

Anvil

EST 120 Min

Draft # 1

LUIS

(VO)

Have you ever thought where life
will take you? Well! I never had.

(laugh)

What I am telling you, is a story
that shook me to my core. Yeah, it
did change my life, that one
incident, but it crippled me,
mentally, and physically. Life
never goes as planned, but you find
things on the way, one leads to
another, and you finally reach
where you always wanted to go.

FADE IN

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

The scene opens on the wide angle shot of the autopsy room.
Three attendants, wearing black rubber aprons and latex
gloves are working on the body.

CUT TO

Close on a scissor cutting through the jeans of Guillermo.

The attendant places a tink of lead in the pan filled with blood. It is placed on the corner of the slab. After that, he peels back a flap of skin the size of a kitten's ear.

Close on the exit wound, which is dark, hollow.

The first attendant looks at the second and nods. The second attendant pulls a cotton sheet over Guillermo's dead body.

The third attendant brings a manila name tag and fastens it around Guillermo's toe.

ATTENDANT 3

(while fastening)

What's his name?

Attendant 1 removes his gloves.

ATTENDANT 1

(removing gloves)

Oh, that's the kid who stays with
Valeria Santiago, his name is
Guillermo.

Close on - Attendant 3 writing with a marker. He stops and looks at Attendant 1 again.

ATTENDANT 3

Cause of death?

CUT TO

The stainless-steel pan filled with blood, lead, and debris slides off the slab, and hits the ground.

Guillermo's dead body also shifts, and the wire tie on the tag cuts into Guillermo's toe.

The third attendant has left and Attendant 1 and 2 look at each other. Attendant 1 sighs.

ATTENDANT 1

Until I talk with Hector, leave it
blank.

EXT. BEACH DORY FLEET - DAY

We show a wide shot of Dory Fleet.

CLOSE ON - Detective Hector Perez (38) running his finger over droplets of tar, seaweed and sand.

Hector shrugs. He is wearing normal slacks, jacket, and aviator sunglasses.

HECTOR

Tch.

As the scene widens we see his assistant standing with hands in his pocket.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You see anything?

The assistant looks around and points to a pearl-handled gun rolled into the tines of the rake.

ASSISTANT

What's that?

They both look at each other. Hector clears off the sand and looks at the Assistant again, who is now sitting with him. Hector reaches into the back pocket of his slacks and with his handkerchief, he bends over and picked up the gun.

His aviator shades fall off his nose into the sand and taking one step, he crushes the glasses and looks in a random direction.

HECTOR

Chingasa!

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - DAY

The door of the car opens and a briefcase is thrown inside.

CUT TO

The door of the car closes and we see Hector and his assistant sitting inside.

Hector looks into the rear view mirror.

CUT TO

EXT. PARKING - DAY

We show Hector's Ford driving off.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

CLOSE ON - Hector's cat. A piece of fish gets thrown in front of it.

We see Hector in jeans and a red shirt. He is chewing something, opens the door and heads out.

EXT. DANTE'S JAZZ BAR - DAY

Hector is standing outside Dante's Bar. In front of the door, he stares at his reflection for a while, he lights a cigarette, blows his nose, and pushes through the louvered doors.

EXT. PUBLIC BATHHOUSE - NIGHT

LUIS

(VO)

I am standing in a pool of water,
blood, and my own shit.

We show a wide shot of a public bathhouse with Luis standing at the edge. He is covered in blood and shit naked.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

I rub out the blood; the bones and
the brains won't wash off. After
dumping Guillermo in the surf, I
hid in the dunes until dark.

He is rubbing out the blood.

FLASHBACK

EXT. BEACH DORY FLEET - NIGHT

We can see Luis putting sand over Guillermo's **body in hurry**.
He is breathing heavily and he is looking around out of
consciousness. Tears are running down his cheeks.

CUT TO

Luis presses his cheek into the sand.

LUIS

(VO)

Who's looking for me? I have to
guard the dories... who will notice
I'm gone? Will I be safe on the
beach?

FADE OUT

Music starts.

FADE IN

A few days earlier

EXT. ALBERTO'S SHOE REPAIR - DAY

LUIS

(VO)

Guillermo came to the village after a fight broke out in his hometown. Unwilling to fight, he hitched to San Reyes, where, he lived above Alberto's shoe repair with a Puerto Rican dancer.

In a light setting, we show sunlight touching the board of the shop. The camera pans up and we see the window of Valeria's Apartment. He has his bag in his hand and Valeria is helping him with it.

CUT TO

INT. VALERIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Guillermo puts his bag outside and puts his hand on his pelvis and leans. Valeria jumps on the couch.

VALERIA

Welcome home!

Guillermo smiles.

GUILLERMO

Ah! These stairs and this bag,
sucked the life out of me.

Valeria laughs.

VALERIA

You're weak roomie.

Guillermo laughs. Alfred comes running and jumps in Valeria's lap.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Meet Alfred!

She says while rubbing Alfred's head.

GUILLERMO

He's so cute. Do you mind me taking
him for a walk?

Valeria raises her eyebrow.

VALERIA

Would you do that for me?

Guillermo nods.

GUILLERMO

Why nod? You put a shelter on my
head. This is the least I can do.

Valeria smiles.

VALERIA

Well! What can I say, thank you.

Guillermo plays with Alfred.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

On more thing. I talked to my
friend and he said you can join
Dante's from tomorrow.

Guillermo nods.

GUILLERMO

Thanks for doing this. It's been a
week since we met and you are doing
so much for me, I really appreciate
it.

Valeria bursts into a laughter.

VALERIA

Oh don't be like this. Just work
hard dude!

Guillermo smiles and nods, takes Alfred's leash, and walks
out.

EXT. BEACH DORY FLEET - DAY

We show beach waves.

CUT TO

LUIS

(VO)

Guillermo walked Valeria's dog each day to the sea wall, where I saw him reading in the morning light. Eventually he came to visit.

Guillermo is watching the sun with Alfred standing near the sea wall. He turns and Luis is standing with a smile.

LUIS (CONT'D)

I am Luis. I guard the dory fleet.

Guillermo nods and smiles, and extends his hand for a handshake.

GUILLERMO

Guillermo!

Luis shakes hand with him.

LUIS

(shaking hands)

Nice to meet you.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - NIGHT

In the kitchen, we see the staff working. Luis and Guillermo are standing in front of the sink washing dishes.

LUIS

(VO)

We shared a love for wine and poetry, and he sometimes helped me wash the scales and blood out of the boats. We were friends. I was also hired at Dante's where we washed the dishes and helped make the spicy ceviche.

Martha enters the kitchen.

MARTHA

How many times have I said? If one of you is washing the dishes, the other should be serving the customers.

Luis laughs.

LUIS

Oh cut it out Martha. We're doing some speedy work don't stop us.

He winks at Guillermo, who smiles back.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

On our days off, we would hitchhike east of the village to the sandstone cliffs. The canyon was deep, and there was the smell of citrus.

The scene transitions.

EXT. CLIFFS - DAY

Luis is sitting on the cliff with his hands on his knees. He has a wine bottle in one. A backpack is laying in the back. Guillermo is constantly walking back and forth with his notebook in hand. He takes a deep breath and shouts.

GUILLERMO

(gestures into the air)

'I, in the prow, small, hardly human, lost, still without mind or voice or joy... transfixed by the movement of the water flowing between the receding mountains mine alone were those solitary places mine alone that elemental pathway mine alone the universe.

Luis looks at him and smile. Guillermo then throws the notebook towards him and Luis catches it.

GUILLERMO (CONT'D)

Read to me Luis, this is life, read
to me!

Guillermo leaps at the wine bottle and stats gulping it down.
Luis opens the notebook and clears his throat.

LUIS

With his long spear the naked
fisherman attacks the fish trapped
in the rock pool the sea the air
the man are still suggesting a rose
a gentleness spreads from the edge
of the water and rises enclosing
the bluntness in silence..

Guillermo puts his head down and rushes Luis, who laughs in
turn and continues.

LUIS (CONT'D)

One by one the minutes seemed to
fold up like a fan and the heart of
the naked fisherman becalmed its
beat in the water but when the rock
was not looking and the waves had
furled their force in the middle of
that mute world..

There is silence for a moment. Guillermo falls back and covers his eyes.

GUILLERMO

Enough of this Luis! I can't take
anymore. You are too beautiful and
I am too drunk to see the sky.

CUT TO

Guillermo and Luis are sitting in the back of the flatbed truck. They are looking in a random direction. A bottle of wine is sitting between them. Guillermo glares at Luis and smiles. He then grabs his leg, reaches around his neck, and pulls his head to his open mouth. Luis clenches his teeth and pushes him off. He is furious and backs off a little.

LUIS

What are you doing?

GUILLERMO

(smiling)

I like you, baby.

LUIS

I am nobody's baby.

Guillermo laughs and lays on the flatbed, staring at the sun. Luis is still stunned.

EXT. LUIS'S HOUSE - DAY

Luis is watering plants in his garden. He sees Guillermo walking towards him. He quickly shuts off the pipe and starts making his way to the door, trying to avoid Guillermo. However, Guillermo shouts from a distance.

GUILLERMO

Hey, lover boy!

He is wearing a net bag.

CUT TO

Guillermo and Luis are standing in Luis's garden. Luis is poker-faced.

GUILLERMO (CONT'D)

Come on honey; let's take a boat to the harbor. I have wine and a bag of tricks. You aren't going to let a little kiss ruin it for us?

