

P A D R E P I S T O L A S

by

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Based on true events

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INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - FRIDAY MORNING

SUPER: Based on a True Story

The sun blares through the window and makes RAMON GUTIERREZ, 30s, GROAN. He turns over to avoid the sun and sends an empty tequila bottle to the floor where it SHATTERS.

SUPER: Friday Morning

THIS finally wakes him up.

He gropes for a cigarette, lights it, then staggers to his feet and makes his way in his boxer shorts through the detritus which includes clothing and a guitar.

At the kitchenette he removes the old coffee filter from the coffee maker and throws it into the over-flowing garbage can.

He fumbles with a new filter.

He fills the carafe with water and empties it into the machine. He finds the coffee can and GROANS again when he discovers it's empty.

Looking around for options, he finally reaches over and takes the old filter from the trash and inserts it into the coffee maker and turns it on.

He removes an ice tray from his small refrigerator, empties the tray into the sink, and fills the sink with water. Bracing himself he sticks his head in the icy water.

He dries himself with a towel he finds on the floor.

He fumbles with his socks, shirt, boots, and jeans and straps a pistol to his thigh.

A priest's cassock comes down over the entire ensemble.

Ramon takes a sip of the coffee and grimaces.

He looks at the sorry apartment, grabs his guitar, bag, and leaves.

EXT. MEXICO - GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS - WEDNESDAY

SUPER: 48 Hours Earlier

A flatbed truck loaded with WORKERS arrives at the doors of a large building with a sign proclaiming "Gutierrez Pharmaceuticals"

The workers get off the truck and enter the building.

INT. GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS - LATER

In a starkly modern laboratory a white lab-coated, safety glasses-wearing CHEMIST carefully pours a white substance into a flask. He stirs the flask thoughtfully as he watches the particles swirl in the liquid.

INT. GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS - LATER

In the print shop portion of the complex a printing press expels "Viagra" labels. Workers stack the labels into trays and then stack the trays onto a pallet.

INT. GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS - LATER

A machine spits out little blue pills into a waiting container. Container after container fill then move along the conveyor belt.

INT. GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS - LATER

The workers load sealed boxes marked PFIZER onto a truck.

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER

The truck pulls up to a plane with a Department of Homeland Security seal.

MEN load the plane.

INT. GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS - LATER

A GROUP OF CAMPESINOS surround PEDRO GARCIA, late 20s, on the floor of the pharmaceutical plant.

PEDRO

Ask yourselves: How can we have a better life? How can we hope to get ahead?

CAMPESINO 1

What can we do?

CATWALK

WILLIAM BLANCHARD, 60s, a large and imposing man, Orson Welles on a good day, watches the men in his G-man suit in strong contrast to the campesinos' rags.

FLOOR

PEDRO

It must be better for all (pause)
or we shut this place down.

The faces of the poor workers are seen in the dim light.
Heads nod and there are hushed WHISPERS of agreement.

PEDRO

No work without better pay. Yes?

Several of the men SHOUT their agreement as the group
continues with nods and MURMURS.

CAMPESINO 2

Aye. The gringos will go loco
without their Viagra.

A couple of the men laugh and hold up their index fingers
straight and then curl the fingers over.

CAMPESINO 2 LAUGHS and grabs his crotch.

CAMPESINO 2

Mexico, where men are men.

CAMPESINO 1

And the women are happy.

More of the men SNICKER and LAUGH.

Blanchard catches the eye of JORGE ALVEREZ, 30s, the steroid-
induced bodyguard of William Blanchard, black jeans, black
boots, black Western shirt, who sits and reads a newspaper
while he surreptitiously keeps an eye on the men.

PEDRO

Hermanos, we must stick together.

CATWALK

Blanchard nods in the direction of Pedro.

FLOOR

Jorge nods, folds his paper, rises to his full height, and
strides over to the men. Some notice his approach and slink
back to their work.

PEDRO

Together!

Pedro looks up and finally sees Jorge approach. Jorge's smile reveals his gold tooth but it's not a happy smile. He takes Pedro's arm and escorts him through a side door.

JORGE
Vamanos, Caesar Chavez.

The campesinos scatter and from the expressions on their faces, you can tell they don't expect to see their friend again.

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

SUPER: Friday Morning

MIGUEL GUTIERREZ, late 40s, needs a haircut and the forty pounds he lost while in jail. The sweat-stained wife-beater he wears shows off his assortment of ink. The GUARD opens the cell door and motions for Miguel to follow him.

Miguel's CELL MATE doesn't look up from the comic book he's absorbed with.

INT. PRISON - CONTINUOUS

Miguel walks behind the Guard, his eyes fixed straight ahead, as INMATES SHOUT from their cells.

EXT. AIRPORT - EL PASO - DAY

MEN unload the PFIZER boxes from the plane then load them onto an unmarked truck as Blanchard watches and smokes a cigar.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY - LATER

Blanchard walks into the back door marked *Department of Homeland Security, El Paso*.

He stops at the desk where the SECURITY Guard and ANOTHER WORKER have their backs to him as they watch a TV news program.

TV ANNOUNCER

...counterfeit prescription drugs are on the rise. Globally the trade is estimated to be in excess of thirty-five billion dollars a year with a predicted growth rate between twelve and sixteen percent.

(MORE)

TV ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

In three years it is estimated to reach seventy-five billion dollars.

The Security Guard mutes the TV and looks to ANOTHER WORKER.

SECURITY GUARD

Don't tell the Mexicans. They'll be on that faster than stink on shit.

Blanchard walks off, his snakeskin boots reflected in the freshly waxed vinyl floor.

He nods to his SUBORDINATES who greet him as he walks through the hallway to his office.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - LATER

ANGELINA BLANCHARD GUTIERREZ, mid 30s, and 'wife' of Miguel watches as DR. ENRIQUE RIVERA, 50s, examines a baby.

She gently places her hand on the Mother's shoulder to reassure her and smiles at Enrique who catches her glimpse and smiles back at Angelina.

Angelina blushes as she realizes she was more attentive than she intended.

INT. PRISON - LATER

Miguel comes out of a dressing room and wears what were his flashy clothes now absurdly large for him. He collects his WALLET from the GUARD. Miguel opens it. It's empty. The GUARD shrugs and Miguel tosses it back on the counter and leaves.

INT. KITCHEN - EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - DAY

Angelina stands at the large wood work table. She breaks eggs into a colorful bowl.

Angelina gently beats the eggs. She adds sweetened condensed milk until the mixture is just how she wants.

Angelina walks to an open cupboard and pulls out several small containers. She walks to the mortar and pestle and measures in small amounts of whole spices and grinds them finely.

EXT. CHURCH - GUADALAJARA - DAY

Ramon leaves the Church. The sun is so bright it causes him to grimace. He puts down his duffle bag and guitar in order to find his sunglasses.

Across the street a FEDERALE hassles a GENTLEMAN dressed in Peruvian clothes.

Father Ramon picks up his duffle bag and guitar and crosses the street. The Federale backs down with the few words from the authoritative-looking Ramon and goes away.

The Peruvian gentleman profusely thanks Ramon. Ramon shrugs *no problem*, resumes an air of piety, and walks off.

EXT. PRISON - LATER

Miguel squints in the sun as the prison door CLANGS behind him and he makes his way down the highway to town, a small duffle bag by his side.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - KITCHEN - DAY

Bowls and pans hang from the ceiling, shelves laden with jars and small boxes, ropes of dried chillies.

Angelina takes a vanilla bean from a closed jar. With a knife she slices the bean lengthwise and then carefully scrapes the inside of the bean to remove the vanilla pulp and seeds.

Angelina fills the flan dishes lined up on baking trays. She runs out of mixture before the trays are full. She reaches into the basket of eggs but finds none.

Angelina rearranges the baking trays with the filled cups and then puts the trays in the oven. She then takes the basket and leaves through the back door of the kitchen.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATE FRIDAY AFTERNOON

A green, pink, and what was once white bus precedes a cloud of black smoke and stops by the roadside.

A cart in the shade of a cottonwood tree sells fruit juice.

Hat in hand, Ramon steps off the bus, wipes his brow, and puts on his hat against the late afternoon sun.

He looks about, lights a cigarette, and nods to the people.

A handful of PASSENGERS clamor to board with their earthly possessions.

WOMAN WITH BUNDLE
Bless me, Father.

Ramon makes the sign of the cross with his hand holding the cigarette.

RAMON
And where are you going?

WOMAN WITH BUNDLE
To my sister and her husband. In Los Angeles. I am to live with them.

RAMON
May your trip be safe, my daughter.

Ramon spots Miguel across the road and then looks back to the woman.

RAMON
God's blessings upon you.

Ramon quickly crosses himself.

RAMON
Amen.

WOMAN WITH BUNDLE
Amen.

Ramon takes wide strides across the dusty road.

RAMON
Miguel!

Miguel stands from where he was crouched down and shades his eyes against the late afternoon sun.

MIGUEL
Still padre to the great unwashed, eh?.

Miguel gestures to the cigarette and Ramon fishes one out of his pocket, gives it to Miguel along with some matches.

Miguel lights up and pockets the matches.

MIGUEL
Let's go.

The two men walk back toward the bus. Miguel cuts in front of a FAMILY who organize their bundles. Ramon lifts a bundle the smallest CHILD struggles with and helps him board the bus.

I/E. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Ramon sits next to Miguel who just looks out the window.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The bus pulls away from the stop. The man with the drink cart rolls it away.

EXT. GARDEN BEHIND EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Angelina steps out of the hen house with a basket of eggs.

ANGELINA

Gracias, my lovely ladies.

Angelina closes the hen house door then stops at a green bean bush. She picks off ripe beans before moving to the next bush.

She disappears through the back door of the cafe with her basket.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - CONTINUOUS

Angelina sets her basket down on the work table then looks into a large oven where trays with cups of flan bake. She takes a knife next to the oven and slides it into one of the cups, then another, sets the knife down, and closes the oven.

MARIA ELENA, MARTA, and CONSUELO enter.

All are about Angelina's age and dress conservatively except for Consuelo who looks like she's on the make (she is): flamboyant colors, dangly earrings, bracelets that announce her every move. And that red hair is probably not hers either.

MARIA ELENA

Just in time!

The women take up their familiar spots in Angelina's kitchen.

ANGELINA

Si, just in time to help.

MARTA

Help? When watching you -

Angelina removes the flan from the oven and sets it on the work table.

ANGELINA

- no one is idle today. Marta, you wash the beans I just picked.

Angelina looks around to see where she needs the few extra hands. Angelina walks to a shelf and takes down a stack of brightly colored tablecloths.

ANGELINA

Maria Elena, you and Consuelo - the tablecloths.

MARIA ELENA

(to Consuelo)

Clearly too many years at the convent school. She's as bossy as Sister Magdalena.

CONSUELO

It wasn't called Our Lady of Perpetual Perfect Posture for nothing.

ALL

Sit up straight!

They LAUGH.

Maria Elena and Consuelo disappear out the door to the dining room. Marta sorts and washes the green beans.

MARTA

Did you bribe Father Nunez to bless your garden? Just look at the size of these beans.

Maria Elena pops back in the kitchen.

MARIA ELENA

Did I hear something about a bride and Father Nunez? Who's getting married?

Maria Elena walks over to where there the cups of flan cool. She leans close and then looks about for a spoon. Angelina blocks her from the flan.

ANGELINA

Work first. Flan later.

Maria Elena waits for Angelina to turn her back then she steals a cup of warm flan. Marta is poised with a spoon and steals a bite.

Consuelo comes into the kitchen and manages to get a spoonful as well. Maria Elena looks at the now near-empty cup while her friends clearly savor their ill-gotten gains.

Angelina LAUGHS and pulls up a stool to the kitchen table after taking a cup of flan for herself.

ANGELINA

A wise woman said, if you can't
beat them, join them.

Maria Elena, Marta, and Consuelo pull up chairs with another cup of flan to share amongst the three of them.

MARTA

Very wise indeed.

CONSUELO

A new recipe?

ANGELINA

Just trying some different spices.
I added cardamon. What do you
think?

