIO points at LUPE.*

LUPE/ROSA

JAKE

ANTONIO

LUPE

JAKE

ROSA

ANTONIO

*(to JAKE, suggestively)*

ROSA

*(to ANTONIO)*

Ah, ah!

*ROSA hits ANTONIO in the arm.*

JAKE

WHAT'S THAT REALLY MEAN?

ANTONIO

Si, si.

LUPE

YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW

ROSA

Es obvio. (It is obvious)

LUPE

JAKE

*(to ROSA, glaring)*

HE DOESN'T KNOW

I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY

EXACTLY WHAT YOU SAY

EXACTLY WHAT THEY SAY

ROSA

Amantes.

LUPE

JAKE

BUT HE CAN GUESS

BUT I CAN GUESS

WHAT YOU'RE TRYING

WHAT THEY'RE TRYING

TO CONVEY

TO CONVEY

ANTONIO

Te gusta la lechuga? (You like lettuce?)

*ROSA hits ANTONIO in the arm again.*

LUPE

*(Tenderly)*

ROSA THINKS THAT WERE SWEETHEARTS

JAKE

And what did you tell her?

ANTONIO

*(to ROSA)*

Ya vamonos. Dejemos a los amantes solos. (Let's go. Leave the sweethearts in peace)

*ROSA comes over to LUPE and squeezes her hand knowingly. ROSA, ANTONIO, and workers (COMPANY) gather the tools and leave the stage.*

LUPE

You have to decide what's right here. Rosa and all the others, they depend on this. And now they depend on you.

JAKE

*(with a sense of wonder)*

It's like my Peace Corps village. Everyone works together.

*JAKE moves closer to LUPE, takes HER hands, and looks into HER eyes.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

Thanks for showing me all this. I think I understand what you mean now.

*LUPE starts to laugh a little.*

LUPE

That's what I always liked about you. You have a big heart Yaik Ruiz. I'm glad that hasn't changed. Even though you don't know Chente from Infante!

JAKE

I plead guilty on that one. Ask me about Prince or Dr. Dre.

*Standing so close THEY can't help but feel the sexual tension. LUPE lets go of JAKE's hands and looks around the garden.*

LUPE

*(wistfully)*

You know, I remember when we were amantes.

JAKE

*(puzzled)*

What are amantes?

*JAKE opens the bag and pulls out a piece of fruit.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

Is this an amante?

*LUPE laughs.*

LUPE

*(suggestively)*

Maybe someday I'll tell you.

JAKE

*(joking)*

Well, I'll just have to look it up on my phone.

*JAKE pulls his cell phone from his pocket.*

LUPE

*(laughing)*

Not now smarty.

*LUPE and JAKE begin to walk hand in hand to a quiet spot away from the garden.*

JAKE

So.

*(pause)*

What about Rafael?

LUPE

Let me worry about that. And sorry about giving you such a hard time. I was pretty pissed.

JAKE

That's okay. I deserved it.

LUPE

Yes, you did. Now show me the man I know you can be.

*LUPE and JAKE sit down on a bench.  
LUPE looks around pensively. JAKE and  
LUPE sing **Cue 23- REMEMBER.***

JAKE

REMEMBER

LUPE

REMEMBER

JAKE  
WHEN WE WERE BOTH SO YOUNG  
OUR LIVES HAD JUST BEGUN

LUPE  
I REMEMBER  
I REMEMBER  
WE DIDN'T KNOW  
HOW FAR WE HAD TO FALL

JAKE  
YOUR MOTHER

LUPE  
YOUR FATHER

JAKE  
I WAS ALWAYS ON MY OWN

LUPE  
BUT NOW YOU'RE ALL ALONE

JAKE  
THAT'S ALL BEHIND ME  
DON'T REMIND ME  
BUT YOU HAVE FAMILY  
TO CATCH YOU  
WHEN YOU FALL  
CARRY THE SINS OF MY FATHER

LUPE  
WHY DO THINGS ALWAYS HAVE TO CHANGE?