Guillermo puts his hand in his pocket and throws a notebook at Luis. He catches it.

GUILLERMO (CONT'D)

Here, hot stuff. Keep it, doll face.

Luis still doesn't say anything.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Guillermo and Luis are pulling a dory into the surf.

CUT TO

Both of them are sitting in the dory. Luis is handling the boat.

CUT TO

Guillermo takes an unbroken bottle out of his bag and cracks the stem off on the rail of the boat. Luis gets furious.

LUIS

You idiot!

Guillermo laughs and drinks out of the broken bottle. The glass cuts through the side of his lip.

GUILLERMO

Give me a kiss, lover boy!

He winks.

LUIS

Back off.

He scoffs. Guillermo smiles again, takes a sip from the bottle and then reaches for a gun from his bag. Luis is shocked and scared.

GUILLERMO

Hey lover boy, look what I found
under the bar at Dante's.

Guillermo looks at Luis from top to bottom and points the gun at him. Luis starts trembling. He lets go of the oars and stands up. He looks around.

GUILLERMO (CONT'D)

Who is going to be my whore now?

LUIS

Please put the gun away. Put it
down.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - DAY

CLOSE ON - Hector's crooked finger.

The bar has a dark ambience with lights flashing all over. We show dancers entertaining the clients. Some people are giving **strange looks on Hector's finger**.

Hector walks through the narrow path between tables, heads directly to the bar, sits on a stool, and puts his hands on the counter. Dante turns to attend him.

HECTOR

A Rosé.

Dante nods and starts preparing the glass.

DANTE

How's the only cop in San Reyes?

HECTOR

I've got a body and a gun. I'm
going to find the shooter.

Dante stops.

DANTE

Who got hit?

HECTOR

Not a hit. I got a kid on the slab.

DANTE

That's the worst. Whose kid?

Hector is quiet. Dante pours the drink, puts it on a napkin,
and slides it towards Hector.

HECTOR

Let's talk about the gun.

DANTE

What are you talking about?

HECTOR

The boys say you know something
about pistols with pearl handles.

Dante laughs sarcastically.

DANTE

Well, the boys talk too much.

Hector walks up to Dante and places a black notepad on the bar.

DANTE (CONT'D)

Okay, okay, so I keep a gun under
the till.

Dante bends under the counter.

HECTOR

Not so fast.

CUT TO

Hector pushes Dante into a tower of empty beer crates. He falls and aches in pain.

DANTE

(getting up)

What the fuck, Hector.

Hector takes Dante by the collar while running his free hand under the counter.

HECTOR

Looks like you lost your
protection.

He shows him his empty hand. Dante bends and looks at the bottom of the counter.

DANTE

You're kidding; I swear it was
there when I locked up last night.

The band starts playing fast number in the background. Hector
sighs and takes out his notebook.

DANTE (CONT'D)

Both Guillermo and Luis Peralta
were working in the kitchen last
night and should be here now.

Hector writes in the notebook and nods.

INT. PUBLIC BATHHOUSE - NIGHT

Close on - Blood coming down the drain from Luis feet.

CUT TO

Luis is trembling in the shower and crying.

LUIS

(VO)

Who killed Guillermo? Would he have
died if I acquiesced to his
advances? Was he dying before he
came to the coast? Could I convince
Hector Perez that I buried the gun
in the sand out of fear, not guilt?
Would there be an inquest? Would I
bring shame to my family?

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

He pointed the gun at me first. He
pulled the trigger.

Luis' expressions change and the scene transitions.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Luis has the same expressions and the scene widens. Guillermo
is pointing the gun at Luis.

GUILLERMO

The chamber is empty.

He laughs and spins the cylinder and Luis falls back. His
pant is wet.

CUT TO

The church bell rings out. Guillermo puts the long barrel of
the pistol to his temple. Luis' mouth is wide open.

CUT TO

From a distance, we show the silhouette of the dory, sound of
a gunshot and gulls screaming. Silhouette of Guillermo falls.

INT. VALERIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Valeria is standing in front of the mirror, phone between her
ear and her shoulder. She is putting on some lipstick.

VALERIA

Mama, I've got to go.

SANTIAGO

Go! Go! But, Valeria, slow down,
Father's worried. Dancing in a jazz
club like a common whore. He didn't
work his whole life so..

Valeria gets annoyed.

VALERIA

Mama! I'm not a puta. Tell Papa,
Mama. Tell him.

SANTIAGO

Come home, child, he needs to hear
it from you. Come back to San Juan.

VALERIA

Goodbye, Mama.

Valeria hangs up and throws the phone on the side.

CUT TO

Valeria is sitting on the couch with a paper on notebook and
a pen in hand. She writes and reads aloud each word:

NOTE

You are disrespectful and I have
enough to do without picking up
your dirty things. Your mother
called from the store in Del Rio.

(MORE)

NOTE (CONT'D)

The guerillas have moved on. If you come home, Papa will help with your driver's license. Please wash the dishes and pick up the dog from Alberto. Do not open the bottle of rosé. I am saving it for a special occasion... If you see Luis, can you try to get a nice piece of fish? Sunday we will have a little party to celebrate your going.

She puts the notebook aside and takes the paper.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

In Dante's Bar's dressing room, Valeria is alone touching up her make up in front of the mirror. The door opens and Dante enters. He goes straight to Valeria and grabs her by the arm.

VALERIA

Easy, Dante, you're hurting me!

DANTE

Valeria, something terrible is going on, and I need you to listen, and I need you to be okay.

VALERIA

I'm okay, Dante. I'm just hot and tired from dancing.

Dante leans into Valeria and braces her shoulders. He takes a pause before speaking.

DANTE

Guillermo and Luis are missing Val,
and I think Guillermo might be
dead.

Valeria tries to stand up but Dante holds her down.

VALERIA

Angel's not dead, Dante. He walked
the dog for me this morning.

DANTE

He washed up onto the beach this
afternoon.

He backs up a little.

VALERIA

Dante!

She buries her face in the palms of her hands.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Guillermo's Mama called. Angel's
going to be a truck driver; he'll
bring fruit to the plaza. He can't
die, Dante, please Dante, not now.

INT. LUIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Luis is in the kitchen looking here and there constantly. He opens the cabinet and takes out bread.

CUT TO

Luis is eating a sandwich quickly.

CUT TO

In the room, Luis takes a wallet from the desk and takes money from it.

LUIS

(VO)

When they find Guillermo's gun, I will be caught, I will be punished, and I will bring my family shame. They might take my father's boat. How will he live? The older boys will take revenge on my little brother; his mother will be filled with hate. If she sees me, she will call Hector. She protects her own.

EXT. BIKE SHOP - NIGHT

Luis is on a bike. He kick starts it three times and it falls. He is afraid.

LUIS

(VO)

Since I am going to steal, I take
the smallest bike that has gas in
the tank.

The dog starts barking. Luis picks the bike up, kick starts
it again and leaves.

CUT TO

We show him driving the bike on an empty road. He runs his
hand through his hair.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

Tomorrow I will find a boat, a boat
leaving Port Angelino. Fishing, I
could save money and begin
somewhere else. The night is cold.
I will not be put in a cage. I have
a gun.

EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

Luis' camp's light is open. We see Hector's Ford parked
outside it.

INT. CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Inside the camp, Hector has a sack and he is putting Luis' jeans and a book of poetry.

CUT TO

EXT. CAMP - CONTINUOUS

As Hector heads outside, he stops and looks down. In the sand, he finds a red pump and a hoop earring. He looks through the earring.

HECTOR

Valeria Santiago.

CUT TO

Hector is standing near the dunes. He is pushing the sand away with his boots. A shirt gets hooked to it and he stops. He lifts the boot to take a look and finds a blood-soaked jersey that Guillermo was wearing at that time.

In the background, we can hear Luis' bike passing by the road. Hector turns to take a good look at it but his eyes twitch and he puts his hand over them.

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - NIGHT

Hector is sitting in his car writing in his notebook.

LUIS

(VO)

Back in his Ford, Hector tapped his note pad on the briefcase that held the pistol. He weighed his choices. He could wake up the village in a desperate attempt to find Luis. Or he could go home to begin his report and try to sleep.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hector is sleeping on the couch. We hear some utensils fall on the floor and cat meowing. Hector wakes up.

HECTOR

Good Lord! Who's there?

Then he realizes that it's his cat. He looks at the clock. It's 12 o'clock. Hector falls back on the couch, looking blankly at the ceiling.

LUIS

(VO)

For his birthday, Hector fantasized that Miss Santiago would join him for drinks and ceviche at Dante's. Possibly a dance and a walk on the beach would follow.

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

But now this would probably be the
last thing on Valeria's mind.

INT. VALERIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Valeria is standing in the balcony, while holding the note.
She is constantly crying and wiping her tears while going
through it.

LUIS

(VO)

His mother will bury her son full
of disbelief and anger. The family
will crumble like ill-made mortar
holding up a brick wall. The sounds
of Guillermo's singing voice will
haunt the sky above Del Rio.

Valeria puts the note to her chest and cries louder.

A funeral hymn starts playing. The scene transitions.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The church bells ring. It is full.

CUT TO

We show Guillermo's mother and father crying and a woman
consoling them.

LUIS

(VO)

Another poet laid to an early rest.

Near his body, a picture of Guillermo's is placed.