MARTA, MARIA ELENA, CONSUELO

(in unison)

Best ever.

ANGELINA

You always say that.

MARTA

We know which side our flan is
battered on.

All CHUCKLE.

ANGELINA

Okay. Break time's over.

Angelina stands then picks up a box that overflows with colorful paper decorations and walks with the others through the doorway that separates the restaurant's kitchen from the dining room/bar area.

RAMIREZ (O.S.)

Fuck!

DINING ROOM

SERGEANT ESTEBAN RAMIREZ, late 30s, in his Federale uniform stands on a ladder and struggles with a WELCOME HOME PADRE RAMON sign from the rafters, his pits soaked with perspiration.

Angelina sets the box down on a table near the bar and pulls out party decorations.

RAMIREZ
(to the gang of three
women)
Buenos tardes, Senoras.

MARIA ELENA AND MARTA
Buenos tardes.

Consuelo looks up from her work and positions herself a little too seductively.

CONSUELO
Senora? Oh Es-te-ban, you surely
must know I am not married.

Ramirez looks uncomfortable.

RAMIREZ
Senor---ita Martinez?

CONSUELO
Not that un hombre fuerte in my bed
would be unwelcome of course.

Ramirez looks even more uncomfortable.

Angelina looks at Consuelo with a familiar *not now* look. Consuelo reluctantly returns to helping Marta and Maria Elena.

ANGELINA
(to Ramirez)
Almost done I see.

RAMIREZ
You really know how to torture a
man, Angelina. The smell of your
flan baking is almost more than I
can bear.

ANGELINA
There's one with your name on it.
Does that help?

Angelina walks to get another view of the sign.

ANGELINA
Very nice, Esteban.

RAMIREZ
It should be. I've been working
like a dog. But Javi and Armanda
made the sign.

Angelina looks at the sign with admiration.

ANGELINA
I don't know how we'll keep someone
with Javier's talent.

RAMIREZ
Your daughter's here. Javier will
be here.

Both CHUCKLE. Angelina pours herself a glass of lemonade and
holds the pitcher above a second empty glass.

ANGELINA
Yes?

Esteban climbs down from the ladder, whips out his
handkerchief, and mops his brow.

RAMIREZ
That's my reward for all this
labor?

Angelina shakes her head good-naturedly.

ANGELINA
The flan is cooling in the kitchen.
Go help yourself.

Ramirez walks out of the dining room to the kitchen.

ANGELINA
But leave some for the paying
customers.

Angelina looks and sees that her friends have finished the
decorations.

ANGELINA
Ladies?

The friends sit at the bar and pass the pitcher of lemonade.

Angelina pulls a vodka bottle from the counter and puts a
large splash in her glass and silently offers it to her
friends.

The friends grin. She pours.

MARTA

Poor Consuelo...

ANGELINA

Poor Consuelo? I'd say poor Esteban. How many years has this been going on?

CONSUELO

What's been going on?

MARIA ELENA

Don't play innocent. You've been swooning over our dear Esteban since what - you were ten?

MARTA

Only since ten? Feels longer.

Marta swirls the vodka into her glass of lemonade with her finger.

CONSUELO

Sometimes you just know from a very young age who is your soul mate. Angelina knows what I mean. Yes?

Maria Elena and Marta give Consuelo a *I can't believe you said that* look. Angelina pretends not to hear.

CONSUELO

I don't know what it is about Esteban, but when I see him I just want to -

MARTA

- Oh please. You've been married and divorced what - three times? Not counting the stunt when you were fifteen and ran off to El Paso with Juan.

CONSUELO

(overly dramatic)
All that searching because I couldn't have the man I want.

MARTA

I doubt Esteban could tell you were pining away for him given the revolving door at your house.

CONSUELO

I see no sense in staying married
when I don't love someone.

Consuelo looks to Angelina. Angelina looks uncomfortable.
Maria Elena gives Consuelo the stink eye.

MARIA ELENA

So, what are we drinking to?

ANGELINA

Let's drink to -

MARTA

- How are you holding up?

Angelina looks at Marta.

ANGELINA

We're drinking to holding up?

MARTA

That isn't what I meant.

MARIA ELENA

What do you propose we drink to?

CONSUELO

Forgetting is good...

MARIA ELENA

Yes, lots and lots of forgetting.

ANGELINA

What are we forgetting?

MARIA ELENA

I forgot.

They all LAUGH and drink deeply on their lemonades.

MARTA

Seriously, Angelina, how are you
holding up?

ANGELINA

We are drinking to forget. That
isn't helping. I'm okay.

There is a long silence.

MARTA

Of course you're okay. But it's
been -

ANGELINA

- a long time. A very long time.

CONSUELO

Armanda gave me an earful yesterday about Miguel. There's no stopping her.

Angelina LAUGHS.

ANGELINA

I'm sorry. Sometimes she doesn't know what's appropriate to say and what's not.

MARTA

She's young and passionate. I like that about her. We were young once.

Angelina shifts around a bit then rubs her lower back.

ANGELINA

Were we?

Angelina CHUCKLES.

MARTA

Yes, young and couldn't imagine the world not running our way.

CONSUELO

We wanted to set the world right.

Angelina shifts uncomfortably.

ANGELINA

I know I'm supposed to love Miguel, you know, because he's my husband, he's...

Angelina stops.

MARTA

Go on.

ANGELINA

He needs to move out from my father's shadow. And (long pause) Ramon coming back...

Maria Elena CHUCKLES. Consuelo gives her a *behave* look.

MARTA

Yes?

ANGELINA

It's been so many years since I've seen him except that time from across the grave at his father's funeral.

CONSUELO

That was a very difficult time.

MARIA ELENA

You know there's a special place in Hell for people who lust after priests.

Angelina looks shocked then turns serious.

ANGELINA

You have it all wrong.

MARTA

For what it's worth, I agree with you about Miguel.

CONSUELO

For what it's worth, I think you need to stop pushing love away.

Angelina looks at Consuelo.

CONSUELO

I don't mean Miguel - or Ramon.

ANGELINA

Then what do you mean?

Consuelo looks at Marta and Maria Elena for support.

CONSUELO

Doctor Rivera. You must see how he looks at you. Those big, dark sad eyes - they ignite when you walk into the room.

ANGELINA

I don't see -

CONSUELO

- you don't want to see -

MARTA

- it's enough -

CONSUELO
- if you 'see' you would have to
make a decision.

Consuelo drinks deeply on her lemonade. They all sit
silently.

I/E. BUS - LATER

RAMON
It will be good to see El Verano
again.

Miguel doesn't respond and continues to stare out the child-
sized-finger-smearred and dusty bus window.

RAMON
I heard there is a new super
mercado and Angelina says the
cinema is open every night now not
just on weekends.

Miguel finally looks at Ramon.

MIGUEL
You talked with Angelina?

RAMON
Yes.

MIGUEL
Did Angelina put you up to this?

RAMON
You mean meeting you? No.

Miguel GRUNTS and looks back out the window.

RAMON
Father Nunez is retiring and the
Church thinks I should take over.

Miguel turns his attention back to Ramon after the bus leaves
the village. He settles back into his seat.

MIGUEL
Convenient. The prodigal son
returns.

RAMON
Hardly - I had my life in
Guadalajara.

MIGUEL
At least you had one.

RAMON
What's that supposed to mean?

MIGUEL
I've spent the last eight years
locked up.

RAMON
At least you're still alive.

MIGUEL
Yeah. Not that the Corderos didn't
try while I was in prison.

RAMON
You've been lucky. Now it's time to
look forward.

MIGUEL
Yeah. Forward.

Both men sit with the uncomfortable silence for a time.

There's a crate of chickens tied to the back of the bus. Any
bounce with a rut in the road releases a CLUCKING chorus.

INT. - BLANCHARD VILLA - LATER

Angelina rearranges the contents of the wardrobe in her
bedroom. She pulls out some things, folds some, and puts them
into a box. Others she puts back into the wardrobe.

It's quiet in the house. A cat lounges on the bed.

Angelina pulls a Tehuana dress off the top of the open box
and holds it up to herself and looks in the long mirror on
the wardrobe door.

ANGELINA
(to the lazy cat)
Frida Kahlo reborn!

The cat jumps off the bed. Angelina LAUGHS as she folds the
dress and puts it back in the box.

ANGELINA
Everyone's a critic.

I/E. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Ramon smiles to the boy across from him.

MIGUEL
 (sarcastically)
 Still saving the world one
 campesino at a time I see.

RAMON
 I do what I can. So many people up
 from Honduras, Guatemala,
 Nicaragua. All making their way
 north. Truthfully, I'm burned out.

MIGUEL
 Tired of watching the rich get
 richer and the poor get poorer, eh?

RAMON
 Something like that.

MIGUEL
 Guess they should have stayed where
 they came from.

RAMON
 That's always your quick answer.

Ramon looks out the window.

MIGUEL
 Never know. My plans might help you
 with yours. Yes...

Miguel perks up and seems more animated than previously.

MIGUEL
 ...long years to make my plans.

RAMON
 Plans to help the poor?

MIGUEL
 Plans to be my own man.

There is a uncomfortably long pause.

RAMON
 I see.

MIGUEL
 Do you?

RAMON

I'm listening Miguel. As a priest
I'm really good at listening.

Miguel is clearly uncomfortable in the full bus. He HISSES in Ramon's ear.

MIGUEL

I don't need some pious priest. I
need my brother.

RAMON

Me too. And I think what you say is
from anger and not justice for -

MIGUEL

- Justice! Yes, it's all about
justice.

Ramon looks about. There is a FEDERALE on the bus who seemed previously disinterested but with Miguel's threatening voice he looks to Miguel and Ramon.

Ramon smiles in a benevolent manner. The Federale's attention wanes.

RAMON

You should take care with your
words, my brother. You never know
who's listening in.

MIGUEL

Yeah.

Miguel puts his arm around Ramon, draws closer to him, and SPEAKS in hushed tones.

INT. - BLANCHARD VILLA - CONTINUOUS

Angelina walks to the wardrobe and pulls a small box from the shelf.

Angelina sits on the bed and then opens the box. There is a BEATEN-UP DRIED CORSAGE amongst PICTURES.

Angelina lifts out a pair of pink baby booties that she sets on the bed next to her. She then lifts a sepia-tone picture. It's of a younger Ramon and Angelina delivering supplies to the poor workers in the village.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: The picture slowly animates to live-action sepia-tone.

EXT. SHANTY TOWN ON THE EDGE OF EL VERANO - DAY

FATHER NUNEZ, 50s, lifts a BOX from the back of a rickety flat bed truck.

The truck has a worn sign that says GUTIERREZ PHARMACEUTICALS. Father Nunez hands the box to 15 year-old Ramon.

There are other BOXES and SACKS of rice and beans.

13 year-old Angelina carries a small CRADLE to the doorway of a shack.

A frayed fabric door covers the opening. It is pulled aside and in the dimly lit room we see a WOMAN with a NEWBORN BABY and SEVERAL OTHER CHILDREN gathered about. For all the humbleness of the home, it appears clean and tidy.

The woman motions for Angelina to come in.

INT. SHACK - CONTINUOUS

ANGELINA

For your baby.

Angelina sets the cradle down. The mother places the baby inside the cradle. Angelina covers it with a new blanket and then rocks the cradle slightly. The woman smiles as she watches Angelina.

WOMAN WITH BABY

Muchas gracias.

ANGELINA

There's milk powder in the paper sacks, clothing for your children, and shoes for school.

EXT. SHANTY TOWN - CONTINUOUS

There are tears in Angelina's eyes as she walks back into the full sunlight.

Ramon comes over to Angelina.

RAMON

Are you okay?

ANGELINA

I'm okay.

Ramon smiles gently then lightly hugs Angelina.

ANGELINA
They have so little.

Ramon kisses Angelina on the cheek and brushes her tears away. Ramon lifts her chin and moves to kiss her on the lips.

ARMANDA (V.O.)
Mama?

END FLASHBACK: Scene returns to full-color.

ARMANDA GUTIERREZ, the 17 year-old daughter of Angelina, stands at the door.

ANGELINA
(slightly disoriented)
Oh, yes. Sorry.