JAKE/LUPE  
I NEVER THOUGHT THIS COULD EVER HAPPEN

LUPE  
I'M TIRED OF THE PAIN

JAKE  
IT ALL SEEMS SO STRANGE

*LUPE and JAKE stand up. THEY look wistfully around the garden. JAKE puts HIS arms around LUPE from behind and holds her tenderly.*



JAKE (CONT'D)

NOW YOU HAVE TO HOLD IT  
ALL TOGETHER

LUPE

EVERYDAY'S A BATTLE TO GET THROUGH  
NO ONE EVER WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IT

*JAKE turns LUPE around and looks HER  
directly in HER face.*

JAKE

SO WHO TAKES CARE OF YOU?

LUPE

I WISH I KNEW

*LUPE looks at JAKE as if SHE expects an  
answer from HIM. JAKE puts his arms  
around LUPE again as they look out at the  
garden.*

JAKE

TOMORROW

LUPE

AND TOMORROW  
THE SAME THING EVERYDAY

JAKE

SHOULD I BAIL AND WALK AWAY?

LUPE

DON'T SURRENDER

JAKE/LUPE

DON'T SURRENDER

JAKE

IS THERE SOMETHING HERE  
THAT YOU REALLY LOVE?

*JAKE smiles suggestively.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

REMEMBER?

*LUPE looks intently at JAKE.*

LUPE

*(Teasing, playfully)*

Let me think. Maybe.

JAKE

SHOULD I REMIND YOU?

*JAKE pulls LUPE close to him and looks in her eyes.*

LUPE

I REMEMBER

*THEY kiss. The passion of their first kiss causes JAKE to stumble backwards. HE lands squarely on the bench with LUPE in HIS lap. THEY laugh. Unobserved, ROSA returns to retrieve a forgotten shovel and notices the two lovers.*

ROSA

*(to herself)*

Amantes! Lo sabía desde el principio! (Sweethearts! I knew it all along!)

*Fade to black.*

SCENE 11

11

*A few days later at the PADILLA home in the evening. It is Dia de Los Muertos. There is a small table with a makeshift altar with candles, sugar skulls, marigolds, and a variety of food. NACHO, CONCHISE, LUPE, and GABI are in the kitchen cooking. All the workers (COMPANY) and the Medinas (ROSA and ANTONIO) are standing around the dining room table. There is a sense of excitement in the air. LUPE goes over to a pot of simmering menudo. Tinny background music plays-*  
**SCENE 11 BACKGROUND MUSIC.**

LUPE

Ooo, that smells good.

NACHO

No caca in this vaca!

*ROSA motions for GABI to come out of the kitchen. GABI goes over to ROSA. ROSA whispers something in GABI'S ear excitedly.*

GABI

No me diga! (You don't say)

*GABI goes back to the kitchen, ROSA to the dining room.*

GABI (CONT'D)

*(to LUPE)*

Rosa told me what happened in the garden.

LUPE

I think Jake is their new best friend. They gave him a whole bag of veggies!

GABI

That's not what I meant. I mean everything!

NACHO

Who's watching the menudo?

LUPE

*(beginning to worry)*

Oh, there was some fruit in there too. I think.

*GABI puts her arm around LUPE and takes HER out of the kitchen and over to the altar for a more private conversation. CONCHISE follows them unobserved in order to eavesdrop.*

GABI

I mean the part about you and Jake on the bench. Besando el patrón mija! (kissing the boss)

LUPE

*(mortified)*

Oh. That.

GABI

Listen Lupita, I know it's your life, I just hope you know what you're doing. Does Rafael know about Jake?

LUPE

*(quietly)*

No.

GABI

Mija!

LUPE

I know, I know! Everything is happening so fast.

NACHO

*(to LUPE and GABI)*

If it's not too much trouble, we're cooking dinner here!

*CONCHISE comes out of hiding and walks up to LUPE.*

CONCHISE

*(to LUPE)*

Oo, the garden of love! And with the boss no less! Ay!

LUPE

*(humiliated)*

Oh great! Ahora todo el mundo sabe! No puedo hacer nada en esta familia! (Now the whole world knows! I can't do anything in this family!)

*GABI, LUPE, and CONCHISE return to the kitchen.*

NACHO

*(to CONCHISE)*

Stick to your tamales Miss Chismosa!