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - DAY

While the hymn continues, Hector is driving the car while eating a sandwich. His suitcase filled with clothes is in the back of the car.

EXT. HECTOR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Hector's car passes by the road. We show a board saying 'Goodbye San Reyes'.

EXT. PORT ANGELINO - DAY

Close on - Balloons and crepe paper hanging from the merchant's windows.

LUIS

(VO)

Port Angelino was prosperous, as it was the port of entry for container ships coming from Europe and the Americas. Opportunity was evident. The streets were safe. The money flowed through town like sweet wine. Good things were happening in Port Angelino.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

A group of men loading the boats with boxes.

INT. CANTINA - DAY

Sea waves are rushing. **Hector are watching them** from the window of the Cantina. He has a cup of coffee and a bowl of custard in front of him.

Opposite to him, the captain is sitting. He has a beer bottle and fish in front of him on the table. The captain rolls his eyes at Hector.

CAPTAIN

Keep your strength up Hector. When the shit hits San Reyes, it can go on for weeks. This tragic shooting of the boy will wake up the natural-born killers that are like rodents in a rocky outcropping. When they smell the blood drying in the hot sun, they will go make their own. Hector, you can do this.

Hector shrugs.

The captain puts down his fork and looks into Hector's eyes.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

It's not always easy to find a killer; but that's what they pay us for. Not why Hector, but who. The villagers need you to be strong, determined.

The captain gestures with his hand and gets back to his plate.

HECTOR

No, you are right.

The captain squeezes Hector's arm.

CAPTAIN

Hit the ball, Hector. Find the killer and bring me the son of a bitch.

He gets furious again. Hector thinks and takes a deep breath.

HECTOR

I have the evidence, I have everything. I even found the footprints of that Santiago girl. And I sense that this boy Luis is also somewhere here.

The captain takes a sip of his beer and burps.

CAPTAIN

You can do this, Hector. Believe
me, you can do this.

HECTOR

Thank you and stop pushing me. I
know I can do this.

Perez gets up.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Are you going to cover it for me?

The captain nods.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Hector is furious and he is driving the car fast while
thinking.

HECTOR

Where is he hiding?

Hector looks out of the window and he sees Luis on his bike.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

What the!

CUT TO

Hector tries to push Luis' bike in the sand with his car.
Luis realizes and tries to change the gear to escape.

HECTOR

Pull over!

He shouts. He notices a gun in Luis' back pocket.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Pull over!

He yells again.

LUIS

I didn't kill anybody!

HECTOR

Pull over! I just want to talk to
you!

Luis is intimidated. A curve approaches. The scooter slows.
Hector also slows his cruiser.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Good boy.

The next moment, Luis speeds into the turn and the road
becomes steeper.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch.

Hector slows on the shoulder of the road to allow a south-
bound fruit truck to pass by.

CUT TO

Luis' rear tire slips on the sand and he falls into traffic with his face dragging along bits of sand and asphalt. Hector's ford bumps over the rear of the motor scooter and crushes Luis's leg below the knee. He cries in pain.

LUIS

Ahhh....What Are you doing?

CUT TO

Hector pulls off the road, jumps out of the Ford and trips head over heels on Luis's injured leg.

Hector is nauseous as he pulls the scooter off Luis.

HECTOR

Hang in there boy, hang in there.

Luis keeps crying in pain.

CUT TO

A bus of school children are yelling and pointing at Luis.

CUT TO

Hector pulls off his shirt and ties a knot around Luis's thigh. A couple is passing by on a motorbike. Hector shouts.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Send the ambulance and notify the hospital that a boy is coming in with terrible injuries!

The bike speeds off and the man yells.

MAN

We will send help. My God, comfort him!

CUT TO

Luis' face, arm, and leg are bleeding.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Hector is waiting anxiously outside the room. Suddenly, Rolando comes running to him.

ROLANDO

My boy? Where's my boy?

Hector points to the room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Luis is lying unconscious on the bed with drips attached to his hand. He also has a ventilator attached to his nose for breathing. Rolando enters the room, looks at him in disbelief and cries loudly.

LUIS

(VO)

I am losing track of time. Has it been days weeks? The nurses are making bets that I won't make it. They float through the halls ready to dump my body, anxious to change the sheets.

CUT TO

Rolando looks at the part of Luis' leg that is gone.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

Hector Perez is taking me in front of the judge on Thursday. It is Monday. I only hope to be dead by morning. The one-legged boy is done. I can't carry on. I am a cripple, why should I carry on?

He sits beside him and cries again.

ROLANDO

What happened to my sweet boy? Who did this to you my child?

LUIS

(VO)

I wonder would a kiss have been so
difficult? Could it have convinced
Guillermo to put the gun down?
Saved the lustful poet. The sun
shines through the eucalyptus. The
ache is always near.

INT. ALBERTO'S SHOE REPAIR - DAY

Alberto is wrapping a pair of wooden and metallic legs in a
newspaper. He carefully cinches with twine and puts it on the
side.

LUIS

(VO)

Mother sent five hundred porno
dollars for my rehab. Money for the
shoemaker, parts will be made.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Rolando enters Luis' ward and a doctor is already there. He
takes off the stethoscope and walks up to Rolando, who is
holding the **wooden legs** wrapped in a newspaper.

DOCTOR

Mister Peralta, welcome, welcome.
Luis is....

Rolando interrupts.

ROLANDO

Please doctor, no speeches. I just spent a lot of money on this arm, this leg. All I want now is to have Luis put together and in a wheelchair.

Rolando clears his throat.

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

We have to be in the court tomorrow. I'm sick with fear. Do what you can. I will be back in the morning.

The doctor nods and looks out of the window. **A can is on parked on the road.**

INT. COURT - DAY

The scene opens on Rolando dragging Luis's wheelchair through the corridor.

LUIS

(VO)

If a wasp wanders into a butter mold, there's no guarantee that it's going to wake up in amber.

Luis looks around and wiggles his nose.

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

The judge is sitting in between and beside him, Hector is sitting wearing a suit and aviator sunglasses.

Opposite to them, there's Luis, and Rolando. And in the ladder-back chairs, Valeria, Alberto, Agnes Mitchell, and two anonymous villagers are present.

Luis turns and glares at all of them. Then turns back.

CUT TO

The judge takes a handful of papers and clears his throat. He is looking down and doesn't notice that Luis is on a wheelchair.

JUDGE

The court will now proceed. May I ask Luis Peralta, to stand up.

Luis looks at Rolando.

LUIS

I can't stand up.

JUDGE

Luis Edgar Peralta, stand up.

Luis is confused

LUIS

I can't get up sir.

JUDGE

Then raise your right hand.

He keeps going through the papers.

LUIS

Can't.

JUDGE

You can't or you won't?

LUIS

Can't sir, it's heavier than it
looks.

The judge looks up.

JUDGE

Will somebody raise this boy's damn
hand?

Rolando jumps up. He raises the lemon-branch arm and the inoperable metal hand of Luis, waving the heavy apparatus at the judge. Luis starts trembling and sweat rushes down his face.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Luis Edgar Peralta, do you swear by the virgin, the saints, and the court, that the statement in Hector Perez's police report, on July the fourteenth, in the village of San Reyes, is the truth?

Luis thinks. Rolando and other people in the court are awaiting an answer including the judge.

LUIS

Yes, it is the truth.

JUDGE

While together in your father's boat, did you watch while Guillermo Lopez spun the cylinder of this pearl-handled pistol?

The judge picks up the gun off the table and waves it erratically overhead. Luis nods.

LUIS

Yes, sir.

JUDGE

Did Guillermo Lopez put the gun to his head?

The judge lowers the pearl-handled gun and places the barrel to his temple. An audible gasp fills the room as the judge asks Luis.

LUIS

Yes sir.

Luis nods quickly. The scene picks pace.

JUDGE

And as the chapel bells rang, did
Guillermo Lopez pull the trigger?

LUIS

Yes sir.

CUT TO

Valeria slumps in her chair as the judge speaks.

CUT TO

JUDGE

And did the gun go off?

Luis tightens his grip on the bench.

LUIS

Yes, the gun went off.

JUDGE

Did you then row from the harbor
and dump his body in the surf?

LUIS

Yes, yes, I did.

JUDGE

Why did you dump the body, Luis?

The judge leans on the table. Rolando shuts his eyes.

LUIS

I was scared. I didn't know what to do. I only went out in the boat because I was frightened from the day before. Guillermo had tried to...

Luis talks quickly like he is running out of time. The judge interrupts.

JUDGE

Enough, I've made my decision. Guillermo Lopez died of a self-inflicted wound. Luis Peralta was the unfortunate witness to this crime. The inquiry is over. Clear the room and bring in the next case.

There's another audible gasp.

CUT TO

Valeria is sobbing.

EXT. COURT - DAY

Hector sits in his car and notices Valeria crossing the road. He drives the car up to her and stops. He pulls down the passenger window. Valeria looks and jumps in shock. Her heel breaks.

VALERIA

Hector? What the hell are you
doing?

Valeria bows down to look at her heel.

HECTOR

Hi, Val. It's me, Hector.

VALERIA

I know who it is, you dumb ox. Look
at my shoe!

Valeria stands straight up with her heel in her hand.

HECTOR

Well, I don't know how you walk in
those crazy things, anyway.

He pulls down his aviators. Valeria is furious.

VALERIA

These crazy things are expensive,
and now you've ruined them.

HECTOR

Guess it's a good thing you live
with that horny cobbler.