Angelina puts the picture in the box and holds up the baby booties.

ANGELINA
These were yours.

Armanda sits on the bed. Angelina fingers the baby booties wordlessly while Armanda watches and fidgets slightly.

Patient long enough, Armanda wraps her hands around Angelina's, the baby booties lost in the tangle of fingers.

ARMANDA
I've got to talk with you, Mama.

ANGELINA
Sounds serious.

Angelina sits next to Armanda on the bed, the booties now crumpled in Armanda's hands.

ARMANDA
Do you love Papa?

Angelina is taken aback.

ANGELINA
Your Papa and I have been married many years.

ARMANDA
I didn't ask how long you've been married. I asked if you loved him.

ANGELINA
Love's a complicated thing.

ARMANDA
It shouldn't be.

ANGELINA
The blessing of youth: The world
seems so simple.

Angelina LAUGHS softly and draws Armanda closer but Armanda pulls away.

ARMANDA
I'm not a child.

ANGELINA
Of course not. You're a lovely
young woman. You make me so proud.

ARMANDA
I know why you're clearing out
things. You're going to let him
move back. To our home.

Angelina hesitates.

ANGELINA
In the eyes of God, he is my
husband.

ARMANDA
And in your heart?

ANGELINA
We must look to the future.

ARMANDA
What future is there with a man you
don't love?

Armanda plops the crumpled baby booties on Angelina's lap.

ANGELINA
I didn't say that.

ARMANDA
Your eyes say it.

There is a long, uncomfortable silence as Armanda's words work their way into Angelina. Angelina smooths the booties on her lap.

ANGELINA
Things are never perfect, Mija.
Sometimes...

Angelina stops herself for a moment.

ANGELINA

We do the best with what is.

Armanda slides off the bed and kneels at her mother's side and looks up at her.

ARMANDA

Mama, I love Javi with my whole heart.

ANGELINA

Of course you do.

Angelina caresses Armanda's hand.

ANGELINA

But now is not the time for you to worry about who you love. You're still so young.

ARMANDA

You weren't much older when you married.

ANGELINA

Is there more? Something you're not telling me?

Angelina draws Armanda's chin up, Angelina's eyes glitter with tears.

ANGELINA

Mija?

Armanda looks distressed seeing Angelina on the verge of tears and then in a flash of realization.

ARMANDA

Oh, Mama.

Angelina braces herself for the worst.

ARMANDA

It's not (uncomfortable) that.

ANGELINA

That?

ARMANDA

Javi and I. Oh no, Mama. He is (stumbles) we are... No!

Armanda kneels up straight before Angelina.

ARMANDA

He respects me. He respects you.

ANGELINA

As he should.

Angelina looks at Armanda not relinquishing her concerned parental gaze.

ARMANDA

No, Mama, we've not had sex.

Angelina is relieved as she loosens her grip on the booties that were previously smoothed on her lap.

ANGELINA

Mija, I think of myself as an enlightened woman, but I never want your life to be less than it can be.

ARMANDA

You think Javi isn't good enough for me?

ANGELINA

I think he's a fine young man. But what of your dreams?

ARMANDA

Our dream is to marry. To be together.

ANGELINA

And after that?

ARMANDA

We will make a life (beat) a great life - together. Please, Mama.

ANGELINA

What do you want me to do?

ARMANDA

Just say that you agree.

ANGELINA

I told you (beat) I only want you to be happy.

Armanda stands and hugs Angelina.

ARMANDA

I love you.

ANGELINA

And I you.

I/E. BUS - NIGHT

The bus stops.

RAMON

Here at last.

Ramon steps into the aisle and collects his hat, duffle bag, and guitar from above the seat. Miguel gets his small bag.

Both men exit the bus.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The bus pulls away and we see the front of the church. A truck loaded with workers in non-native dress passes slowly. Miguel and Ramon watch.

MIGUEL

I see Rico still works for
Blanchard.

RAMON

We're supposed to meet Angelina at
her restaurant.

Miguel SNORTS.

MIGUEL

HER restaurant.

Ramon walks away from Miguel.

MIGUEL

So where are you going?

RAMON

I've got something to do first.

Miguel GRUNTS as he watches Ramon head toward the church.

INT. EL VERANO'S CHURCH - NIGHT

Ramon enters and puts down his duffle bag and guitar, dips his fingers into the holy water, genuflects, crosses himself, and walks to the front of the church where he kneels in prayer.

FATHER NUNEZ, 70s, his blind walking stick propped up next to him, stretches out asleep in a darkened pew unnoticed.

Angelina sits in the front pew off to the side unnoticed and waits while Ramon prays.

He finishes and crosses himself as he stands.

ANGELINA

Welcome back.

Ramon jumps, turns, and sees Angelina.

RAMON

Angelina.

ANGELINA

I thought you might come here first.

Ramon stands straighter, smooths his cassock, and brushes at invisible dust as Angelina approaches.

Ramon stretches his arms out for a hug while Angelina extends her hand for a handshake.

There's a slight pause as they reevaluate.

Ramon extends his hand for a handshake while Angelina stretches her arms out for a hug.

They LAUGH then hug one another.

Ramon relaxes slightly with the genuine warmth of Angelina.

Ramon and Angelina step back.

Ramon walks to a pew and motions Angelina to sit.

Angelina is hesitant to start the conversation.

ANGELINA

I need to talk to you.

RAMON

Is everything alright? Have Father Nunez' eyes gotten worse?

ANGELINA

He's really not as bad off as he makes out to be.

Father Nunez perks up a bit and attempts to get up from the hard, narrow pew on hearing his name.

RAMON

Then why did he have the Monsignor
transfer me to El Verano?

Angelina averts her eyes with the intensity of Ramon's gaze.

RAMON

What?

ANGELINA

I - We think Miguel needs someone
he can truly trust close by.

RAMON

Really? I wouldn't think his
brother the priest would be quite
what he had in mind.

ANGELINA

Perhaps not, but you are the only
family he has.

RAMON

What about you (pause) and Armanda?

ANGELINA

I really wanted to talk about
Armanda.

Father Nunez relaxes back on the pew, trying to remain quiet.

RAMON

How is she?

ANGELINA

She's fine. Fine.

RAMON

That's good then.

Angelina takes a breath with a pause, then just says what she
has to say.

ANGELINA

She doesn't know Miguel is not her
father.

Father Nunez freezes where he is.

Father Nunez twitches his nose, nervous to let loose of his
grip on the end of the pew where he lies.

ANGELINA

I just want you to know that Armanda is struggling with Miguel's return. She doesn't need her world turned upside-down.

RAMON

I have no -

Father Nunez stick his head up and SNEEZES.

Ramon and Angelina get up and rush over to where Father Nunez struggles to stand.

RAMON

Father Nunez. Let me help you.

Ramon grabs Father Nunez' arm but Father Nunez jerks it away from him.

FATHER NUNEZ

What do you mean Miguel is not the father of Armanda?

ANGELINA

Father Nunez, you must have misunderstood.

FATHER NUNEZ

I may be blind but I'm not deaf. So if Miguel isn't the father, who is?

Ramon and Angelina look at one another.

RAMON

Have you been sleeping long, Father?

ANGELINA

We should get going.

RAMON

So your eyes have gotten much worse?

FATHER NUNEZ

My eyes, my back, my knees. But you are still not answering my question.

RAMON

We'd better get going.

FATHER NUNEZ

Okay. I can tell you don't want to
tell me.

A figure steps into the low candlelight. SENORA RUIZ, 60s,
crosses herself, slowly opens the door then slips out.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Senora Ruiz walks toward the El Milagro Restaurante.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - NIGHT

A BAND PLAYS on the small stage and TOWNSPEOPLE are having a
good time to judge from the noise level.

Senora Ruiz walks to a crowded table, glances back towards
Armanda, then whispers in the ear of SENORA GOMEZ, 60s.
Senora Gomez looks to Armanda, then whispers to her HUSBAND.

Maria Elena brings food and breaks up the whispering as the
people at the table starts to dig in.

Armanda sits with some FRIENDS as JAVIER ROJA, 17, clears off
a nearby table. He could pass for a Gringo if you only
considered his Aerosmith tee shirt and jeans and discounted
his dark good looks.

Miguel enters and the place goes quiet. Even the band falters
and then picks up again as the people resume their
conversations.

Miguel spots the table with Armanda and goes over.

Armanda's friends scatter and Miguel sits.

ARMANDA

You're back.

The Maria Elena arrives with a beer for Miguel.

MIGUEL

(without looking up)
Tequila.

Maria Elena takes back the beer, makes a face that makes
Armanda smile. Miguel turns but only sees Maria Elena's
straight face and turns around again to face Armanda.

MARIA ELENA

I'll be right back.

MIGUEL

All your mother could think to do
while I was gone was to run a
restaurant?

Armanda fixes her father with a scathing look.

ARMANDA

It's actually the best restaurant
in El Verano but what was she
supposed to do?

Miguel slowly turns to face his daughter and she withers
under his gaze.

MIGUEL

She was supposed to stay home and
teach you to respect your father.

INT. EL VERANO'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Ramon, Angelina, and Father Nunez sit in the dark deserted
church.

RAMON

Miguel is...

FATHER NUNEZ

Changed?

Ramon LAUGHS.

RAMON

No. He's the same bastard as ever.

FATHER NUNEZ

And yet you still love him.

RAMON

He's my brother. Of course I love
him.

FATHER NUNEZ

And you, Angelina? Do you still
love Miguel?

ANGELINA

What we have should not be called
love. We lead our lives reconciled
to our fate.

RAMON
 (to Angelina)
 He told me you came to see him in
 jail.

Angelina LAUGHS.

ANGELINA
 Twice I brought Armanda to see him
 out of some sense of duty, I guess,
 and twice he refused to see us. I
 gave up after that.

FATHER NUNEZ
 He didn't even want to see his
 daughter?

ANGELINA
 Go figure.

Ramon gets up to leave but Angelina grabs his arm.

ANGELINA
 Ramon?

Ramon turns to face her.

ANGELINA
 Nothing. Let's go.

Ramon helps Father Nunez to his feet and they leave.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - NIGHT

Ramon walks in carrying his guitar and duffel bag with Father
 Nunez and Angelina and the place ERUPTS in welcome.

Ramon spots his brother and Armanda and they make their way
 through the crowd. Several PEOPLE embrace Ramon on his way to
 the table.

Armanda gets up and hugs Ramon earning a scowl from Miguel.

Javier wipes his hands on his apron to shake Ramon's hand,
 but Ramon grabs him in a bear hug.

They sit and Angelina pours Ramon and Father Nunez a tequila
 from the bottle that sits on the table as Miguel sullenly
 seethes.

ARMANDA
 Father Nunez told us of the strings
 he had to pull to get you to come
 back to us.

Angelina helps Father Nunez find the glass of Tequila.

FATHER NUNEZ

Who else should take over my duties
now that I am unable?

RAMON

Never underestimate the wiliness of
an old priest.

Ramon reaches over and grabs Father Nunez' hand.

FATHER NUNEZ

This is a great and happy day for
the town and for me.

EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Ramirez looks spiffy in his crisply pressed Federale uniform
as he waits for the small plane to come to a stop.

William Blanchard descends the steps of the Homeland Security
plane and they walk to Ramirez' police car.

BLANCHARD

Are they at that rat hole of my
daughter's.

Ramirez checks his watch.

RAMIREZ

They should be at there by now,
Senor Blanchard.

They get in and leave.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - NIGHT

Armanda leans over to Ramon.

ARMANDA

Tio, I need to talk to you.

RAMON

So talk.

ARMANDA

Not here. Come with me. Por favor.
Outside.

They leave.

EXT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - CONTINUOUS

Ramon and Armanda step out onto the patio. Armanda can barely contain herself as Ramon lights a cigarette.

ARMANDA

I have some important news: I'm in love.

RAMON

And who's the lucky fellow?

ARMANDA

Who else would it be?

RAMON

Your Mama wrote about someone always about your house. Someone named Pedro...

Ramon pauses as if deep in thought.

RAMON

Vargas? Pedro Vargas. That's it.