CONCHISE

And what do you know about it papanatas!

NACHO

*(sexual reference)*

I know I love your tamales.

*GABI takes LUPE aside.*

GABI

*(softly)*

What does your heart tell you?

LUPE

*(slowly)*

Well, Jake is here and Rafael...

*MR. PADILLA and RAFAEL come through the front door. RAFAEL is in traje de charro outfit.*

NACHO

Is here too!

*Everyone except LUPE goes over to RAFAEL to greet him.*

NACHO (CONT'D)

Welcome back to L.A. Rafael.

*NACHO shakes RAFAEL'S hand. GABI and CONCHISE give him a big hug at the same time.*

Love the outfit!

CONCHISE

*CONCHISE kisses him quickly on the cheek.*

Wonderful to see you Rafael!

GABI

*LUPE has been waiting for all the people to get out of the way. SHE slowly comes over to RAFAEL and gives him a cursory hug. HE looks intently at her.*

Amorcito, how are you?

RAFAEL

*LUPE is slightly cold to RAFAEL and the conversation is a little strained.*

Fine. How are you?

LUPE

Good, thanks.

RAFAEL

*(pause, concerned)*

You okay?

NACHO

How about a song, Chente?

*RAFAEL wants to talk to LUPE, not sing. Background music stops.*

Give him a chance to relax.

GABI

He's famous. We all want a song!

NACHO

*NACHO retrieves a guitar and gives it to RAFAEL. HE reluctantly sings. RAFAEL looks at LUPE during the song, but she looks away. CONCHISE comes up to RAFAEL as he sings and sways to the music. RAFAEL sings **Cue 24-NO SE OLVIDAR** (I can't forget)*

RAFAEL

NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE  
NO SE OLVIDAR AMORCITO  
I'VE KNOWN IT ALL ALONG  
THAT I'VE BEEN GONE TOO LONG  
NO ME OLVIDES (DON'T FORGET ME)  
THERE'S SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND  
I'M IN LOVE BUT I'M NOT BLIND  
BUT AFTER ALL THIS TIME  
ME OLVIDASTE?(YOU FORGOT ME?)  
NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE  
TE VOY A ENCONTRAR  
PUES NO SE OLVIDAR  
AMORCITO NO SE OLVIDAR  
NO SE OLVIDAR  
NO SE OLVIDAR

*(Softly to LUPE)*

No puedo olvidar. (I can't forget)

*Everyone applauds. RAFAEL is confused by  
LUPE'S behavior. GABI comes over to  
LUPE.*

GABI

*(to LUPE so no one can hear)*

Híjole mija! Qué vas hacer?

*GABI shakes her head. RAFAEL sits down  
next to LUPE and takes her hands.*

RAFAEL

What's wrong amorcito corazón?

LUPE

We have to talk.

*There is an immediate knock at the door.  
MR. PADILLA lets in JAKE.*

MR. PADILLA

Jake! Welcome, come in please!

*MR. PADILLA shakes JAKE'S hand.*

NACHO

*(to GABI and CONCHISE)*

Oh, this should be good!

*LUPE is getting nervous.*

JAKE

Thanks Mr. Padilla. Hello everyone!

COMPANY/ROSA/ANTONIO/GABI/NACHO/  
CONCHISE

Hi Jake. Buenas noches!

*ROSA comes over to JAKE and gives him a big bear hug. JAKE smiles. ROSA quickly walks past LUPE and looks in her eyes and speaks softly in a teasing fashion.*

ROSA

*(to LUPE, so no one else can hear)*

Amantes?

MR. PADILLA

*(to the group)*

As you all know, Jake is the new plant owner. And after his help with the Medina family...

*ROSA and ANTONIO react with hand clapping.*

ROSA/ANTONIO

Muchisimas gracias Señor Yaik.

MR. PADILLA

He deserves some of Lupe's cooking!

NACHO

Don't forget Gabi and Conchise too!

MR. PADILLA

That's right! Gabi, Conchise, and Nacho have all been busy in the kitchen.

*MR. PADILLA walks with JAKE over to RAFAEL. LUPE is starting to panic.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)

And this is Rafael, my future son in law from Oaxaca.