He laughs. Valeria has a straight face. She scoffs.

VALERIA

Hector, you're sick. Alberto's a
good man.

Hector opens the car door and gets out.

HECTOR

If he's such a saint, why is he
raising that kid without a woman?

VALERIA

You pig! That little boy's mother
bled to death when her baby was
born.

HECTOR

Yeah, well if I was going to have a
baby, it would be in a hospital,
not at home like some peasant. Come
on, get in. I'll take you and your
high heels to your boyfriend's shoe
shop.

He points towards the car.

VALERIA

You're disgusting. I think I'll
walk.

She gives him a fake smile. Hector fake-smiles back.

CUT TO

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - DAY

Hector is driving his car. He looks in the rear-view mirror and he sees Valeria bowing down looking at her heels. He grins.

The police radio in the Ford starts squawking. He grabs the microphone, straightens his aviators and speaks.

HECTOR

Detective Perez, San Reyes
Division.

RADIO

Cut the bull, Perez! Where the hell
are you?

HECTOR

I'm just pulling into the plaza
central, Captain.

RADIO

Oh yeah, then who's the pendejo
that's fifty feet in front of me?

Hector takes a deep breath, glances in the mirror, and turns
to look out the rear window.

HECTOR

(to himself)

Son of a bitch, son of a bitch, son
of a bitch, son of a bitch!

The signal starts breaking up; Perez leans in to the speaker.

RADIO

Picking up girls... (crackle) ... on
duty... lying... (sputter, sputter) ...
maybe you want, I beat you to
death... (crackle) with a stick?

HECTOR

Yes sir, right away, sir.

RADIO

Right away? Perez get your nose out
of my culo. Find Chihuahua. That
Colombian chingasa isn't happy
running guns, now he's bringing
coke to San Reyes.

Hector clicks on the microphone.

HECTOR

Can't be much money in soda pop.

RADIO

Loco Madre, you idiot, I'm talking
about cocaine.

Hector is annoyed.

HECTOR

Oh yeah, yeah, I think I heard
about that.

RADIO

You're stupid, Perez. You know
that?

The camera pans and we show Rolando's truck.

INT. ROLANDO'S TRUCK - DAY

Rolando and Luis are sitting in the front. Rolando is
driving.

ROLANDO

Luis, now that you are out of
trouble, what will you do?

LUIS

I don't know. What would you do?

ROLANDO

You must work. It won't be easy,
but you must.

Luis hesitates.

LUIS

Before you fished, you were a
professor. Maybe I could go to
school?

ROLANDO

But how will you live? I'll be
paying for the hospital and that
damn motor scooter for the rest of
my life.

There is a pause. Luis nods.

LUIS

Guillermo wrote poems. He said they
sell.

Rolando looks at Luis in surprise.

ROLANDO

Guillermo! That crazy mariposa?

Rolando makes the sign of the cross.

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

That dead boy ruined your life!

LUIS

But you said I must work. Look at me. What can I do? I'm made out of dead tree branches! Maybe you want me to beg and sell lotteria tickets on the church steps like Francisco 'the cripple'? No father, I am a Peralta. I will study. I will write. And I will pay for the hospital. I will pay for the scooter. I will leave San Reyes. Then one day you will say, 'he was right.'

ROLANDO

All I will say is that you are stubborn and stupid like your mother. She ran away so she could show her tits in front of a camera.

Rolando puts his hand on Luis' shoulder.

LUIS

That was a long time ago. You know she is a real actress now, off-Broadway, respectable, a professional. I am proud of my mother; why can't you be?

Rolando takes his hand off and sighs.

INT. DANTE'S JAZZ BAR - NIGHT

Loud music is playing. The bar is crowded and the dancers are busy entertaining.

Luis is dragging through the tables with the help of his crutches. He notices Agnes on a table shouting.

AGNES

Your tabs are longer than Halley's
comet. Pay up you cheap bastards.
This bar runs on money, not
friendship.

Luis stops.

LUIS

(VO)

I can't go in there. Agnes is
right; Dante's isn't in business so
I can drink for free. I must work.
I am no longer a child. It is time
to find Francisco. It is time to
learn what it means to be a
cripple.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Luis walks up to the gate where Francisco is sweeping up used lottery tickets and litter on the steps with a brush and box.

CUT TO

A pelican flies down out of the bell tower almost knocking Luis to the ground. Francisco looks up.

FRANCISCO

What is it, Caravaggio? Was fishing
bad today?

Francisco looks at the Pelican. The bird bounces up a step of the church. Francisco then deliberately looks at Luis with narrow eyes.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Oh look, Caravaggio; it's the boy
who killed the poet.

A shaft of light bounces off the side of the church, lighting up Luis's face.

LUIS

I didn't kill anybody.

Francisco puts his finger below his chin.

FRANCISCO

Hmm.. Are you sure?

Luis scoffs.

LUIS

Ask anybody, they will tell you
that Guillermo stole the gun. I was
his friend and he still killed
himself.

Luis sighs and turns. Francisco stops him.

FRANCISCO

Come on up here, boy, so we can
talk.

LUIS

You had better come down here. I'll
never get up these steps on
crutches.

Francisco laughs.

FRANCISCO

I'm in no mood to argue about what
happened to Guillermo, but from the
looks of you, get ready to do a lot
of crawling. Throw down those
crutches, get down on your nubbins,
and show me what you've got. Show
me that you're ready for your new
life.

(MORE)

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

The doctor didn't tell him,
Caravaggio. The surgeon, the
devil's butcher, not only tricks
death with his fancy stitching and
pints of blood. He makes class and
status. And boy, as God and
Caravaggio here can attest, your
new status in this society is now
lower than the asshole of a stray
dog.

Luis's eyes become red and tears start rushing down his eyes.
He drops to his knees and with his right arm and his metal
claw pulls himself and his wooden leg up the first step.

Francisco raises his eyebrow.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Look, Caravaggio, this boy is
beginning to see what it takes to
be a man. Look he is using his arm,
his anger, and his heart to crawl
out of his pity.

CUT TO

Francisco and Luis are standing in front of each other.
Francisco puts his hand on Luis's shoulder.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

What are you looking for, Luis?
Have you come to steal my job? Are
you looking for the priest? Maybe
you should come back on Saturday,
the day the villagers confess; the
day your sins are forgiven.

LUIS

I don't need a priest, Francisco. I
have been forgiven. I am looking
for work.

FRANCISCO

What can you do, Luis? You are only
half of a man, and this small
village is barely large enough to
support one beggar. Business is
slow; people are suspect of a
lottery with no winners. I make two
cents on a ticket, not enough for a
glass of wine.

LUIS

I am going to be a writer, Don
Francisco. I am a Peralta. I have
not come here to beg.

Francisco laughs louder and looks at the pelican.

FRANCISCO

(shouts)

Listen to him, Caravaggio. Luis Peralta, the son of a professor who taught his students to turn on our government. A pinche leftist who took his pay from the university while he slept with the enemy. A pinche communist, who sympathized with the guerillas, the cowards who hid in the dark palms and shot my legs off, and left me for dead. Your father is an asshole Luis; a weasel pretending to be a man.

Luis gets furious but calms himself.

LUIS

I am not my father. I only want to write so I can make a new life in the north.

FRANCISCO

Ah, El Norte. You can go to the North Pole, Luis, but when you get there, you will still be a criminal.

(MORE)

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Those gringos have no use for you,
Luis, just another brown-skinned
wetback looking for a handout.

LUIS

I will make my own way. I will sell
my stories and I will pay my own
way.

Luis is out of breath now. He sits on the steps.

FRANCISCO

Well, Caravaggio, maybe this boy is
to be taken seriously.

CUT TO

The pelican bobs its head and dances in circles.

CUT TO

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Tell me, Luis, what kind of books
have you read?

Luis sits up straight.

LUIS

I've read many books, Francisco,
but I no longer have the luxury of
aimless reading.

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

I am no longer a child. The next
book I read, I must write myself.

Francisco sits beside Luis.

FRANCISCO

Ha-ha! Did you hear that
Caravaggio? This is not just a
child; he's a silly fool. Luis, if
you are to write, trust me, you
must not give up your reading. You
are a simple boy, the son of a
traitor. Your only hope is to read,
read, and read until your eyes burn
like hot embers. Only by ingesting
the words of others will you get
your head out of your culo and
expand your mind. Maybe then, you
will have something to say. Most
likely not, but like I said,
there's not enough room for two
beggars in this little town.

Caravaggio flows to the entrance of the chapel and pulls from
the shadows a muslin sack. The sack is heavy, and Caravaggio
drops it, spilling the books along the steps that lead to
Luis and Francisco.

Luis and Francisco are surprised by the whole act.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Ah even a stupid bird knows that reading is important. Luis, I want you to get off your culo and look at these books. Take them back to the beach and read them. Read them as if your life depended on it, Luis. Cervantes, Marquez, Joyce, Celine, and even that asshole Hemingway will show you something. Read them all and more Luis, and then we will talk about writing. And stay out of Dante's. That life, the whores, the wine, and the lost souls it attracts will quickly put out the fire in your belly, the fire that burns hot with sin, which never lasts. Feed your fire with beautiful words.

Luis starts gathering the books around him.

EXT. DANTE'S JAZZ BAR - DAY

The sun has risen and a group of fishermen are walking by the sand towards their boats with **nets hanging in their backs.** They find Luis sleeping on the sand with a book on his chest.