Armanda pulls a wrinkled face and then LAUGHS.

ARMANDA

Pedro is the gardener. And he must be at least forty.

Ramon CHUCKLES softly.

RAMON

Forty? That's so very old.

Armanda punches Ramon on the shoulder.

ARMANDA

It's Javier.

RAMON

But you've been in love with Javier since you were six. Why is this news?

ARMANDA

We plan to get married.

RAMON

That's wonderful but have you told your mother?

ARMANDA

I did, but I'm not sure she believes me.

RAMON

Did you tell your father?

Armanda scoffs at the idea.

RAMON

Your father is not going to be pleased you're marrying the son of a campesino.

ARMANDA

I don't care about him.

RAMON

Look, you can't just ignore your family.

ARMANDA

You have.

Ramon is temporarily taken aback.

RAMON

I was assigned to the Church in Guadalajara. I wasn't ignoring my family.

ARMANDA

That's not what I've heard.

RAMON

Let's talk about this later, eh?

ARMANDA

Promise?

RAMON

Promise.

Armanda embraces him then they return to the restaurant.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - NIGHT

Blanchard walks in with Ramirez.

Blanchard walks to the table and the crowd parts before him like the Red Sea. Ramirez follows in his wake.

Everyone at the table stands except for Miguel. This does not go unnoticed by Blanchard.

Ramon gives Ramirez a hug.

BLANCHARD

Sit. Sit.

He places his hand on Ramon's shoulder.

BLANCHARD

I just wanted to see that you both safely arrived.

MIGUEL

Eight years in jail thanks to you, but now you're worried about a bus trip?

Blanchard ignores this.

BLANCHARD

Miguel, we have a lot to discuss.

MIGUEL

Yeah, we do.

BLANCHARD

Many things have changed. Come to the villa tomorrow at ten. But clean yourself up first. You look like a campesino.

Blanchard turns and leaves as Miguel seethes.

Ramirez follows Blanchard to the door of the cantina where he speaks to Blanchard.

Blanchard nods and leaves while Ramirez walks back to the table.

Ramirez pulls an empty chair over to the table where Ramon sits with Miguel.

RAMON

Glad you could stay, Esteban.

MIGUEL

You follow him around like a puppy.

Ramirez ignores the jab and signals for a drink.

Maria Elena brings over a beer.

RAMIREZ

Gracias.

RAMON

How can you do that? You know how
he treats his workers.

Ramirez drinks deeply on his beer.

RAMIREZ

This isn't the town you left
behind.

RAMON

You are the son of campesinos -

RAMIREZ

- that was their life. It's not
mine.

RAMON

It was an honorable life.

RAMIREZ

It was a shitty life.

Ramirez finishes his beer and sets the bottle down strongly.
He stands.

RAMIREZ

I guess we all can't all be
priests. Thanks for the beer.

Ramirez leaves.

The previously subdued CHATTER at the cantina resumes and
someone SHOUTS out Ramon's name. Others follow and the Band
LEADER motions for Ramon to join them on stage.

Ramon smiles and takes his guitar to the stage and unpacks it
as the crowd CLAPS.

They finally settle down and Ramon SINGS the love ballad I
WOULD NEVER by Lila Downs.

Ramon starts with a guitar introduction.

RAMON

I have walked a thousand mile
I have worked as fast as I can

While Ramon sings to the room, his eyes are fastened on
Angelina.

RAMON

And you have raised a precious
child...
To be a woman

Armanda takes Angelina's hand.

RAMON

But I would never turn my back on
your love.

The crowd is deathly quiet, every eye fixed on Ramon.

RAMON

I have walked up and down
Yeah I have wandered from place to
place...
And I have raised my weary hand
To my face...
But I would never turn my back to
your love.

Dr. Rivera stands at the bar nursing a beer, amused at Ramon's fixation on Angelina.

EXT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - REAR - CONTINUOUS

Javier carries a garbage can across the rear deck of the cantina as Ramon PLAYS the instrumental introduction to the next stanza then SINGS along.

JAVIER AND RAMON

Is there anybody there who knows
me?
Isn't there anybody who knows me
now?
That I will, will be home soon.
But I would never turn my back to
your love.

Armanda slips out the back door and steps onto the back patio and into the moonlight but Javier doesn't notice.

Javier HUMS along as the band inside joins in for the instrumental interlude and he empties the trash with Armanda looking on lovingly.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - CONTINUOUS

The crowd SHOUTS their encouragement as the band and Ramon get into the music.

The band backs off as Ramon finishes the song.

RAMON

And the sun is goin' down.

EXT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - CONTINUOUS

Javier removes an empty BEER BOTTLE from the trash and uses it as a microphone while Ramon SINGS inside.

JAVIER AND RAMON

There are colors against the sky
 I have seen my home town in your
 eyes...
 And I would never turn my back
 And I'm learnin' to face the fact
 That I would never turn my back
 On your love.
 Hey yeah, yeah
 Hey yeah, yeah
 No, I would never turn my back on
 your love.

The song finishes. Javier takes a bow to the trees as inside the crowd APPLAUDS.

SLOW CLAPPING is heard coming from the direction of the trees.

JAVIER

Who's there?

Javier's friend, JULIO, steps out still CLAPPING and Armanda slips back into the shadows.

JULIO

Not bad. But I wouldn't quit the
 fine job you have here yet.

Angelina comes onto the patio.

ANGELINA

Javier?

JAVIER

Coming.

Angelina goes back in.

Javier empties the trash into the dumpster.

JULIO

You still in love with Armanda?

JAVIER

Always.

JULIO

You know Blanchard will never let his granddaughter marry the son of a campesino.

JAVIER

Armanda loves me for me. She doesn't care about any of that.

JULIO

Maybe not. But Blanchard does. And what about her father?

JAVIER

She cares even less what he thinks.

JULIO

And what will you do for money? Work for Blanchard at his factory?

JAVIER

When you love someone as much as I love Armanda, Julio, there's a way.

JULIO

Good luck with that, Amigo.

Julio leaves and Armanda comes out from the shadows.

ARMANDA

Did you mean that, Javi?

Startled, Javier faces Armanda.

JAVIER

I've never meant anything more in my life.

Armanda runs to Javier and they embrace.

Ramon comes out through the door, finishes the bottle of beer in his hand, sets it down on the patio, then lights up a cigarette.

ARMANDA

I told Tio we want to be married.

JAVIER

I thought we agreed we'd keep it a secret.

ARMANDA

Who else would marry us?

They kiss.

RAMON

What a fine evening for kissing in
the moonlight.

Javier and Armanda break off their embrace.

ARMANDA

I was just telling Javi -

RAMON

- I heard the part about you
wanting me to marry you but I
missed the part about what you two
are going to do after you get
married.

ARMANDA

Mama said we can live in the
apartment upstairs.

RAMON

You can afford that?

ARMANDA

I'll get a job too.

Ramon takes a drag on his cigarette as he considers this.

RAMON

Your father and I had a long talk
on the bus today. He wants to
resume his old job. I told him a
better plan would be for him to
take you and your mother to el otra
lada to start a new life.

Javier is crestfallen.

RAMON

(to Javier)

If you two were married he would
have to take you as well.

Javier brightens.

JAVIER

Really?

ARMANDA

Oh Tio, marry us (beat) tonight.

Ramon LAUGHS but not unsympathetically.

RAMON

Let me talk to your father and
convince him he must leave first.
Then we'll see.

ARMANDA

Don't you see? If we were already
married he'd have to leave.

Ramon takes Armanda's hand.

RAMON

I'm not sure I follow. But I'll
talk to him.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - CONTINUOUS

Ramon and Armanda return to the table and sit next to
Angelina.

A PERUVIAN CAMPESINO comes over and waits patiently until
Angelina notices him then bends and WHISPERS in her ear.

She nods, gets up, and leads him into the kitchen.

Ramon turns to Armanda.

RAMON

What's that about?

ARMANDA

Mama has a little business on the
side. She gets papers for
campesinos.

MIGUEL

Apparently it's no secret. Does
that fellow work for Blanchard?

RAMON

You know how he treats his workers:
he charges them so much for food
and housing that they never earn
enough to leave.

MIGUEL

They chose to come here without
papers.

RAMON

You sound like a Gringo.

Armanda CHUCKLES to herself.

RAMON

They had very little choice -
starve in their country or live
like slaves here. They're much
better off to try to make a life in
el otro lada.

Miguel SNORTS and takes a slug of tequila, finishes it off,
upends the bottle and, finding it empty, signals to Maria
Elena for another.

RAMON

Forget about the business. Why
don't you take your family to el
otro lada too?

MIGUEL

Even if I wanted to leave I
couldn't. They don't give visas to
felons.

Armanda starts to talk but Ramon reaches out and squeezes her
hand.

RAMON

Your wife is American -

MIGUEL

- I have plans of my own and they
don't include running to El Norte.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - LATER

Only Father Nunez and Ramon remain in the cantina. Chairs are
stacked on the tables and the lights are low. Ramon pours yet
another tequila for both of them. Most of it goes into the
glass.

FATHER NUNEZ

So, who is Armanda's father?

RAMON

It doesn't matter.

FATHER NUNEZ

How can you say that?

RAMON

She's almost a grown woman.

FATHER NUNEZ

Yes?

RAMON

It isn't my story to tell.

Father Nunez SIGHS.

FATHER NUNEZ

I had a love once.

RAMON

You?

FATHER NUNEZ

Is that so strange?

RAMON

It's just that...

Father Nunez puffs out his chest.

FATHER NUNEZ

I was once young and handsome and full of lust.

Ramon leans forward to put his elbows on the table, misses, and corrects himself as Father Nunez slumps again.

FATHER NUNEZ

Her father had selected another for her to marry.

RAMON

What happened?

FATHER NUNEZ

What happened? She married him. If she married me I wouldn't be sitting here with you drunk, old, blind. Well I guess I would still be old and blind. And drunk. But I certainly would not be sitting here drinking with you.

RAMON

So you became a priest.

Father Nunez nods.

RAMON

Regrets?

Father Nunez LAUGHS.

FATHER NUNEZ

Yes and no.

Angelina opens the door to the cantina backlit by the street lights.

Ramon looks up.

FATHER NUNEZ
Who is it?

ANGELINA
You plan to sleep here?

Father Nunez gets up and picks up his walking stick to steady himself.

FATHER NUNEZ
We were just solving some
theological questions.

ANGELINA
Let me walk you home, Father.

Father Nunez holds out his arm.

FATHER NUNEZ
How can I say no to such a
beautiful woman?

ANGELINA
(to Ramon)
And you?

RAMON
I want to finish this drink.

Angelina shrugs and walks out the door with Father Nunez. The door shuts.

Ramon drunkenly hums the tune from 'I Would Never' and stares into his drink.

Angelina walks back in.

RAMON
That was fast.

ANGELINA
Esteban was making his rounds. He
offered to make sure Father Nunez
got home.

RAMON
Our Esteban has become quite the
escort for old men.

Ramon SNORTS then drops his head.

ANGELINA
So what did you decide?

Ramon looks up questioningly.

ANGELINA
About these theological questions.

Ramon looks back at his drink, pauses, then looks at Angelina.

RAMON
Are you happy?

ANGELINA
I'm happy you're back in El Verano.

RAMON
You know that's not what I meant.

ANGELINA
Oh? Are you saying you wish things were different?

RAMON
- I didn't -

ANGELINA
- Or that my father hadn't given me to Miguel like some contract obligation -

RAMON
- that -

ANGELINA
- Or that my husband wasn't in jail for eight years -

RAMON
- that wasn't -

ANGELINA
- Or that his daughter detests him -

RAMON
- she's -

ANGELINA
- Or that you chose to run away while I was stuck here to raise Armanda in a loveless marriage?

Angelina runs out of steam.

RAMON

Yes.

Ramon reaches out and takes Angelina's hand but she pulls back.

RAMON

You could have refused.

ANGELINA

Really? Ramon, we were what? Nineteen? -

RAMON

- YOU COULD HAVE REFUSED.

ANGELINA

And you could have fought harder for us.

Angelina gets up.

ANGELINA

You've helped countless people in Guadalajara. Maybe now you can help your family and yourself.