*THEY shake hands. JAKE looks questioningly at LUPE.*

JAKE

Pleasure to meet you.

RAFAEL

Igualmente.

*RAFAEL notices the tension between LUPE and JAKE. ROSA comes over with ANTONIO to JAKE and RAFAEL.*

ROSA

*(to RAFAEL)*

Este hombre valiente nos salvó de la migra!

LUPE

*(to JAKE, translating)*

She said you saved them from the INS.

RAFAEL

So you're the hero I've been hearing about.

ROSA

Tenemos unas cosas para tu madre Lupe. Y tu padre Señor Yaik.

LUPE

*(translating)*

This is for my mom and your dad.

*ROSA gives THEM each something for the altar. THEY put it on the altar. LUPE is obviously uncomfortable.*

JAKE

*(to ROSA)*

Thank you so much.

ROSA

*(to LUPE)*

La semana que viene, vengan a cenar.

*(pause and then to ANTONIO)*

Y les enseñaré a los amantes cocinar nopales.

*RAFAEL is slightly stunned by what ROSA says.*

JAKE  
*(to LUPE)*  
What was that?

LUPE  
*(nervously)*  
She wants us to come over for dinner.

GABI  
*(to LUPE)*  
Now mija!

*LUPE starts to speak but is interrupted by MR. PADILLA.*

MR. PADILLA  
Everyone! Atención! A toast!

*EVERYONE gets a glass and stands up.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)  
Tonight we remember those who are no longer with us. We were blessed to have them in our lives. May we keep them in our hearts always.  
*(a somber pause)*

Salud!

EVERYONE  
Salud!

*MR. PADILLA takes JAKE aside while the remainder of the group continues to chatter in Spanish.*

MR. PADILLA  
*(softly)*  
Jake, Rosa has a little something to say.

*MR. PADILLA motion to ROSA.*

MR. PADILLA (CONT'D)  
Rosa, ahorita!

*ROSA comes to the middle of the stage and quiets everyone down.*

ROSA  
Mis amigos! Amigos, cállense por favor, estoy hablando!

*ROSA waits a moment for dramatic effect.*

ROSA (CONT'D)

Tenemos un regalito.

*CONCHISE steps in to translate for JAKE.*

CONCHISE

We all have a little gift.

ROSA

*(in very broken English)*

For Mr. Yaik.

*ROSA produces an envelope and hands it to JAKE and gives him another bear hug.*

JAKE

*(not understanding)*

Gracias Rosa.

*JAKE raises his hands in confusion and looks at MR. PADILLA questioningly. MR. PADILLA comes over to JAKE to explain.*

MR. PADILLA

Everyone here has contributed a little something. It may not be \$25,000 but it's the thought that counts.

*JAKE is amazed and cannot respond for a moment.*

JAKE

Thank you all so much. It's a very generous gift. While it may not be \$25,000, I've learned to have a little faith.

*With his hands folded together, JAKE turns to LUPE and bows.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

Thanks to Lupe here.

*JAKE pauses dramatically and surveys the crowd.*

JAKE (CONT'D)

And so, I've decided not to sell the plant!

*EVERYONE cheers. THEY are ecstatic. MR. PADILLA pats JAKE on the back. ROSA gives him another bear hug.*

LUPE

*(to JAKE, softly)*

I knew you'd do the right thing.

*Out of excitement and delight, LUPE kisses JAKE.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(to JAKE, joking)*

Pretty fly for a pretty pocho patrón!

*THEY both laugh. RAFAEL'S frustration is starting to show.*

RAFAEL

*(to LUPE)*

What's going on here Lupe?

*RAFAEL pushes JAKE. JAKE looks at LUPE.*

GABI

Now Lupe!

*LUPE steps between them.*

LUPE

*(to RAFAEL)*

You don't understand!

RAFAEL

I understand alright. He's the problem.

*RAFAEL points to JAKE. RAFAEL tries to push him again but JAKE parries and sends him crashing into the altar, scattering the altar's items everywhere. MR. PADILLA picks RAFAEL up of the floor firmly and presses him against the wall.*

MR. PADILLA

*(with calm authority)*

You are a guest in my house. Behave accordingly.