They look at each other and laugh. Then they kick the sand on Luis.

FISHERMAN 1

Hey, who's gonna make the coffee?

Luis wakes up.

LUIS

(VO)

Guillermo and I had talked of leaving the village. But just leaving was no longer enough. The months that had passed and the books that Francisco had shared spawned new desire. I could no longer live beneath the anvil of oppressive heat and melancholy. I would find my mother and show my father what the world up north could provide.

Luis starts gathering his things. The fishermen walk away.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

I would make it to Manhattan. I had forgiven my mother for leaving the family to pursue her dreams.

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

The dirty movies she'd made were only the means to an end. After years of hard work, she had gotten a break. Her agent had found work for her off Broadway.

While Luis is gathering stuff, another fisherman approaches him.

FISHERMAN 2

Where have you been, Luis?

LUIS

I have been reading here.

FISHERMAN 2

Agnes Mitchell is ill at ease boy. She has grown used to you writing at your table in the bar.

Luis dusts off his clothes.

LUIS

Tell Agnes I will return when I am ready to write over the jazz and confusion. I'll write something that will take me north to my mother.

FISHERMAN 2

Write if you must, but remember she left us here to fend for ourselves a long time ago.

Luis becomes annoyed.

LUIS

Yes, but we survived and she has achieved success without our help. Keep fishing if you must. I am going to find myself somewhere far away from this village. You know as well as anybody that San Reyes is the past. San Reyes is dying. I will drag myself north and find a new way. Please believe in me as I have begun to believe in myself.

The fisherman nods.

FISHERMAN 2

Yes, Luis you can follow your imagination as far as it will take you, but first help me with this boat. Exercise your mind in the books, but keep your body strong. You may need it when you see what the city takes from you.

(MORE)

FISHERMAN 2 (CONT'D)

When all hope and the big dreams
die, you may be back one day, and
your good leg and your metal hand
may be the only things that brings
you food. Now, let's get this boat
past high tide.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - NIGHT

Dante is frying the patties. He looks back at Agnes, who is
washing the dishes.

LUIS

(VO)

Lew Mitchell lost his dishwashers
the night Guillermo and I left the
kitchen at Dante's. Without our
help, the cook quit and the food
for the fishermen was gone. They
griped as their stomachs emptied.
As a last resort, Lew fetched his
mother off of her perch on the
rusty freighter and brought her to
the bar. Agnes began cutting fish,
washing dishes, and grilling
steaks.

Agnes also looks back and smiles at Dante.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

Guillermo's death was finally
fixing their troubled history.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

It is a dirty alley with trash coming out of the cans.
Valeria is standing with hands in her pocket waiting.
Chihuahua appears. He is a muscular man wearing a backpack.

LUIS

(VO)

The longing for a woman superseded
Hector Perez's desire to be a good
cop. Some days, on the orders of
the Captain, he made a veiled
attempt to shut down Chihuahua's
drug dealing. But every day after
feeding his cat, Hector came to San
Reyes looking for Valeria Santiago.

CUT TO

Hector's Ford is parked on the other side of the street. He
is sitting with his seat leaned back looking constantly at
Valeria.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

Blinded by her magical pair of legs, Hector never saw the money or the coke that the two exchanged.

CUT TO

Chihuahua hands a packet to Valeria. She looks around and puts it in her pocket. Chihuahua zips back his bag.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

The only thing standing between the trickle and a river of coke was Hector Perez. The stream of drugs found its path of least resistance because the detective had his sights on only one thing, the culo of Valeria Santiago.

CUT TO

Valeria notices Hector's Ford. Chihuahua disappears in the alley.

CUT TO

Valeria is standing near the passenger window of Hector's Ford. She leans, flashing her breasts a little. Hector is surprised.

VALERIA

What do you want, Hector?

Hector's mustache twitches and Valeria laughs.

HECTOR

Isn't it a glorious day, Miss
Santiago?

VALERIA

Hector, in case you haven't
noticed, yesterday was hot as
Hades. Today's the same, and I
think it'll be this hot tomorrow,
too. Now tell me, detective, what
are you really looking for?

HECTOR

My, what a lovely dress you have
Valeria.

Valeria giggles.

VALERIA

That's right, Hector. It's kind of
you to notice. I have this one and
I have one just like it at home.
How very observant, Hector, guess
that's why you're a detective.

There is an awkward pause. Hector is gathering the courage to ask for a date but he couldn't.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Hector.

INT. DANTE'S JAZZ BAR - CONTINUOUS

Music is playing. The doors swing open and Valeria enters. She walks up to some other dances near a wall in the corner.

CUT TO

Valeria is talking with other dancers and her gaze is focused on the doors.

LUIS

(VO)

As Valeria pretended to listen to the girls, she thought of the scene with Hector. Maybe she had been cruel to the detective. He only needed what every man wanted, time with a lady to break the moronic monotony of the tropics.

CUT TO

The door opens again and this time, Hector enters Dante's bar.

He nods at one of the fishermen on the table and walks straight to Valeria. He grabs her by the arm, the other dancers back off a little.

DANTE

Valeria, if you could just give me a bit of your time some evening, I will show you that I am not just any man but a man who seeks your friendship. A man who seeks your respect.

The dancers against the wall giggle and purr. A dancer in a velvet miniskirt speaks.

DANCER

Valeria might be done with young boys, but Hector Perez is in for a big surprise when he gets that girl alone. He'll run for his mama when he fondles her tight ass and breaks his neck on her cold heart. She sleeps with children and is looking for something that normal men don't possess.

They giggle again.

VALERIA

I will fix you a meal, Hector. We can sit and talk. Even a stray needs a friend.

HECTOR

Valeria, I am not a stray. I am respectable. I am not a dog.

VALERIA

Hector, I was just trying to be funny. Women like to laugh.

HECTOR

I know how to laugh, Miss Santiago. I have a cat. He makes me laugh a lot, like when he falls through...

Valeria interrupts.

VALERIA

We will talk later. Come to my house Sunday.

Hector grins.

INT. HECTOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hector is in the bathroom, standing in front of the mirror all dressed up. He has both his hands holding each side of the sink. Hector looks in the mirror.

HECTOR

What's wrong with me? It's a date
with a girl, a pretty girl, yes,
but just a girl. Five years since I
touched a girl.

Hector raises his hands and looks at them.

CUT TO

The cat rubs up against his leg. Hector jumps and trips over
his pet. His head hits the edge of the sink. Hector cries.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Ave Maria Gato! Are you trying to
kill me?

The cat jumps out of the window.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Oh my pinche Dios!

He gets up.

CUT TO

Hector is holding a fish against his swollen head, when the
radio stutters. Hector looks at the clock.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Oh I'm gonna be late for the date.

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - NIGHT

Hector is in the car. The radio stutters.

HECTOR

Hector Perez, San Reyes division.

RADIO

What took you so long, Perez?

HECTOR

It's Sunday sir, my day off sir.

Hector sighs.

RADIO

Don't 'sir' me Perez. I don't care if it's the birth of Christ. Where the hell is Chihuahua? We've got kids high as goats running around. They're causing trouble in the school and all because you're a lazy shit. We've got a situation, Perez. A situation. One pinche arrest would have made it all go away.

HECTOR

It's not that simple, sir.

RADIO

You're right Hector, it's getting complicated. I've got every parent in the village calling me night and day.

HECTOR

I'm sorry to hear that, sir.

Hector's forehead starts to sweat. He unbuttons the top of his shirt and opens the window of his car.

RADIO

You're taking me for a fool again, Hector. I think it's time to get your nose out of Valeria Santiago's tits and start doing some police work.

HECTOR

I didn't know you knew Miss Santiago Sir. Yes, I think there is an attraction that I would like to?

RADIO

Bring me the head of Chihuahua and then you can play house with anyone you like.

(MORE)

RADIO (CONT'D)

Get your ass up to the plaza, crack
open a few crates, crack a few
heads. Get that coke out of the
hands of those kids.

Hector throws his hand against the steering wheel.

HECTOR

Yes, sir.

Hector opens the glove box and takes out a cologne. He puts
it on, takes a bouquet from the other seat, opens the door
and gets out of the car.

INT. OUTSIDE VALERIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Hector knocks on the door. He has the bouquet in his hand
now. After a while, Valeria answers the door without makeup,
in a plain black shirt, her hair in a braid.

Hector is in surprise for a moment.

VALERIA

Hi Hector. What happened to your
eye? You look terrible. Did
somebody hit you or did you fall in
the bathtub?

Hector's face looks miserable.

HECTOR

Are you going to invite me in?

VALERIA

Oh yes, come in. You sound hungry.
But I'm telling you, that eye's
going to take some getting used to.

INT. VALERIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Hector is sitting on the edge of the sofa nervously. Valeria comes to the sofa and hands Hector a bottle of rosé and two glasses.

She sits down next to Hector. Alfred shoots out of the bedroom and leaps into Valeria's arms.

Hector dives into the corner of the sofa protecting his face with the bottle of wine. Valeria giggles.

VALERIA

Easy, Hector, it's just my little
dog.

Hector calms down and removes the bottle.

HECTOR

I am from the country. We don't
keep dogs in the house.

VALERIA

Oh I couldn't imagine not having my
little friend in my bed when I wake
up.

HECTOR

I could.