Angelina leaves.

Ramon raises the full glass in front of him in a silent toast to the door closing after Angelina and then downs it and pours another.

INT. BLANCHARD'S VILLA - SATURDAY MORNING

Blanchard sits in his opulent living room with BENITO SANCHEZ, 30s, a weasely, young Steve Buscemi-type guy. Benito sucks on a long neck while Blanchard enjoys a flute of Champagne.

Jorge smokes a cigarette just outside the French Doors that lead to the patio.

BENITO

Sunday?

Blanchard nods as he sips his Champagne.

BLANCHARD

The pilot will have the cash for the operating expenses for the month. Just make sure the product's there.

BENITO

When have I not come through?

BLANCHARD

And make sure the plane isn't here longer than absolutely necessary.

CU: a listening device nestles in the lamp shade that sits between the two men.

INT. RAMIREZ' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ramirez listens on his headset and smokes a cigarette.

INT. BLANCHARD'S VILLA - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Blanchard takes a sip of Champagne.

BENITO

Have you talked with Armanda about the wedding?

BLANCHARD

There's nothing to talk about. When the time is right, I'll announce the wedding. Once you and Armanda are married...

Miguel enters the living room looking much better than the last time we saw him.

BLANCHARD

Ah, Miguel.

MIGUEL

Who's this?

BLANCHARD

Miguel, I'd like you to meet Benito Sanchez. Benito has been filling your shoes since you've been...away.

Miguel sits on the sofa.

MIGUEL

(to Blanchard)

So you plan to marry off my daughter just like you forced me to marry Angelina?

BLANCHARD

It was a business decision.

MIGUEL

So you could control my family's business.

BLANCHARD

Before I showed up, your family's business was selling poor quality aspirin to even poorer Mexicans.

MIGUEL

And now we get to sell Viagra to the rich, but limp-dicked Norte Americanos.

BLANCHARD

For which we are well-paid.

MIGUEL

This isn't what I want.

BLANCHARD

There are bigger things going on than just what you want.

MIGUEL

What I want is to go back to work.

BLANCHARD

Many things have changed since you went to jail.

MIGUEL

So you said. What things? I hear you still refuse to get involved with supplying the meth trade.

THIS gets to Blanchard. Benito perks up and Blanchard looks to Benito.

BLANCHARD

Don't you have something to do?

Benito slinks out. Blanchard directs his attention back to Miguel.

BLANCHARD

Over and over we go. I do not make street drugs.

MIGUEL

Over and over we go. Sudafed is not a street drug. You like to think you're better than Carrillo Fuentes.

BLANCHARD
Old Carrillo Fuentes is dead - so
yes, I am better.

MIGUEL
And his son?

BLANCHARD
Arrested earlier this year. Not
much news in prison, eh?

INT. RAMIREZ' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

BLANCHARD (V.O.)
And I intend to die peacefully - in
my sleep - at a very old age.

MIGUEL (V.O.)
Exactly how old is old?

Ramirez smiles at Miguel's audacity.

BLANCHARD (V.O.)
I have a proposition for you I
think you should consider.

Ramirez perks up.

INT. BLANCHARD'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BLANCHARD
The business has expanded greatly
since you went away. I need someone
I can trust to set up another
factory in Jalisco.

MIGUEL
Jalisco? Why not send me to
Yucatan?

INT. RAMIREZ' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Ramirez leans back in his chair and LAUGHS.

BLANCHARD (V.O.)
You may have read that the FDA is
cracking down on counterfeit
pharmaceuticals.

MIGUEL (V.O.)
 I thought your high-priced chemist
 makes them identical and
 untraceable?

Ramirez nods.

BLANCHARD (V.O.)
 Yes, but it's still something we
 must be aware of.

MIGUEL (V.O.)
 That's why you have Ramirez.

Ramirez sits up and listens more intently.

BLANCHARD (V.O.)
 You're too high profile.
 I happen to know your phones are
 tapped and Ramirez has been
 approached to monitor your
 activities.

Ramirez looks worried.

INT. BLANCHARD'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MIGUEL
 So why would I be any safer in
 Jalisco? (beat) Oh. YOU would be
 safer if I was in Jalisco.

Miguel gets up.

MIGUEL
 If I'm such a liability wouldn't it
 be in your best interest to keep me
 happy?

BLANCHARD
 You're in no position to threaten
 me.

MIGUEL
 Oh no?

Jorge's phone goes off playing *La Cucaracha*. Blanchard and Miguel turn to look as Jorge quickly picks it up.

Miguel leaves the room.

INT. EL VERANO FREE CLINIC - DAY

Angelina finishes changing the dressing on a CHILD in one of the twenty beds in the makeshift clinic filled with PEOPLE.

ANGELINA

Your arm is looking much better,
Ricardo. You should be able to go
home tomorrow.

Angelina reaches into the picnic-style cooler on the bottom of her cart. She pulls out a cup of flan and holds up a spoon to Ricardo.

RICARDO

Doctor Rivera says your flan has
magic to heal.

Angelina CHUCKLES.

ANGELINA

Does he? Well, you don't want to
argue with Doctor Rivera now do
you?

Ricardo takes the flan and spoon and digs in greedily.

Ramon enters. Several of the people call out *Padre!*

He stops at several beds before he reaches Angelina.

The room goes quiet.

RAMON

Good morning.

Angelina moves to the next bed and unwraps the dressing from the WOMAN lying there but says nothing.

RAMON

I brought the church's donation for
the clinic.

Ramon takes an envelope out of his pocket.

Angelina is still mute as she concentrates on her work so Ramon places the envelope back in his pocket.

RAMON

I wanted to apologize for last
night.

Angelina says nothing as she puts a fresh bandage on her patient.

RAMON

But you were pretty hard on me.

Nothing. Ramon looks around.

RAMON

Is there something I could do to help?

Angelina smiles slightly and looks up.

ANGELINA

You can empty Senora Mendoza's bed pan behind me.

SENORA MENDOZA, 40s, smiles sweetly as she holds out her bed pan.

Ramon leans in close to Angelina so as not to be over-heard.

RAMON

Is there anything else I might do?

ANGELINA

(to the room)

Father Ramon would like to help but he only wants to do the clean jobs.

The room erupts into LAUGHTER.

Chagrined, Ramon goes to Senora Mendoza's bed and takes her bed pan then looks around.

RAMON

Where do I take it?

Angelina motions to the back of the clinic where the bathrooms are.

ANGELINA

(to her patient)

Senora Hernandez, what would you say about a man who professes his love but runs away at the first sign of trouble?

Senora Hernandez starts to speak but she's interrupted by Ramon still holding the bed pan.

RAMON

Senora Hernandez, what would you say about a woman who professes her love for one man but goes off and marries another?

Senora Hernandez starts to respond but she's cut short by Angelina.

ANGELINA

What if that woman was forced to marry another because her father had arranged it? Is that right?

The MEN on the other side of the room respond.

MEN

Yes!

RAMON

Senora Hernandez, should a woman marry because her father says so or should she marry for love?

The WOMEN respond.

WOMEN

For love!

Ramon looks at Angelina, smiles, and spreads his hands as if to say *See*.

The women LAUGH.

ANGELINA

(to the room)

What if that woman was then forced to be both mother and father to a child because the man she married went off to jail while the man she loved ran off to be a priest?

The room goes QUIET.

RAMON

(quieter)

And what if the priest realized his mistake?

Some people in the room COUGH nervously and others cross themselves.

Angelina finishes with the dressing, mindlessly hands a flan and spoon to the woman, and looks at Ramon fixing him with her gaze.

ANGELINA

This is all too late.

Silence.

Ramon puts down the bed pan. He takes the donation envelope from his pocket, sets it on a nearby table, and leaves.

INT. EL VERANO BEAUTY SHOP - DAY

A BELL fastened to the front door RINGS as Consuelo walks in.

Senora Ruiz and Senora Gomez sit under hair dryers reading magazines.

Marta walks to the dryers, checks, and restarts the dryers.

MARTA

Finally! Senora Gomez couldn't wait.

Consuelo smiles and nods to Senora Gomez.

CONSUELO

I'm sorry. It was a crazy morning.

Consuelo checks Senora Gomez under the dryer.

CONSUELO

I think you're ready.

Consuelo turns off the dryer and walks Senora Gomez to her station and removes the hair curlers. Senora Ruiz lifts her dryer.

SENORA RUIZ

Did you hear?

CONSUELO

Hear what?

Marta rolls her eyes at Consuelo then looks to Senora Ruiz.

MARTA

You remember what Father Nunez said about gossip.

CONSUELO

What gossip?

SENORA RUIZ

Well, the other night -

SENORA GOMEZ

- she was praying -

SENORA RUIZ

- I was praying at the church -

SENORA GOMEZ
- tell them -

SENORA RUIZ
I would if you'd stop interrupting.

Senora Gomez looks slightly embarrassed.

SENORA RUIZ
In the midst of my prayers, Ramon
came in - then Angelina -

SENORA GOMEZ
- Miguel is -

SENORA RUIZ AND SENORA GOMEZ
- not Armanda's father.

Senora Ruiz gives Senora Gomez the stink eye. Marta and
Consuelo look shocked. Marta collects herself first.

MARTA
Who is?

CONSUELO
Yes, who?

SENORA RUIZ
Sadly, she didn't say.

CONSUELO
Do you think it's someone here in
El Verano?

SENORA RUIZ
That Pedro Vargas maybe? Maybe he
does more than just the gardens.

CONSUELO
Or Doctor Rivera?

SENORA RUIZ
That could explain the way they
look at each other.

The bell RINGS and Armanda walks in unnoticed.

SENORA GOMEZ
No. Must be more handsome than
that.

CONSUELO
Esteban Ramirez is very handsome
and he seems very close to
Angelina.

MARTA

Armanda is such a beautiful girl.

Armanda COUGHS. The ladies all look to the door.

ARMANDA

Senoras.

They freeze then...

MARTA

Armanda, we were just...

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - DAY

In the nearly deserted cantina Miguel glowers at Ramirez over his beer.

MIGUEL

Why are you telling me this?

RAMIREZ

Miguelito -

MIGUEL

- don't call me that.

RAMIREZ

Sorry. Old habits die hard. I have done what I can to protect Senor Blanchard since I joined the Federales. It has been a very rewarding relationship. But now that you are back we can do what you always wanted to do. But you need money and this is a way to get it.

MIGUEL

I cannot believe he would bring in that little shit Benito to replace me.

RAMIREZ

But Miguelito -
 (on Miguel's look)
 -Miguel, he has.

MIGUEL

Why would Benito agree to what you suggest?

RAMIREZ

Because he agrees with you; it's time to expand the business.

MIGUEL

So the enemy of my enemy is my friend?

RAMIREZ

Something like that.

MIGUEL

Or maybe he's just another enemy.

RAMIREZ

Look, I know you might not have planned to move this quickly but talk with Benito.

MIGUEL

He's just a kid.

RAMIREZ

Talk with him. What can it hurt? And if you agree, we'll move on it tomorrow.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - LATER

MORE PEOPLE have arrived and Miguel and Ramirez still talk at their table.

Angelina enters.

Ramirez nods to her and Miguel looks over.

Ramirez says something to Miguel and gets up as Angelina approaches.

RAMIREZ

Hola, Angelina.

ANGELINA

Hello, Esteban.

Angelina looks at Miguel.

ANGELINA

Am I interrupting something?

RAMIREZ

No, we're finished. I need to go.

Ramirez kisses Angelina on the cheek and leaves.

MIGUEL
Sit. If you like.

ANGELINA
We need to talk.

MIGUEL
About what?

Angelina SIGHS and sits.

ANGELINA
Where'd you stay last night?

MIGUEL
Does it matter?

ANGELINA
Are you coming home?

MIGUEL
I don't know.

Angelina pauses then plows ahead.

ANGELINA
I want a divorce.

Miguel looks up.

MIGUEL
No Gutierrez has ever divorced.

ANGELINA
So we'll continue to lead our
separate lives?

MIGUEL
You can do as you please.

ANGELINA
And our daughter?

MIGUEL
What about her? She hates me.