*MR. PADILLA releases RAFAEL.*

RAFAEL

I'm sorry Mr. Padilla, but this ladrón thinks he can steal what's mine.

LUPE

*(incensed)*

What's yours? I've been trying to tell you...

*Just then, three shots ring out, interrupting LUPE. Glass flies everywhere. EVERYONE ducks for cover. From offstage we hear a voice yelling.*

PINTO

Have a nice day!

*Three more shots ring out. Glass and debris are flying everywhere.*

GABI

*(furious)*

It's that pinche Pinto! I'll deal with him!

*GABI takes a handgun from HER purse and storms out the door.*

LUPE/CONCHISE

Gabi no!

*GABI fires three shots as PINTO runs off.*

GABI

*(calling after PINTO)*

Nobody messes with my family!

*GABI comes back inside. EVERYONE now notices JAKE, who is sitting against the wall holding his bleeding arm, cut by the flying glass. EVERYONE gets up off the floor.*

LUPE

Jake!

*LUPE rushes over to JAKE. SHE examines his arm.*

LUPE (CONT'D)  
(to JOSÉ MARIA)

Give me those!

*LUPE points to the napkins on the table. JOSÉ MARIA brings them over hurriedly. LUPE presses the napkins to JAKE'S arm. MR. PADILLA and ANTONIO come over to JAKE to examine his arm.*

MR. PADILLA  
That will need some stitches. Can you walk?

JAKE  
I think so.

*JAKE gets up with the help of LUPE and MR. PADILLA and sits down in a chair. LUPE kisses JAKE tenderly on the cheek.*

MR. PADILLA  
I'll need to bandage that before we go.  
(to JOSÉ MARIA)  
Get the kit from the kitchen.

*JOSÉ MARIA hurries to the kitchen to retrieve the kit. MR. PADILLA bandages JAKE'S arm. While he does, RAFAEL comes over to CHUY.*

RAFAEL  
(to CHUY)  
Espero que este pinche puto se sangre hasta la madre y se muera.

*LUPE ignores RAFAEL.*

LUPE  
(to MR. PADILLA)  
I'll take Jake. County General Papi?

MR. PADILLA  
Si, but let Chuy here take Jake. Chuy, take Jake to County General. Here, take my keys.

JAKE  
It's alright. I'll be okay.

LUPE  
You sure?

*JAKE nods. LUPE is reluctant to let him go without her. MR. PADILLA gives CHUY the keys. MR. PADILLA and LUPE get JAKE to his feet. CHUY takes over and holds JAKE'S good arm and escorts him off stage. EVERYONE slowly starts to clean up.*

LUPE (CONT'D)  
*(to RAFAEL, softly)*  
I can't do this. I can't marry you.

*RAFAEL walks to the edge of the stage and sings Cue 25-YA ME VOY. The clean up effort goes on quietly while RAFAEL sings.*

RAFAEL  
*(with a touch of anger)*  
Ay, ay, ay. Esta canción es de dolor. Por que ya te me fuiste mi Lupe.  
I USED TO SING YOUR NAME  
BUT NOW THE SONG HAS CHANGED  
SAD TO SAY  
I THOUGHT YOU'D ALWAYS BE  
WAITING HERE FOR ME  
YA SE FUE  
YOU'RE ALL I EVER WANTED  
NOW YOU TELL ME YOU'RE NOT FREE  
HE CAN NEVER MAKE YOU HAPPY  
NOT THE WAY IT WAS WITH ME  
PARA SIEMPRE IS SO LONG  
BUT NOW THE SONG IS GONE  
GONE AWAY  
YOU WANT HIM I CAN SEE  
AND THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME  
YA ME VOY  
YOU LOVE HIM I CAN SEE  
NO TE PREOCUPES MAS POR MI  
YA ME VOY, YA ME VOY, YA ME VOY

*Fade to black.*

SCENE 12

12

*A few hours later inside St. Mary's church. The church is dimly lit and there is one pew and a rack of devotional candles. LUPE and MRS. PADILLA, sing **Cue 26-I WANTED YOU TO KNOW**. Start cue as soon as the lights come up. LUPE enters the church. LUPE lights a candle reverently. LUPE looks at the candle as SHE sings.*

LUPE

*(tenderly)*

For you Mamá.