Valeria laughs.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Like I was trying to tell you a few days ago, I have a cat. A funny cat with a broken tail and a bare patch where he was chewed on by a dog. I was able to shoot the dog. But it was a lot of work getting kitty out of the beast's jaws. The fur never grew back, reminding Kitty to be more careful around mean dogs.

Alfred bared its teeth as Hector pops the cork on the wine.

VALERIA

Please, Hector.

Valeria pulls down the hem of her skirt to cover her knees.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

No more talk about guns and killing. Let's enjoy this wine and then we can eat.

Hector nods.

HECTOR

Yes, the smell from your kitchen
would make anyone...hungry.

Hector licks his lips.

LUIS

(VO)

Since arriving in San Reyes, Hector
had suffered a sexual drought. The
softest thing that he had taken to
bed was his cat, Kitty. But the
solemnity of the apartment, the
peasant dress, and the bared gums
of her little dog hampered
Valeria's allure.

Alfred jumps off the couch.

VALERIA

Are you unhappy, Hector? You look
disappointed, but it's hard to
tell. That eye, it's awful. Maybe
we should eat.

HECTOR

Yes, I need to eat and drink and
enjoy this evening. Ever since I
first saw you at Dante's, I have
imagined a night like this.

(MORE)

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Most of the women there have bad reputations and will go out on the beach with anyone with a little cash. But you are different, you are precious.

Valeria pulls Hector by the hand to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Hector is sitting on the dining table. Valeria takes a piece of fish from the pan and puts it on the plate in front of hector.

CUT TO

Valeria is washing the dishes. Hector is standing against the counter looking at Valeria's bottom constantly. Then he takes a few steps forward and puts his arm around her. He reaches down and pulls her shirt above the turn of her ass. He bends over Valeria and inhales. He unzips his pants.

VALERIA

Stop that, Hector.

Hector backs off and trembles. Valeria is embarrassed and shouts.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Get out of my house! You're just another man who wants to screw.

(MORE)

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Get out! Go to Dante's, there are girls there you can have for a few dollars.

Hector zips his pants.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - NIGHT

In the kitchen, agnes is sitting beside the steamer. She is smoking a cigarette and has a copy of life magazine in her hand. She is going through the pages. Agnes takes a puff.

LUIS

(VO)

Agnes knew if she could just reach one of her connections in Los Angeles, she could get hold of the right music, some dope, and a disco ball; she might lure the young kids out of Port Angelino.

In the magazine, we show a picture of well-dressed teenagers with noses full of coke doing a complex dance step under the spinning balls.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

Staring at the photographs, Agnes had convinced herself that this lawless little village could be something special? A regular Caribbean San Tropez in America's backyard. No more black beans, drawstring pants, and huaraches. Her son's club would cater to the wealthy, the artists, and the literary intelligentsia.

Dante enters the kitchen after turning off the lights of the bar. He notices his mother.

DANTE

Let's go to the bar.

Agnes closes the magazine and looks at Dante.

AGNES

Jazz is dead, you moron.

She breathes.

AGNES (CONT'D)

When we get there, Lewis, you're going to walk right up to those nitwit musicians and tell them to pack it in. It's adios and goodbye.

(MORE)

AGNES (CONT'D)

Give them one last drink, then it's vamanos. You got that, Lewis? It's time to get with it. Everything worth having is coming out of Port Angelino. It's time for us to siphon off their youngsters, who will spend more in an hour than those smelly fishermen spend in a day.

Dante shrugs.

DANTE

You used to like jazz, Mother.

Agnes takes the last puff of her cigarette, throws it on the floor and smashes it. Dante is watching the whole act.

AGNES

Yeah, well I used to like a lot of things, son. It's the seventies, Lewis, and you either get hip or you may as well shut down that shitty little bar and get lost.

DANTE

And where do you plan on getting a disco ball in the tropics?

Dante struggles with the frayed rope on the outboard motor.

DANTE (CONT'D)

And what about the goddamn disco music? And you can't be selling cocaine to children like banana daiquiris without Hector Perez breathing fire up our asses.

AGNES

Details, Lewis, just little problems to be solved. Now help me down these blasted stairs and into that leaky skiff of yours. We're going to clean house. We're going to get Dante's rocking.

Dante thinks.

LUIS

(VO)

All went according to plan. The crestfallen band walked out of the bar with their instruments into the inferno of the morning sun. They walked down the beach, disappearing into the undulating heat waves, never to be seen again. The interesting quintet had arrived at Lew Mitchell's without warning.

Agnes talks to herself.

AGNES

(to herself)

Details, just shitty little
details.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Luis is sitting in an empty area beside the dories. He has a package in front of him.

LUIS

(VO)

The deep throb of disco had driven me from my makeshift desk at Dante's, scuttling to take cover like a sand crab safe in the shadows of the fishing dories. I felt safe there. I had been guarding the dories and sleeping on the beach since the birth of my father's son with his new wife. I had been cast off like a piece of unwanted furniture by my stepmother when I was twelve.

Luis tears a corner off the package and takes out a linen suit. Manhattan is written on the package.

CUT TO

Luis reaches beneath the overturned dory, pulls out a bottle of rosé, his notebook, a pack of Atlas cigarettes, and begins to write.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

Again, the story went nowhere.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Francisco is sweeping the floor. Luis enters the church. He makes a cross and then walks up to Francisco.

CUT TO

Francisco stops as Luis enters with a notebook in his hand taking support from the crutches.

LUIS

Hello Francisco, it's Luis. Are you busy? I just came by to talk and thank you for the books.

FRANCISCO

Ah, it's my peg-legged writer friend. Come up and sit down. But watch out for the pelican shit. Our friend isn't housebroken yet.

(MORE)

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Silly bird doesn't realize that it's bad luck to shit where he eats. That's a bit of a cliché, but I find there's some truth to it. Yes, avoid clichés young man and only call an ace an ace when no other words will bring meaning to your thoughts. How's the writing going? Have you begun a masterpiece?

CUT TO

Luis is sitting on one of the benches. Francisco is standing opposite to him.

LUIS

No, I am pretty discouraged. All the books I've been reading are a lot better than anything I can come up with. I tried to write a story about Caravaggio.

Francisco raises his eyebrow. Luis clarifies.

LUIS (CONT'D)

Not the bird but the seventeenth-century painter.

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

He was really good with a brush but had to leave Genoa after being charged with murder. For the longest time, people thought it was a crime of passion between Caravaggio and the murder victim, but now, years later, the historians find out that Caravaggio was not homosexual, and that the man he murdered was a pimp.

Luis sighs.

LUIS (CONT'D)

But it was stupid, and I quit.

Francisco laughs.

FRANCISCO

Luis, first attempts don't always go somewhere. First drafts are about falling trees in the forest, second drafts are like making lumber, and final drafts are when you build a box or a house for the readers to see.

LUIS

Thanks, Francisco. I have a deep
longing to write and make my
parents proud.

He sits back.

FRANCISCO

Fuck pride, Luis, it's a writer's
enemy. If you write for approval,
money, or fame you'll be satisfied
hacking off the branches of what's
in fashion or predictable. Charge
the whole tree, Luis. Cut that
fucker down. If you have something
to say, say it. Don't beat around
the bush. That's a cliché,
Luis...just checking to see if you're
awake. Here I need to go sell false
hope to the lost souls.

Francisco raises his finger. He puts his hand in his back
pocket and takes out a book. He hands it to Luis.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Luis, here's a good one. An
Englishman wrote it.

LUIS

(holding the book)

What's it about?

FRANCISCO

Read it, then come tell me what
it's about. Malcolm Lowry almost
died getting this one into print.

Luis nods.

INT. VALERIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Valeria puts on her jeans and looks out of the window.

Hector's Ford is parked outside.

VALERIA

(VO)

He almost raped me. Why would he
treat me like a whore? Why can't he
be more like Guillermo, gentle,
even sweet, the young angel? Why
must old men act like dogs? Hector,
not even thirty, sniffs the ground
I walk on, waiting for me to take
him to bed. He must learn not every
stray needs a friend.

EXT. VALERIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Valeria is standing near the Ford's passenger door. She leans and shouts.

VALERIA

Hector, you lazy rabbit. Why do you just sit there? Was it too much to come to my door? Or were you too ashamed after what you tried in my kitchen? Everyone knows we're friends, so quit hiding in the bushes and show me a little respect.

Hector gets out of the car and opens the door of the car for Valeria. She smells and sits inside.

CUT TO

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - DAY

Hector and Valeria are sitting in the car. A fan is throwing air. However, Hector is still sweating.

Valeria turns to the rearview mirror to check her makeup, she flicks a loose eyelash out the window. She returns the mirror, looks at Hector and gives a warm smile.

VALERIA

Let's go.

Hector smiles.

LUIS

(VO)

Beneath his bushy mustache, Hector actually had a sweet smile. Her papa had been a freewheeling caballero, raw and restless. But mother had tamed the man. It took lots of love and discipline, but she broke him.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Francisco is sitting on the stairs counting lottery tickets. The Pelican is moving beside him. Hector's Ford passes by the stairs. Valeria leans and waves at him. He waves back and then notices Hector.

FRANCISCO

(shouts)

You are an ugly bug.

CUT TO

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - NIGHT

Hector turns to Valeria.

HECTOR

I don't know why all the scum and street people have to wash up on our beaches. It's disgusting and bad for the tourist business.

VALERIA

Hector, there is no tourist business, and that poor man, who is an intellectual, lost his legs fighting the guerrillas. He gave his legs for this country. Where were you when the fighting broke out? Does it make you feel important to call our hero 'scum'?