ANGELINA
And do you blame her?

MIGUEL
I'm still her father.

Angelina seethes.

ANGELINA

Have you thought about what Ramon suggested? About going to the United States.

MIGUEL

Why would I do that?

Angelina is exasperated.

ANGELINA

For your family.

MIGUEL

What family? You just asked me for a divorce. My business is here.

ANGELINA

My father is never going to let you take over the business.

MIGUEL

We'll see.

ANGELINA

Miguel, this is going to end badly.

MIGUEL

For who?

ANGELINA

For all of us. Can't you see that?

MIGUEL

So, you want me to walk away from what I have spent my whole life on.

ANGELINA

I want you, for once in your life, to think of someone other than yourself.

Angelina gets up and leaves.

INT. CHURCH - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Ramon helps Senora Gomez bring flowers to the altar for Easter Sunday's service.

RAMON

Very nice. Thank you, Dona Gomez.

SENORA GOMEZ

We want the altar to look nice for your first mass. And on Easter, no less.

RAMON

Surely an omen of good things for my time back in El Verano.

Senora Gomez notices Angelina as she enters the church.

SENORA GOMEZ

I'll be going.

RAMON

Thank you again.

SENORA GOMEZ

De nada.

Senora Gomez nods and smiles to Angelina.

SENORA GOMEZ

Buenas Dias, Senora Gutierrez.

ANGELINA

Buenas Dias.

As they pass Senora Gomez turns briefly as her expression changes from a smile to something more quizzical if not judgemental.

Sensing Senora Gomez' continued presence, Angelina decides to keep things formal.

ANGELINA

Father Ramon?

Senora Gomez lingers in the Narthex.

RAMON

Yes, Sister Angelina.

ANGELINA

Is this a good time to have a word with you?

RAMON

Certainly.

Ramon and Angelina sit in the front pew.

ANGELINA

Has Armanda talked with you about her intentions to marry Javier?

Ramon nods.

RAMON
Has she talked with her father?

Senora Gomez pokes her head out as she tries to listen.

ANGELINA
Miguel? She never talks to Miguel.

RAMON
Don't you think he should be
consulted?

ANGELINA
He hasn't been a part of her life
for some time if ever.

RAMON
Still -

ANGELINA
- Ramon, I don't want her to end up
like us.

Ramon casts his eyes to the Narthex where Senora Gomez is not
doing a very good job of hiding herself and lowers his voice.

RAMON
I agree but what would it hurt if
they waited?

Angelina inches closer.

ANGELINA
Miguel's up to something. I don't
know what but if he doesn't leave
I'm afraid my father will kill him.

RAMON
That seems a little extreme.

ANGELINA
Ramon, I'm not kidding. I've
suggested he leave but he seems
intent on staying. I've even asked
him to take Armanda and me to the
United States.

Ramon looks off.

RAMON
Who's side is Esteban is on?

ANGELINA

What does Esteban have to do with this?

Ramon looks back at Angelina.

RAMON

Esteban told me that your father has hired him to keep an eye on Miguel.

ANGELINA

So.

RAMON

So whose side is Esteban on? Your father's? Miguel's? His own?

Angelina frowns and shakes her head.

ANGELINA

What are you saying?

RAMON

I think Esteban is ultimately working for Esteban. If that's true, what's best for Esteban?

ANGELINA

He'd align himself with whomever he thinks is going to win.

RAMON

And who's going to win?

Angelina sits back in the pew.

ANGELINA

My father.

RAMON

Your father.

RAMON

We have to find a way to get Miguel out of here. And if Armanda and Javier are married -

ANGELINA

- he'll have to take all of us.

RAMON

Have Armanda and Javier meet me here after mass. I'll marry them tonight.

Angelina leans forward to embrace Ramon but he nods his head toward Senora Gomez and she squeezes his hand instead.

ANGELINA

And I can get a visa for Miguel and Javier.

Ramon stands and raises his voice for Senora Gomez' benefit.

RAMON

Go with God, Sister Angelina.

ANGELINA

And with you, Father Ramon.

Senora Gomez shuffles off, no doubt to tell her friends what she saw if not heard. She can always make up that part.

INT. WHORE HOUSE - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Lots of red-flocked wallpaper and subdued lighting.

Benito sits with a PROSTITUTE on his lap. OTHER PROSTITUTES lounge nearby.

Miguel enters. CARMEN, a beautiful PROSTITUTE, 30s, comes up to Miguel. He gives her hand a quick kiss.

BENITO

Hey, Miguel. I like your choice of meeting places.

Benito's eye lock on Carmen's rack.

BENITO

Not to mention your taste in women.

Miguel motions with his head and walks away with Carmen as Benito extricates himself from his new best friend.

INT. WHORE HOUSE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

More subdued lighting, lamp shades with fringe, chachkas everywhere.

ESMERALDA, The Madam, 50s, sits at her desk and plays solitaire on an old CRT monitor.

Miguel, Carmen, and Benito enter without knocking and Miguel motions for the Madam to leave.

She leaves.

Miguel sits in a leather chair as Benito sprawls on an overstuffed velvet-covered sofa.

MIGUEL

Carmen, a beer.

Carmen leaves.

BENITO

You've gotta know I've always looked up to you, ever since I was a little kid. And doing time? Man, I bet you learned a lot in there. If I could only crawl inside your brain and look around. I figure with your smarts and my -

MIGUEL

- Shut up.

BENITO

Sure, man. I was only saying -

MIGUEL

- SHUT UP.

Benito is monetarily silent.

Carmen brings Miguel his beer. He kisses her hand again then pulls her down to kiss her deeply without regard for Benito.

MIGUEL

I'll be done soon. Now leave us.

Miguel pats her on the ass. Carmen winks at Miguel, leaves, and shuts the door behind her.

MIGUEL

What do you know about tomorrow's shipment.

BENITO

Only what I heard from Ramirez and Blanchard.

MIGUEL

Which is?

BENITO

Blanchard's plane lands tomorrow at ten. There'll be one million on board.

MIGUEL

Dollars or pesos?

Benito LAUGHS.

BENITO
You've been in prison too long.
Dollars, man.

Benito sits up.

BENITO
And get this: the only guy that'll
be there is his bodyguard and the
pilot. We load the stuff, the plane
takes off, pop the guard, take the
money. Easy peasy.

Miguel eyes Benito.

MIGUEL
Why are you doing this?

BENITO
Hey, it's the perfect opportunity
for us.

MIGUEL
What 'us'?

Benito leans forward in his enthusiasm.

BENITO
You. Me. What I mean is we get the
money to supply the meth biz, you
get to see how I operate, kinda
like an on-the-job interview and
you get to fuck the old man over.

Miguel is out of his chair and grabs Benito's face.

MIGUEL
You using?

BENITO
Just a little. I know when enough's
enough.

Miguel pulls a KNIFE out of his pocket and forces Benito's
hand to the COFFEE TABLE. The fingers of Benito's hand splay
wide and Miguel pushes the knife against the second joint of
his pinky finger. It starts to bleed.

Benito SQUEALS.

MIGUEL
Listen, you hijo de puta. 'Enough'
is none. You understand me?

BENITO

Okay. Okay. No need to overreact -

MIGUEL

- This is not overreacting. This is me protecting myself and my plans, you little fucker.

Miguel presses harder against Benito's finger and it bleeds more.

Benito WHIMPERS and nearly faints.

MIGUEL

Are we clear?

Miguel lets go of Benito's hand.

Benito looks panicked.

BENITO

Shit! I'm bleeding like crazy, man!

Miguel LAUGHS.

MIGUEL

Don't bleed on Esmeralda's carpet.

Benito looks at the carpet. It's clearly not the first time blood has landed there.

BENITO

Fuck me.

Miguel pulls a HANDKERCHIEF from Benito's pocket. A SMALL PLASTIC BAGGIE falls out of it.

Miguel grabs Benito's bleeding finger and bends it opening the wound deeper. Benito WHIMPERS.

MIGUEL

Are we clear, pendejo?

Miguel releases Benito's hand, wipes the blood from his own hand, and tosses the handkerchief to Benito.

Benito wraps the handkerchief around his finger and hand.

BENITO

Yeah, man. Fuckin' yeah.

Miguel picks up the baggie and throws it in the waste basket.

Miguel sits down again as Benito rubs his face with his hand wrapped with the blood-soaked handkerchief.

Miguel draws deeply from his beer.

MIGUEL

The chem guy knows how to make
Sudafed, right?

BENITO

If he can make Viagra and Lipitor
he can make Sudafed. Easy peasy.

INT. WHORE HOUSE CANTINA - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Ramon, dressed in jeans and a tee-shirt, stares into space,
an empty shot glass in front of him. He lifts the glass to
his lips then, realizing it's empty, signals to the BARTENDER
for another.

Carmen comes in and takes a beer from the cooler and leaves.

JANE, 20s, American Poor White Trash, a bit hefty and forty
percent cleavage, sits down next to him.

JANE

I hate to drink alone.

Ramon looks at her, finally gets it, and signals to the
bartender for another drink.

JANE

Thanks. You new? Haven't seen you
here before.

RAMON

Been away for a while.

JANE

You work for Blanchard?

Ramon looks at her quizzically.

She shrugs.

JANE

It's just that most everyone does.

The drinks arrive and she takes a sip and makes a face.

JANE

Guess from your reaction you don't.
What do you do?

Ramon stares at his reflection in the bar mirror as he weighs
what to tell her.

RAMON
I'm a drunkard.

She LAUGHS.

JANE
Woman problems?

Ramon turns to her.

RAMON
What's your name?

JANE
Jane.

They shake.

RAMON
Ramon.

JANE
Tell me all about it. I'm a really good listener. You wouldn't believe the things some guys tell me. I'm kinda like a priest. So pretend you're in the confessional and tell Father Jane all.

Ramon looks at her funny.

JANE
What?

RAMON
Nothing.

Ramon SIGHS as Jane settles in with her head cradled in her hands, an expectant look on her face as Ramon stares into his drink.

RAMON
I've known her since we were kids. There was a time when we knew we would marry.

JANE
She married someone else, didn't she?

Ramon looks up surprised.

JANE
I told you I was good. You still love her, don't you?
(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

And she just might be available again. Am I right?

RAMON

Yeah. No. I don't know.

Jane punches Ramon playfully on the arm and slams her hand down on the bar, BLAM.

JANE

I knew it.

Ramon rubs his shoulder where her punch landed as she takes another sip and grimaces.

JANE

Look. I'm not that bright it's just that there's only so many ways these things can go. And lord knows I'm the last one to be givin' out love advice but then what do priests know about love and they're givin' out advice all the time.

RAMON

Got that right.

Ramon sips his drink and runs his hand through his hair.

RAMON

She's changed.

JANE

Haven't we all.

RAMON

I don't mean just older. She talks more. Stronger. Colder, in a way.

JANE

She outgrew her husband.

RAMON

And me.

JANE

You're fucked.

Ramon looks up sharply.

JANE

If I'm hearin' you right, and I think I am, you two had this thing when you were young, you went off and while you were gone she grewed up. Have I got it right so far?

Ramon nods.

JANE

Now you come back 'spectin' to pick up where you left off. Yep, you're fucked. Wise man said you can't step into the same river twice.

RAMON

But what if she still loves me?

JANE

Does she?

RAMON

I don't know.

JANE

So here's what you gotta do, my son. She's here in town?

RAMON

Yeah.

JANE

Good. 'Cause you gotta do this lookin' in her eyes. No phone calls. No text messages. Got it?

RAMON

Got it.

JANE

You tell her she's the butter to your bread. The light of your life. It's her or no one. You don't care what has to be done but that you two have to be together. There's no body or no thing that can keep you apart. Can you do that, my son?

RAMON

I don't know.

Jane goes to punch him on the arm again but he sees it coming this time and fades so the blow isn't so devastating.

RAMON
(LAUGHING now)
I can do it, Father Jane.

JANE
'Cause it's only by havin' the
balls to lay it on the line like
that that you'll know fer sure if
she still loves you.

Jane raises her hand.

JANE
Give me an 'amen'.

RAMON
Amen.