ALL THOSE TIMES THAT I CAME HERE  
 DAY AFTER DAY  
 TO ASK YOU TO HELP ME  
 AND TO SHOW ME THE WAY  
 WELL, I'VE FINALLY DECIDED  
 AND YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG  
 TO DREAM MY OWN DREAM  
 TO SING MY OWN SONG  
 I WANTED YOU TO KNOW  
 I WANTED YOU TO KNOW  
 I DON'T HAVE TO CHOOSE  
 THERE'LL BE TIME FOR THAT ONE DAY  
 LOVE HAS TO WAIT I'LL GET TO THAT SOMEDAY

*MRS. PADILLA appears on stage in ethereal dim light.*

MRS. PADILLA

NOW IS YOUR TIME  
 I'LL BE HERE TO HELP YOU  
 JUST FOLLOW YOUR HEART  
 AND REMEMBER I LOVE YOU

LUPE

I USED TO COME HERE EVERYDAY TO PRAY  
 AND ASK FOR HELP TO GET ME THROUGH THE DAY  
 I NEVER THOUGHT MY ANSWER WOULD BE YOU

LUPE (CONT'D)

MRS. PADILLA (CONT'D)

WHAT MY MOTHER USED TO SAY IS STILL TRUE      WHAT YOUR MOTHER USED TO  
 SAY IS STILL TRUE      SAY IS STILL TRUE



LUPE/MRS. PADILLA

FAMILIA Y FE, FAMILIA Y FE  
FAMILIA Y FE, FAMILIA Y FE

LUPE

I WANTED YOU TO KNOW  
I guess it's not just a dream anymore.

MRS. PADILLA

*(tenderly)*

No, it's not.

*MRS. PADILLA slowly fades to black with a slight smile on her face. The scene moves back to the PADILLA house where MR. PADILLA, GABI, NACHO, CONCHISE, JOSÉ MARIA, ROSA, and the COMPANY are still cleaning up. LUPE hasn't returned from St. Mary's yet. RAFAEL is not present.*

NACHO

Well, it's not caca in the vaca now, it's glass in the menudo!

CONCHISE

So sorry mi corazón, it was sabroso.

*CONCHISE throws out the menudo.*

NACHO

I don't think that Pinto idiot will be back.

CONCHISE

Not with Gabi around!

NACHO

Not unless he wants to lose his huevos rancheros!

*Everyone laughs.*

NACHO (CONT'D)

Remind me not to piss you off!

*GABI bows graciously. GABI'S cell phone rings and SHE answers.*

GABI

Bueno?

*(pause)*

Muy bien, muy bien.

*(pause)*

Si, hablaré con José.

*(pause)*

Okay. Bye.

*(pause)*

Hey everybody, Jake will be fine. Just a few stitches.

*EVERYONE sighs in relief. LUPE enters the stage.*

MR. PADILLA

Mija, you're back.

LUPE

I had to go and talk to someone.

MR. PADILLA

Well, I'm glad you're back.

*GABI comes over to LUPE.*

GABI

*(tenderly)*

Let me guess. You've been at St. Mary's.

*LUPE nods.*

LUPE

I told Mom I'm going to college.

*Start Cue 27 here. THEY all sing **Cue 27-FAMILIA Y FE**. NACHO goes to the kitchen and returns with two bottles.*

NACHO

*(excitedly)*

College? Let's get this party started!

*NACHO holds up a bottle in each hand. EVERYONE cheers.*

*NACHO uncorks the bottles while LUPE  
and GABI pass out glasses to EVERYONE.*

NACHO (CONT'D)  
WE'VE GOT TEQUILA AND SOME VINTAGE PULQUE TOO  
HOW 'BOUT A RED HOT, STRAIGHT SHOT

JOSÉ MARIA/NACHO  
STARTING WITH YOU!