HECTOR

Yeah, well what about your little angel, Guillermo? I suppose you were proud to have that suicidal mariposa sleeping on your couch?

Valeria buttons her shirt.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Everyone knew, Miss Santiago, you weren't fooling anyone.

VALERIA

You're the fool, Hector. I thought you could change but you can't! You were born a pig; you live like a pig, and one day you will die like a pig. And what makes you think Guillermo slept on the couch? If everyone knows, then they better get the story straight. Even dead, that poet has more heart than you.

Valeria starts crying. Hector sighs.

HECTOR

Ave Maria, you're not telling me you slept with that little chingasa?

VALERIA

(sobs)

That boy made love like a man, Hector. Guillermo had more machismo in one of his beautiful fingers than you have in your whole, fat, stinking body.

The car comes to a stop in front of Dante's. Disco music is playing.

HECTOR

Did you sleep with the queer?

Valeria leaps over Hector's police paraphernalia and sinks her teeth into the Hector's scalp. Hector pitches forward, engaging the transmission. The car crashes through Dante's plate glass window.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Dante is cleaning the windows. As the car crashes, he freezes. The dancers and fishermen turn towards the scene. Agnes yells.

AGNES

Who's going to pay for this? Which
one of you jackasses is going to
pay?

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Valeria and Hector are stunned. The radio stutters.

RADIO

Perez, pick up!

Agnes skates towards the car on shards of broken glass.

RADIO (CONT'D)

Goddamn you, Perez, I said pick up!
Where the hell are you?

Valeria clings to Hector's back as he bends over and picks the police microphone off the floor of the car. **Hector the button.**

HECTOR

Hector Perez, San Reyes division.

RADIO

What took you so long? By God, you better not be up there chasing girls.

HECTOR

No sir, I'm chasing Chihuahua. I see him right now. He can't see me but I've got that little Colombian prick right where we want him.

RADIO

Well don't just sit there, go get him, Hector! Get off your fat culo and bring him in. Bring me the head of the devil. Bring me the head of Chihuahua.

Agnes is still stuck in the glass. Valeria moans and gurgles. Hector is bleeding.

CUT TO

Dante throws a towel at Agnes.

DANTE

Here, Agnes, looks like Hector
needs a little clean up.

EXT. PLAZA - NIGHT

Hector's Ford is parked outside the Plaza. He has a towel
around his scalp with red stains on it. He is watching
Chihuahua.

CUT TO

Chihuahua is unloading crates from a taxi.

LUIS

(VO)

Chihuahua was unloading crates of
fruit and contraband with the help
of an underemployed cab driver,
Javier Vidal Cervantes. His taxi
was clean and gassed up for the
next fare. Some days there was no
one to pick up, and he grew
restless sitting alone in the car.
He had to be ready for anything. It
had been less than a week since he
had picked up and delivered Lew
Mitchell's mother from the sandlot
outside the courthouse.

CUT TO

INT. HECTOR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Hector is still watching.

LUIS

(VO)

Things had not gone well for Hector since crashing into Lew Mitchell's Disco bar. Chihuahua had slipped through the traps set by Hector and the captain. He needed change, and the captain had insisted that he leave for Padua. He would not be missed for a few days.

Hector starts the car.

LUIS (CONT'D)

(VO)

Dejected, Hector pulled out of the plaza and sped east on the old road to Padua. The captain, Valeria, and the village could screw themselves.

INT. HECTOR'S FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

Hector is sticking his head under the faucet.

CUT TO

Hector is wiping his face on the flour sack that is hanging from a nail next to the sink.

Hector's mother comes out.

MOTHER

Hector, you're home!

She exclaims. Mother wraps her arms around his middle.

Hector's father also appears and looks at him from top to bottom.

FATHER

Doesn't look like you've missed many meals. Maybe we better kill another chicken to fill this boy up.

HECTOR

It's good to see you too, Father. Looks like you lost a kilo for every one that I gained.

Mother laughs.

MOTHER

Hush, Hector. He is not well. The doctors say he has smoked himself into an early grave. A death that we can't afford.

(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

And when he's gone, who's going to plant the corn? Come back to Padua, Hector. Come back to bury Papa and help out until I die.

HECTOR

That could be a long time, Mama. They need me on the coast, but I will send more money. The cousins will help. Right now, I am just happy to be home, and for a few days I look forward to forgetting about San Reyes.

CUT TO

Hector is lying in his room looking at the ceiling.

LUIS

(VO)

Disgusted with his work as a cop, longing for sex with Valeria, and passing his time with the memory of his cousin, the smells from his mother's kitchen awoke a hunger for sweetbread and butter.

Hector sniffs and turns his position on the bed. He closes his eyes.

EXT. HECTOR'S FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

Hector and his father are standing outside the farm. His father is holding a rifle. A rabbit is dead in front of them.

Father stomps the animal with his huarache, and ties the two front legs with a length of wire that he wraps around his waist. He pants.

HECTOR

We should go back to the house.

Hector points.

FATHER

What's your hurry boy?

Hector is annoyed.

HECTOR

Ok then, give me the rabbit and the gun. You sound like you're dying.

FATHER

We're all dying, Hector. Here, give the rabbit to your mother. She has been waiting to cook something special for you. And take your grandfather's rifle. I am done with the hunt. Take this gun that belonged to my father.

(MORE)

FATHER (CONT'D)

Take good care of it, and one day
you can give it to your son.

Father hands the gun to Hector. Then, he starts untying the
rabbit.

LUIS

(VO)

After a sleepless night in his
childhood bed, Hector took a bag of
sweetbreads, the rifle, and a
framed picture of his father,
loaded the Ford, and headed back to
the village. He would find Valeria.
He would salvage his job and he
would pray for a son.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - NIGHT

Dante's bar has changed completely into a disco. Even a disco
ball is hanging on the dance floor.

CUT TO

Valeria is standing in front of the bar. Dante slides a
bottle of Rose and she takes out a pack of cocaine and slides
it to Dante.

LUIS

(VO)

Chihuahua, to increase his profits,
was cutting the cocaine with a
caustic mix of baking soda and baby
laxative. It blew out the blood
vessels in the nostrils of the
disco dancers.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Luis is sitting with his notebook in hand. Valeria appears
from the back. Luis turns.

LUIS

Que lastima, Miss Santiago? What
are you doing out here in the
middle of the night?

VALERIA

I thought you might be thirsty,
Luis.

She shows him the bottle and kicks off her shoes. She leans
up against one of the overturned dories.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

I see you are studying like a monk
and living like a hermit, so I
bring refreshments and artsy favors
from Dante's Discotheque.

Valeria unbuttons her pajama top, reaches into her bra and retrieves a small vial of uncut cocaine. She scoops up a fingernail and holds it out to Luis.

Luis scoots over to Valeria and, while lightly touching her hand, snorts the white powder.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Hey, angel, be a gentleman and open
this bottle for me.

Valeria hands him the bottle.

Luis pounds the bottom of the bottle with his shoe. The cork rises slowly. He bites the end of the cork and pulls it from the bottle as Valeria holds out the two glasses.

Valeria takes her wineglass and offers another fingernail of coke to Luis.

LUIS

Thanks, Valeria. This stuff was
everywhere in the hospital. The
night nurses teased me with lines
on their bellies while dripping
morphine into me intravenously.
They had a real party. I was at
their mercy.

(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

One minute I was over-stimulated
from the coke and the next down and
depressed from the smack.

VALERIA

I see loneliness, Luis, where
others might just see pain.

She pats on Luis's shoulder. Luis laughs.

LUIS

Miss Santiago, at least you can see
me. I've become invisible to
everyone in the village, patched
together with lemon wood and iron,
studying books that I don't
understand.

VALERIA

Come back to Dante's, Luis. Agnes
misses you. She's old, rickety, and
wild, but she knows about life.

Valeria reaches out and takes an oily shank of Luis's hair
and tucks it behind his ear. Luis looks into Valeria's eyes
and pulls the rest of his hair out of his face. Tears run
down his cheeks as Valeria ties a ponytail with a strip of
leather.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

See, Luis, you're not invisible.
You're not a ghost. Here, let's
drink to tomorrow. We will go to
Dante's together, but first we need
to get away from all this nasty
fish business. I will walk you to
the bathhouse.

LUIS

I'd rather not.

VALERIA

Then we will go to my house. You
need a bath. I will wash your
clothes and we will eat and drink.
Your face is beautiful. Yes, we are
all lonely, Luis. The dories will
keep. You have a sad heart; it
needs the feel of clean sheets.

She sighs and leans close to Luis's face. They kiss.

EXT. CHAPEL - DAY

Outside the Chapel, Francisco and the pelican are sitting
looking at the sky.

Hector's Ford wheezes, clanks, and dies in front of them.
Francisco looks down.

FRANCISCO

Look, Caravaggio, it's our fat
friend Hector Perez.

The pelican squawks.

Hector kicks open the door of the car and twists out from
behind the steering wheel.

CUT TO

Hector is standing opposite to Francisco.

HECTOR

Tell me about Chihuahua and
Santiago. I know you know
something. And while you are at it,
tell me about a good mechanic too.

Francisco laughs.

FRANCISCO

Honest cops and mechanics are hard
to come by, Perez.

The pelican begins screaming at Hector.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

As for your friend Valeria, well,
you better start chasing another
whore.

Hector grabs Francisco by the collar.