Jane makes a drunken sign of the cross.

JANE
Go forth and sin no more.

Jane gets up to leave.

JANE
Gotta get back to work. Unless
you...

RAMON
Thank you, no.

JANE
Your loss.

Jane leaves a thoughtful Ramon staring at his reflection.

INT. BLANCHARD VILLA - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Blanchard fixes drinks at the bar as Angelina sits in the
elegant living room.

BLANCHARD
Have you even talked with Miguel?

Blanchard hands Angelina her drink and sits.

ANGELINA
We talked.

BLANCHARD
And?

ANGELINA

I tried to talk him into taking us
to the United States.

Blanchard takes a cigar from the humidor on the table next to
him.

BLANCHARD

Really? But I need him here.

ANGELINA

Miguel wants to stay in El Verano.
Daddy, I'm afraid something bad is
going to happen.

BLANCHARD

Nothing bad is going to happen,
Sweetheart.

Blanchard takes the cigar out of its wrapper, clips the end,
and reaches for the lighter.

ANGELINA

I wish you wouldn't.

Blanchard SIGHS.

Blanchard slowly puts the cigar in his coat pocket.

The door bell RINGS and Angelina puts her drink on the table
beside her and gets up to answer it.

INT. BLANCHARD VILLA - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Angelina opens the door. It's Ramon.

RAMON

We have to talk.

ANGELINA

Daddy's here.

Ramon enters. Angelina catches a whiff of his breath, SIGHS,
and walks back to the living room with Ramon following.

INT. BLANCHARD VILLA - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Angelina and Ramon enter.

BLANCHARD

Ramon! My favorite priest.

RAMON

Afternoon.

ANGELINA

Want a drink?

RAMON

Whatever you're having.

Angelina goes to the bar to fix Ramon's drink and brings it to Ramon.

Ramon swallows half of his drink.

RAMON

Senor, may I speak privately with your daughter?

Blanchard frowns then gets up, takes the cigar out of his pocket, and puts it in his mouth.

BLANCHARD

Certainly. Gives me a chance to smoke this beauty.

Blanchard leaves.

ANGELINA

Is something wrong?

RAMON

Tomorrow's an important mass for the town.

ANGELINA

And for you.

A door closes in the distance.

ANGELINA

But you can't seriously be here to talk about Mass.

RAMON

I wanted to give your father time to get outside.

ANGELINA

Okay. He's gone. Now what do you really want to say?

RAMON

Is Armanda okay?

ANGELINA
What about Armanda?

RAMON
I walked in the barbershop today to
get my hair trimmed for Easter
mass.

ANGELINA
Yes. So?

RAMON
They were talking about Armanda
when I walked in and then the place
went silent.

Angelina SIGHS.

ANGELINA
It wasn't just you. Armanda went to
Marta's earlier and came home in
tears. She knows people are talking
about her but she doesn't know why.

Ramon takes another drink.

ANGELINA
Ramon, I don't know what to do.

Ramon leans forward and takes Angelina's hand but she pulls
away and stands.

ANGELINA
Once you've married Armanda and
Javier, we'll go to the United
States.

RAMON
Us?

ANGELINA
Be serious. Those decisions are
long past for you and I.

Long silence.

RAMON
Is Miguel going with you?

ANGELINA
Miguel is still my husband.

RAMON
Your marriage should have been
annulled years ago.

ANGELINA

Actually, I asked Miguel for a divorce.

RAMON

Really? What did he say?

ANGELINA

(in her best Miguel voice)
No Gutierrez has ever divorced.

RAMON

Look, tomorrow is Easter, a time of resurrection and new beginnings.

Ramon looks at the remains of his drink and sets it down.

RAMON

New beginnings for all of us.

Ramon stands and moves closer to Angelina. He takes her hand and looks intently in her eyes.

RAMON

I've always loved you.

ANGELINA

Look. Ramon.

She pulls away.

RAMON

You're right. It was wrong of me to come here.

Ramon turns to leave.

ANGELINA

Ramon...

He leaves.

EXT. EL VERANO CHURCH - SATURDAY NIGHT

We see the last of the Mass being given by Father Nunez. Ramon stands next to Father Nunez on the dais as the ALTER BOYS assist in the communion.

FATHER NUNEZ

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Ramon crosses himself at the end of the prayer. Angelina crosses herself in the congregation next to Armanda and Javier.

RAMON

Amen.

ANGELINA, ARMANDA, JAVIER

Amen.

ORGAN MUSIC plays as the congregation leaves the church.

EXT. CHURCH - LATER

Father Nunez accepts the well wishes from the people of El Verano. In a slow time-lapse sequence we see the crowd dwindle to where no one remains.

The church lights dim with each reduction in the crowd to candlelight. We move through the silent sanctuary and see the candlelight glow from the small side chapel.

Father Nunez sits in a chair. Angelina stands next to him. Javier and Armanda kneel before Ramon. The only SOUND is a solo guitar that plays an instrumental variant of I WOULD NEVER that we heard before.

Ramon holds up two rings and mouths his prayer. We hear nothing but the guitar.

RAMON

(inaudible)

May these rings be a symbol of true faith in each other, and always remind you of your love.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FATHER NUNEZ AND ANGELINA

(inaudible)

Amen.

ARMANDA AND JAVIER

(inaudible)

Amen.

Javier looks to Armanda as he places a PEARL RING on her finger. We watch Armanda's face as Javier speaks to her. Everything we need to know is reflected in their faces.

Ramon blesses Armanda and Javier. Angelina and Ramon share a tender look and a smile.

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - SATURDAY NIGHT - LATER

The place is packed. The band PLAYS.

Consuelo and Marta sit close to the band. Maria Elena brings them drinks then sits down. She fans herself dramatically.

Angelina catches Maria Elena's eye and motions to the PEOPLE who've just entered and Maria Elena SIGHS, stands, and goes back to work.

Ramon, Angelina, Javier, Armanda, and Father Nunez sit at a table locked in animated joyous conversation.

Blanchard and Benito walk in. The noise level noticeably diminishes as people make way for Blanchard's passage to Ramon's table.

Once there, Blanchard looks at the band and raises his hand.

The band stops and the conversations die down as Blanchard addresses the crowd.

BLANCHARD

I have some wonderful news. Tonight
I am proud to announce the
engagement of my lovely
granddaughter Armanda to my
business associate, Benito Sanchez.

Blanchard puts his arm around Benito who beams.

Consuelo and Marta look at one another then back to Ramon's table.

Stunned silence. Especially at Ramon's table where Armanda is particularly horror-stricken.

BLANCHARD

Armanda, stand up.

Benito, oblivious to Armanda's state, helps her to her feet.

Blanchard CLAPS and motions to the band to PLAY. Few other people CLAP.

The band starts up again half-heartedly.

Benito leans over to kiss Armanda and she SLAPS him.

The band stops.

Benito rubs his face, murder in his eyes.

Ramon stands to protect Armanda.

ARMANDA
 (to Blanchard)
 You ruined my mother's life. You're
 not going to ruin mine.

Now Blanchard is apoplectic.

BLANCHARD
 How dare you show disrespect like
 that? You'll do as I say.

RAMON
 Senor Blanchard, you could have
 chosen a better time -

BLANCHARD
 (wheeling on Ramon)
 - Pay attention to the affairs of
 the Church and leave my family to
 me.

Blanchard raises his hand to smack Armanda but Ramon grabs
 his arm.

Blanchard shakes Ramon loose.

BLANCHARD
 This isn't the end of this.

Blanchard turns and leaves and Benito follows.

Once they leave the band PLAYS.

Angelina signals to Maria Elena for another round of drinks
 as the tables simmer down.

ARMANDA
 (to Ramon)
 What are we going to do?

Angelina takes Armanda's hand.

ANGELINA
 This is why we need to get you out
 of El Verano. Tomorrow night you'll
 be in the U.S. and none of this
 will matter.

FATHER NUNEZ
 But for now, let's drink a toast to
 the happy couple.

Armanda pours Tequila into everyone's glass but when she
 comes to Ramon, he places his hand over his glass.

Angelina looks quizzically at Ramon who just shrugs.

They all toast (Ramon with his water glass) and Armanda wipes a tear from her eyes and kisses Javier.

Angelina raises her glass.

ANGELINA

To our daughter and Javier.

Everyone turns to Angelina who looks panicked as she realizes what she just said.

FATHER NUNEZ

You mean your daughter.

Silence.

ARMANDA

What are you talking about?

Angelina puts down her glass.

ANGELINA

This is not how I planned to tell you but - you're our child.

ARMANDA

Our?

Angelina looks at Ramon.

ANGELINA

I was pregnant when my father had me marry Miguel.

ARMANDA

(to Javier)

I can't believe this is happening.

(to Angelina)

I can't believe you're telling me this now.

Armanda gets up and runs off in tears.

Consuelo stands but Marta pulls her back to her seat.

Ramon gets up but Angelina pulls him back down to his seat.

JAVIER

I knew it. This explains a lot.

ANGELINA

(to Javier)

Go to her.

Javier leaves.

Father Nunez shakes his head.

FATHER NUNEZ
I'll remember this night until my
dying day.

On Ramon's look.

FATHER NUNEZ
Or until next week. Whichever comes
first.

CROWD
Ramon! Ramon! Ramon!

Ramon is devastated at Armanda's reaction but manages to smile and wave to the crowd, gets up, and goes to the stage where he takes a guitar from one of the musicians.

Ramon talks briefly with the band, they nod, and he takes a seat in front of the band.

(The song is NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH by Lila Downs)

The DRUMMER starts with a back beat.

RAMON
(rap-like)
What are the open plains,
but land to roam and cultivate,
reciprocate, trade and share,
to give and to take, to respect the
Indian way?
I will no longer cry for what is
past is gone,
like a memory that floats in the
air,

Ramon SINGS and PLAYS.

RAMON
the song of an eagle feather
climbing in the wind,
on a hot summer day, on a hot
summer day.

The band joins in.

RAMON
I've seen eyes that were crying
sadly,
fist ready for the blow.
(MORE)

RAMON (CONT'D)

I've seen turbulent skies above me,
butterflies in the snow.

I saw war in a mask and a costume,
in a jingle of leaders to blame.
I've seen power in the hands of the
wrong men,
will it always be just the same?

Seen boys cross illegal borders,
risk a life to wash a dish.
I've seen money disguised as the
answer,
is that your only wish?

Angelina and Maria Elena share a look. Consuelo and Marta
join Angelina at her table.

RAMON

Saw mothers smile so hopeful,
saw a man who treasures life.
As a man not able to chose,
on the strength I need to survive.

Ramon nods to the crowd and they join in.

CROWD

Truth, nothing but the truth!
What's your comment today,
what's your comment today,
the things you say.

When you give and you take,
when you take and you take and you
take.

Truth, nothing but the truth!
In the name of nature,
the choices you make.
Is it only me, is it only you,
are we only living for today?

RAMON

Maybe today will be the day,
before it's over, I'll make a
change.

Maybe today will be my day,
before it's over, I'll have my say.

The horns join in.

CROWD

Na, Na, Na...

RAMON

May the walls in the road be
witness to the needs of your
ticking heart.

May the words of your love be
spoken at your table and when you
part.

May your long line of family
members be proud of who you've
become.

May your hands and your soul remind
you everyday that you are around.

May the house that is always clean
be the home to the ones in need.

May the dirt on the soles of your
boots make a track of the good will
you lead.

May the words that were used to
defy float away, far away out of
sight!

And the mountain we still must
climb be the one we will climb to
unite!

The crowd is now on its feet, they dance where they stand as
they sing.

CROWD

Truth, nothing but the truth!
What's your comment today,
what's your comment today,
the things you say.

When you give and you take,
when you take and you take and you
take.

Truth, nothing but the truth!
In the name of nature,
the choices you make.

(MORE)

CROWD (CONT'D)

Is it only me, is it only you,
are we only living for today?

RAMON

Maybe today will be the day,
before it's over, I'll make a
change.

Maybe today will be my day,
before it's over, I'll have my say.

The horns join in.

CROWD

Na, Na, Na...

The band, Ramon, and the crowd break off and the crowd
APPLAUDS and WHISTLES.