*NACHO holds LUPE'S arm up in the air.  
LUPE takes a shot and makes a face.*

GABI/CONCHISE/LUPE  
*(chastising the boys)*  
BUT THERE'S A REASON  
WHY WE ALL CAME HERE TODAY  
SO AFTER ALL THE BEER  
WE'RE ALL HERE  
TO REMEMBER AND PRAY

MR. PADILLA  
That's right.

COMPANY-MEN  
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A PARTY  
TO CELEBRATE THE ONES WHO'VE PASSED  
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE A GOOD TIME  
IT'S NO CRIME

COMPANY-WOMEN  
JUST DON'T GET DRUNK OFF YOUR ASS!

COMPANY-MEN  
*(joking)*  
Oh no, not us!

NACHO  
What about dancing?

*A cumbia style dance ensues. LUPE dances  
by herself for a few moments then the  
COMPANY-WOMEN and the COMPANY-  
MEN pair up to dance. ROSA convinces  
JOSÉ MARIA to dance with HER. NACHO  
tries to show a struggling CONCHISE the  
steps.*

*MR. PADILLA and GABI dance together.  
Soon the music abruptly changes to rap.*

JOSÉ MARIA/NACHO

HEY, YO!

JOSÉ MARIA

WE GOTTA CHANGE IT UP  
THIS IS OLD SCHOOL STUFF  
CHECK OUT THIS CHIDO RHYME  
FROM SOME VATOS IN THEIR PRIME

*JOSÉ MARIA points to NACHO.*

NACHO

WE DON'T MEAN TO INTERFERE

JOSÉ MARIA

WHAT?

NACHO

WITH YOUR LAME SONG  
AND YOUR BEER

JOSÉ MARIA

WHAT?

NACHO

BUT WE GOT A DIFFERENT WAY

JOSÉ MARIA

WHAT?

NACHO

YOU EVER HEARD OF DR. DRE?

*To the delight of EVERYONE, NACHO does  
a series of pop and lock moves.*

JOSÉ MARIA

*(in an emcee style voice, being a little silly)*

Ya quiero presentarles al jefe de la cocina. (And now presenting the boss of the kitchen).  
Give it up for grand master Nacho!

COMPANY-MEN

Hijole, check that out!

ELVIA

Ay, Dios mio!

*In a pitched rap style. HE goes over to CONCHISE and looks at her seductively. Good natured fun.*

NACHO

HEY GIRL, YOU LOOK GOOD TO ME, YEAH SO GOOD TO ME

*CONCHISE smiles and puts her hands on her hips in feigned annoyance.*

CONCHISE

You're ridiculous.

GABI

I don't know, he's kinda cute!

NACHO

*(suggestively)*

YOU SURE COOK, YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE, IS THAT ALL YOU DO?

CONCHISE

Okay, okay. That's enough.

*(pause)*

That's just the tequila talking!

*CONCHISE laughs.*

NACHO

*(to JOSÉ MARIA)*

Hey home boy, help me out.

*JOSÉ MARIA comes over and THEY do a few pop and lock moves in perfect unison. Rap beat ends and the main theme returns.*

LUPE

*(good naturedly)*

Very nice boys, but not exactly appropriate for the occasion. Remember, we're here for Mom.

QUERIDA MADRE, MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY

REMEMBER, BE THANKFUL  
FOR ALL THE THINGS WE HAVE EACH DAY

JOSÉ MARIA

Yeah, like gangs and this shitty house.

*LUPE and GABI glare at JOSÉ MARIA.*

GABI

IF SHE WERE HERE NOW  
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT SHE'D SAY  
REMEMBER YOU'RE IN MY HOUSE  
SO WATCH YOUR MOUTH  
AND DON'T TALK THAT WAY!

JOSÉ MARIA

*(laughing)*

You got that right.

JOSE MARIA                      LUPE

I KNOW WHY WE'RE HERE	FAMILIA Y FE
TO REFLECT AND PERSEVERE	FAMILIA Y FE
IF WE DIDN'T LIVE THIS WAY	FAMILIA Y FE
SHE'D PROBABLY BE ALIVE TODAY	FAMILIA Y FE
SHE BATTLED ALL HER LIFE	
IT WAS ALWAYS SUCH A FIGHT	
SO EXCUSE ME IF I SAY	
IT NEVER SHOULD HAVE	
BEEN THIS WAY	

*LUPE, GABI, and MR. PADILLA come over to JOSÉ MARIA. LUPE puts a hand on his shoulder. EVERYONE else gathers around but at a greater distance. The music grows softer.*

GABI

*(tenderly)*

REMEMBER WHAT SHE ALWAYS USED TO SAY?