HECTOR

Valeria's not a whore, you asshole.
Why would I give up the chase? I
have come back to this town to bust
the Colombian and find Miss
Santiago. She will be mine.

Francisco laughs again and spits on the side.

FRANCISCO

Well, you better get in line; she's
living la vida loca with the
Peralta boy above Alberto's.

Hector leaves his collar.

HECTOR

Right, and your legs are going to
grow back for the next Olympics.

Hector kicks Francisco, spits at the bird, and stumbles down
the steps. Reaching into the Ford, he pulls the heirloom
rifle out through the window and begins walking to Dante's.

INT. DANTE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Hector notices the ambiance of Dante's bar and scoffs. Dante
shouts from the till.

DANTE

Welcome home! What's new in the hinterland? Did your family and friends treat their prodigal son with warmth and kindness?

HECTOR

Shut the fuck up, Mitchell.

DANTE

Whoa, hold on, Hector. I was just trying to be friendly.

HECTOR

Well, I'm not looking for friends. Give me a glass of your rosé and leave me alone.

DANTE

Right away, detective!

Dante notices the gun.

HECTOR

Good? Now leave the bottle and go back to your work.

CUT TO

Hector is sitting in a corner table. He has a bottle of rosé on the table and he is drinking from the glass. Hector is furious. Dante is putting a sandwich on the table.

DANTE

That's some gun, Hector.

HECTOR

Leave me alone, you gringo pendejo.
Fetch me another bottle and mind
your own business.

Dante leaves.

AGNES

Watch your language, hot stuff.

Hector turns to look at Agnes.

AGNES (CONT'D)

That's right, I'm talking to you,
fat boy.

CUT TO

Hector slides off his stool and lumbers up to the table where Agnes is sitting behind a mound of cash.

HECTOR

Watch your mouth, you evil, dried-
up woman.

AGNES

Where's your girlfriend Valeria,
detective? I heard after she bit
you, you ran home to mommy.

HECTOR

Where is Miss Santiago?

AGNES

That's easy Slim, your hoochi-
coochi dancer is shackled up with
Luis Peralta. Ha ha ha, how does it
feel to lose your girl to a one-
legged rascal?

Hector tips the table of money onto Agnes and walks back to
the bar.

CUT TO

Dante has a bottle in hand. Hector walks up to him.

HECTOR

Call me a cab. Call me a cab, God
damn it! Mitchell call me a pinche
taxi.

EXT. PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

A teenager is desperately waiting. He takes out an empty
packet of cocaine and looks above.

TEENAGER

Hey Chihuahua, you coming?

The body of Chihuahua falls and his head cracks against the footpath. The the teenager screams in horror and runs away.

The camera pans up and we show Hector standing near the window of Chihuahua's apartment from the outside.

LUIS

(VO)

Now that Chihuahua was out of the way, Hector was determined to talk to Valeria.

INT. OUTSIDE VALERIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Climbing the stairs next to Alberto's shoe shop, Hector stops mid-flight to tuck in his shirt. He smooths his bushy mustache.

CUT TO

Hector knocks the door furiously. Luis opens. Hector pushes the door, and Luis falls on the floor.

HECTOR

Where's Valeria?

Hector points the gun at Luis.

LUIS

I don't know. I just woke up. What
are you doing here?

Alfred comes running and clings to Hector's boot as he walks
to the bedroom, and sticks the barrel of the rifle into the
dark room.

CUT TO

In the bedroom, a sliver of light from the front room
illuminates Valeria.

HECTOR

(shouts)

Get up.

His eyes are red with tears.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Get up.

Valeria turns. She is completely naked. Hector loses it.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Get up, god damn it!

VALERIA

What do you want?

Valeria pulls the damp sheet to the top of her breasts.

HECTOR

Get out of bed.

CUT TO

Luis is still on the floor terrified.

CUT TO

VALERIA

No!

Hector shoots a missed-bullet at Valeria. It goes through the clapboard wall of her bedroom.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Ave Maria, Hector!

Valeria jumps naked from the bed.

VALERIA (CONT'D)

Don't kill me. Please, I beg you
don't kill me. And for the love of
God, let me get dressed.

Hector deeply inhales. He points the barrel of the gun at the black silk pajamas lying over the back of a small chair.

Luis shouts.

LUIS

Leave her alone! Mother of God,
leave her alone!

CUT TO

Hector walks back into the front room and kicks Luis's wooden leg into the kitchen.

HECTOR

Shut up you, one-legged mariposa.

Valeria is in her pajamas. She comes from behind and jumps onto the back of Hector.

The shots ring out as Valeria reaches around and grabs the barrel of the rifle.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Let go, you puta! Let go!

CUT TO

Valeria and Hector are still trying to get hold of the gun in the bedroom.

VALERIA

Shoot it all you pig! All of it,
Hector. This will be your last
dance.

A few shots go missed into the walls.

The chapel bells cling. Luis hops to the bedroom. He swings his lemon-wood leg into the scalp of Hector. Hector's head pops and the gun falls.

CUT TO

Valeria is standing over Hector while Luis straps on his missing leg. Valeria picks up the rifle and she pulls the trigger.

The bullet misses Hector and hits a wall clock. There's a knock on the door. Valeria and Luis look at each other.

Alberto enters the room.

ALBERTO

Que pasa, Señorita? We heard fireworks. Are you having a party? Oh, Hola Luis, you must be the honored guest. And I suppose that's Hector Perez lying drunk from wine?

VALERIA

Chingasa! There isn't time. There isn't time. We have to get this bastard out of here.

Alberto realizes and looks at Luis and Valeria. He backs off a little in disbelief.

ALBERTO

All hell's broke out in the plaza. People are running in and out like the place is on fire.

VALERIA

Well, he can't stay here. Help me,
Alberto. I beg you. Help me!

INT. ALBERTO'S SHOE REPAIR - CONTINUOUS

The three of them are in Alberto's bedroom. Hector is trussed onto one of the four posts of Alberto's bed.

ALBERTO

Ave Maria, My wife, bless her soul,
would die again knowing the likes
of Hector Perez was lying in our
bed.

INT. LUIS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

At Luis's father's, Rolando, in an undershirt, is sitting at a painted table helping Luis's stepbrother with his school papers. He has his reading glasses on. The stepbrother is writing in the notebook.

Valeria and Luis appear in the room. Rolando notices.

ROLANDO

Go to your room!

The stepbrother runs away.

Rolando puts down his pencil, hooks his thumbs in the straps of his shirt, and pushes back from the table. The pencil hits the floor.

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

Ah, the prince and his queen have
risen.

LUIS

No father, we have been awake for
hours. Your heir and his queen
barely escaped Hector Perez.

CUT TO

Luis and Rolando are sitting on the table. Rolando looks
disappointed. In the back, we can see from the door of the
room that Valeria and his wife are discussing something.

CUT TO

Rolando rises from his chair and picks up the receiver of the
telephone from the wall.

MAN

Barbizon Hotel, how may I direct
your call?

Rolando looks at Luis.

ROLANDO

I want to speak with Maria Peralta.

MAN

One moment, please.

Luis gets up and walks close to Rolando.

MAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, sir; there is no Maria Peralta at the Barbizon. Have a nice day.

ROLANDO

Wait, wait, and don't hang up.

Rolando puts a hand on the receiver and looks at Luis.

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

Luis, Luis, what's the name of your mother's pimp?

LUIS

Les Demay. And he's a theatrical agent, not a pimp. Ask for Mr. Lester Demay, father.

Rolando groans.

ROLANDO

Lester Demay, Can I talk to him?

CUT TO

Rolando takes a deep breath.

MARIA

Hello!

ROLANDO

Maria, its Rolando. Don't hang up.

MARIA

Why are you calling me? I'm
sleeping. What do you want now?

ROLANDO

I want nothing. It's about our boy.

MARIA

I sent him clothes. I gave you
money-five hundred American
dollars? If you remember. Now what
do you want?

ROLANDO

I want you, you who left him as a
small child, to shut up and listen.

Rolando starts shouting

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

Luis has to leave San Reyes-today!
Maria, you have to hide Luis.
There's a storm brewing down here,
and I'm not talking about the
weather. Now get your rotten ass
out of bed and start acting like
the boy's mother!

Maria hangs up. Rolando also puts the receiver back and looks at Luis.

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

Chop, chop, Luis. Get up, get that girl, go get on your suit that your mother sent and get to the airport. I will have Javier meet you at the dories. Here.

Rolando speaks while taking a coffee can from the cabinet. He takes out a bunch of dollars.

ROLANDO (CONT'D)

Go to Manhattan, find your mother and wait. I will contact you when or if you can return to San Reyes.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS

Valeria and Luis are in the plane. Luis has a note in hand.

NOTE

Luis, I don't know what you have done to cause you to leave San Reyes without notice. But please stay out of trouble until you land safely in New York.

(MORE)

NOTE (CONT'D)

I am in rehearsals and have arranged for you to go to Long Island where you will stay with the playwright Edward. All I know, and I don't know much, is that you are traveling with a woman from the bar in San Reyes. I pray that she is not the reason that you are on the run. Dress nice for the play and come to my dressing room after the curtain falls.? Love Maria.

Luis puts his hand on Valeria's and smiles. Valeria smiles back.

LUIS

(VO)

Mother had fought back the guilt of abandoning me in the hospital in Point Angelino. She would open in two days with me in the front row.

FADE OUT

THE END