JOSÉ MARIA

Yeah, yeah.

GABI

HONOR HER MEMORY  
THAT'S THE KEY  
AND REMEMBER EACH DAY

LUPE

I KNOW SHE HEARS ME  
AT ST. MARY'S WHEN I PRAY  
I KNOW SHE'S ALWAYS NEAR  
KEEP HER HERE

*LUPE puts her palm on JOSÉ MARIA'S  
heart.*

LUPE (CONT'D)

TU FAMILIA Y FE

JOSÉ MARIA

*(reluctantly)*

I know.

NACHO

*(to JOSÉ MARIA, trying to cheer HIM up)*

Dude, a toast for Mrs. P!

*NACHO gives JOSÉ MARIA a shot glass.  
EVERYONE gets their glasses. MR.  
PADILLA leads the toast*

MR. PADILLA

To Señora Padilla, querida madre y esposa. Salud!

MR. PADILLA, LUPE, GABI, CONCHISE,  
COMPANY, JOSÉ MARIA, NACHO, ROSA

Salud!

*JOSÉ MARIA seems to come out of his funk.*

LUPE

I KNOW SHE'D LIKE THIS  
HOW WE REMEMBER HER TODAY  
LET'S HAVE A GOOD TIME  
PATRÓN AND LIME  
I KNOW SHE'D WANT IT THIS WAY  
EL DIA DE LOS MUERTOS  
Y PODEMOS RECORDAR  
HOW THEIR LIVES SHAPED US ALL  
MAY WE RECALL  
OUR DEAR FALLEN STARS

ELVIA, CIERRA, XOCHI, LUPE,  
GABI, CONCHISE, ROSA

IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A PARTY  
THAT'S WHY WE ALL CAME HERE TODAY  
SO AFTER ALL THE BEER  
WE'RE ALL HERE  
TO REMEMBER AND PRAY  
EL DIA DE LOS MUERTOS  
Y PODEMOS RECORDAR  
HOW THEIR LIVES SHAPED US ALL  
MAY WE RECALL  
OUR DEAR FALLEN STARS  
CON MI FAMILIA Y FE  
FAMILIA Y FE

MR. PADILLA, COMPANY-MEN, JOSÉ  
MARIA, NACHO  
I KNOW WHY WE'RE HERE  
TO REFLECT AND PERSEVERE  
HONOR THEM TODAY  
FAMILIA Y FE

LUPE, GABI, CONCHISE, COMPANY-  
WOMEN, ROSA  
FAMILIA Y FE  
FAMILIA Y FE

*MR. PADILLA puts his arm on JOSÉ  
MARIA'S shoulder.*

MR. PADILLA	ALL WOMEN	ALL MEN
No te olvides	FAMILIA	I KNOW WHY
Tu familia		WE'RE HERE
Y tu fe	Y FE	TO REFLECT AND
Honor those		PERSEVERE
Who gave	FAMILIA	HONOR THEM
You life		TODAY
Every minute	Y FE FAMILIA	
Every day	Y FE	

NACHO

Órale!



MR. PADILLA, COMPANY-MEN, JOSÉ-  
MARIA, NACHO

I KNOW WHY  
WE'RE HERE  
TO REFLECT  
AND  
PERSEVERE  
HONOR THEM  
TODAY  
FAMILIA  
Y FE

LUPE, GABI, CONCHISE, COMPANY-  
WOMEN, ROSA

FAMILIA Y FE  
FAMILIA YE FE

MR. PADILLA, LUPE, GABI, CONCHISE,  
COMPANY, JOSÉ MARIA, NACHO, ROSA

FAMILIA Y FE  
FAMILIA Y FE  
FAMILIA, FAMILIA, FAMILIA

*EVERYONE raises their glasses.*

Salud!

THE END