Ramon takes a bow.

Angelina wipes a tear from her eye as she CLAPS with the
others.

EXT. CHURCH - SUNDAY MORNING

Ramirez motions to Angelina to join him as she walks up the
steps to the church with her father.

Angelina turns to talk briefly with her father who looks up
at Ramirez, nods, then goes into the church as Angelina comes
over to Ramirez.

ANGELINA

Good morning, Esteban.

Ramirez looks around conspiratorially.

RAMIREZ

I have to talk to you about these
rumors.

ANGELINA

The one where you are the father of
Armanda?

RAMIREZ

Yes. That rumor.

Angelina LAUGHS.

RAMIREZ

It's not funny.

ANGELINA

We both know you're not her father.
What else matters? Besides, it's
good cover for your -

RAMIREZ

- No one must know about that.
People don't want a gay Federale.

ANGELINA

Your secret has always been safe
with me.

RAMIREZ

Thank you. And I will never tell
the secret of your plan.

Angelina punches him on the arm.

ANGELINA

How do you know that?

RAMIREZ

Assault on an officer? I will have
to take you in.

He takes her arm and ushers into the church.

INT. CHURCH VESTIBULE - LATER

The choir SINGS sweetly throughout this and next scene.

Ramon, dressed in his cassock, helps Father Nunez into his.

EXT. AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

The Homeland Security plane taxis up to the hanger and stops.
The door opens, the PILOT descends with an ALUMINUM
BRIEFCASE, and waves to the guys.

Benito and Jorge exit the hanger and approach the plane and
Benito takes the aluminum briefcase from the pilot.

Benito opens the suitcase for Jorge's inspection.

Jorge nods and handcuffs the suitcase to his wrist.

CHURCH -

Ramon is resplendent in his robes.

RAMON

Welcome friends and family. It's with a humble heart I try to fill the shoes of Father Nunez who has served El Verano for the past forty years.

Ramon turns to acknowledge Father Nunez who struggles to his feet and basks in the congregation's APPLAUSE.

AIRPORT -

Benito drives a forklift loaded with boxes marked PFIZER to the plane and he loads it while Jorge watches.

CHURCH -

Ramon and the congregation SING the Alleluhia.

AIRPORT -

The plane takes off as Benito and Jorge watch.

Benito turns and smiles at Jorge.

CHURCH -

Ramon is into his sermon.

RAMON

Today is the day we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It's a time of new beginnings. It's a time for honesty and, hopefully, a time for forgiveness.

Ramon looks out at the congregation searching for Armanda but only sees Angelina who shrugs her shoulders.

RAMON

With that in mind, I'd like to talk to you this morning about some gossip I'm sure you've all heard. It concerns my daughter, Armanda...

The entire congregation starts TALKING.

RAMON

...Blanchard Gutierrez.

AIRPORT -

Miguel appears, gun in hand. Benito draws his Glock as Jorge fumbles for his gun, impeded by the suitcase.

Miguel FIRES. The bullet hits the aluminum briefcase and knocks Jorge on his ass.

Miguel says something that looks like *Son of a Bitch*.

Benito FIRES and misses completely earning him a *what-the-fuck* look from Miguel.

Benito shrugs as Jorge regains his feet and slips into the hanger.

CHURCH -

Several members stand and SHOUT as Father Nunez struggles to make his way to Ramon.

Father Nunez raises his hand for quiet.

The congregation gradually quiets.

FATHER NUNEZ

Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, asked
*who is without sin? Let him be the
one to cast the first stone.*

The congregation looks somewhat chastened.

FATHER NUNEZ

I do not approve of relations
outside of the holy bonds of
matrimony.

The congregation WHISPERS as the last of the people sit.

FATHER NUNEZ

And Father Ramon and I have had
some harsh words over this.

A few members of the congregation nod.

FATHER NUNEZ

This all happened before Father
Ramon took his vows of chastity and
declared in this very church to
serve God the rest of his days.

AIRPORT -

Miguel and Benito stand to either side of the door to the hanger and cautiously peer in earning Benito a bullet that shatters the door frame near his face.

Miguel signals to Benito that he's going around the back.

Benito nods and FIRES blindly around the door. We hear a CRY of pain.

THIS earns Benito another WTF look from Miguel and another shrug from Benito.

They once again cautiously peek around the corner of the door and see Jorge sprawled out on the floor. He holds his leg and GROANS, gun scattered, suitcase still attached to his hand.

Miguel and Benito approach Jorge.

Miguel FIRES a bullet into Jorge's head.

Benito fishes through Jorge's pocket for the key to the handcuffs.

Miguel shakes his head in disgust, looks around, sees a shovel leaning against the interior wall of the hanger, retrieves it, and uses it to cut off Jorge's hand.

Miguel nods to Benito. As they pick up the body Jorge's phone falls on the floor and Benito scoops it up and puts it in his pocket.

Church-

FATHER NUNEZ

So, before we take the holy
sacrament, I want each of you to
reflect on your own sins.

Father Nunez looks over the congregation.

FATHER NUNEZ

And seek in your heart to forgive
Ramon as our Lord has forgiven you.

Ramon offers the Sacrament at the alter as the TOWNSPEOPLE line up including Angelina, Ramirez and Blanchard.

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER

Miguel motions for Benito to throw him the car keys. Miguel opens the trunk which overflows with Corona bottles.

Miguel SLAMS the trunk shut as he glares at Benito.

Miguel and Benito throw the body into the rear of Benito's car.

Miguel picks up the suitcase with the severed hand still attached and carries it to the back seat.

Benito queasily looks to Miguel then quickly pulls a PLASTIC SHEET over the body and the suitcase.

Miguel checks his watch, they jump in the car, and leave.

CHURCH - LATER

Miguel and Benito slip into the rear of the church just as the congregation SINGS the last hymn.

They nod to Ramon as he walks past them to take his place to greet the congregation as they leave.

EXT. CHURCH - LATER

Miguel and Benito are one of the first to shake Ramon's hand.

RAMON

Why didn't you take the Sacrament?

MIGUEL

I've done some things that God would not approve of.

Benito LAUGHS and they make way for the PEOPLE behind them.

EXT. PLAZA - DAY

MEN put the final touches on the sound system on the small stage at the center of the plaza as PEOPLE mill about.

Ramon comes through the crowd on his way to the stage with his guitar, greeting people, some of whom turn away as Ramon approaches, scattered half-hearted APPLAUSE.

JAVIER AND ARMANDA

Javier brings an ice cream cone to Armanda who sits on a blanket.

Ramon approaches Armanda and Javier but Armanda gets up and walks away.

Javier shrugs and walks after her.

RAMON

Ramon SINGS to scattered BOOS.

MIGUEL AND BENITO

Miguel and Benito listen, beers in their hands. All Benito sees is Javier as he leans over and kisses Armanda.

RAMON

People get up and leave as others BOO and finally the band stops playing as Ramon continues to SING.

BLANCHARD

A few feet away Blanchard takes out his cell phone and punches in a number.

RAMON

Ramon stops playing as more people leave. He looks at the band who shrug and put up their instruments.

MIGUEL AND BENITO

Miguel sees Blanchard on his cell.

Jorge's phone in Benito's pocket PLAYS "La Cucaracha".

Miguel's eyes go wide as he grabs Benito and whisks him away from Blanchard.

BENITO

What the fuck?

MIGUEL

You idiot.

BENITO

What?

Benito finally hears the cell phone and takes it out of his pocket. Miguel takes it.

MIGUEL

You're a fucking idiot.

Miguel breaks the cell phone apart and drops the pieces in the trash bin as he walks away.

Blanchard catches Benito's eye and motions for him to come over.

BLANCHARD
Drive me to the airport.

Benito exchanges a look with Miguel.

BENITO
In my car?

BLANCHARD
Of course in your car. Let's go.

Blanchard looks at Miguel for the first time.

BLANCHARD
You might as well come too.

RAMON

A dejected Ramon leaves the park with his guitar.

EXT. STREET - LATER

Benito opens the door to his car solicitously for Blanchard, all the while trying to block his view of the back seat but only managing to get in his way.

BLANCHARD
Move.

Blanchard sees the blue plastic tarp that covers a large lump in the back seat.

BLANCHARD
What's that?

Benito nearly faints.

BENITO
Uhhh...

MIGUEL
Just some things I asked Benito to take to the dump for me.

Benito walks to the driver's side and opens the door.

BLANCHARD
Just drop it off at the plant.
Let's go.

Miguel shoots Benito a *be cool* look over the top of the car, opens the rear door, and tries to get Jorge's legs, now stiff with rigor mortis, to bend.

Giving up, he sits on Jorge's legs, his head now bent against the roof of the car.

Benito and Blanchard get in.

They leave.

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER

Benito's car pulls up to the hanger. Blanchard pulls himself out of the car.

BLANCHARD
Open the door to my hanger.

Benito saunters to the hanger as Blanchard and Miguel follow.

BLANCHARD
Hurry up.

Benito jogs to the hanger door and opens it.

INT. HANGER - CONTINUOUS

Blanchard looks around and sees the blood on the floor. Miguel and Benito play their part in looking surprised.

BENITO
Fuck me! What happened here?

Blanchard looks at Benito and Miguel suspiciously.

MIGUEL
Don't look at me.

BLANCHARD
Let's go.

They walk toward the car.

MIGUEL
(to Benito)
You sit in the back.

Benito's eyes widen.

They get in the car and leave.

I/E. BENITO'S CAR - ROAD - CONTINUOUS

BENITO
It looked like an ambush.

Miguel frowns at Benito in the rear view mirror as if to say *Why are you talking, you idiot?*

BLANCHARD

This isn't like him. Not like him at all.

MIGUEL

If you'd have told me a shipment was going out today I could have been there to make sure things went as planned.

BENITO

Yeah, Man.

Miguel gives Benito a look in the rear view mirror, Benito's head squashed against the ceiling.

BLANCHARD

Jorge always manages this. He gets the shipment on the plane and collects the operating capital.

Blanchard looks out the window as Miguel drives toward the villa.

MIGUEL

Who else know's that's his normal routine?

BLANCHARD

Ramirez, of course, but he was at church. I sat next to him. I was worried something was going to happen. I just didn't expect this.

MIGUEL

You don't suppose Jorge just spread some blood around to make it look like an ambush?

Blanchard looks at Miguel as if he might be on to something then looks back out the window.

MIGUEL

This is why you have family, Viejo. Why trust a stranger?

Blanchard hits the dashboard with his fist.

BLANCHARD

What do you know? Don't talk to me about family.

(MORE)

BLANCHARD (CONT'D)

Every week, for six of the last eight years you were in jail, this has been Jorge's job.

BENITO

That sucks, Man.

BLANCHARD

Shut up. You might be marrying my granddaughter, but you are just a punk kid.

Benito bristles.

BLANCHARD

Can't you drive any faster?

INT. EL MILAGRO RESTAURANTE - DAY

Angelina is busy in the empty restaurant. Consuelo and Marta walk in the front door.

Consuelo walks to Angelina and stops her hand from wiping down a table.

CONSUELO

Are you alright?

MARTA

I am so sorry.

Angelina sits down at the table.

ANGELINA

I never imagined people could be so cruel.

MARTA

You just imagine that they are as nice as you -

CONSUELO

- until you have to see them as they are.

Maria Elena walks in from the kitchen with a tray loaded with cups of flan.

MARTA

Just in time, Amiga.

MARIA ELENA

Small town...

Maria Elena sets the tray on the table and sits with her friends.

MARIA ELENA
Smaller minds.

Each of the women take a cup of flan and slowly enjoy it.

CONSUELO
And, even smaller -

MARTA
- and soon it will all be forgotten.

ANGELINA
I'm worried about Armanda. She's very angry. At me. At Ramon. Pretty much everyone.

CONSUELO
She's young. She'll see why you made the decision you did.

Angelina looks into her now empty flan cup.

ANGELINA
Maybe I should have another.

MARTA
I've heard it's magic flan.

CONSUELO
Let the healing begin.

The women each take another cup of flan from the tray.

INT. BLANCHARD'S VILLA - OFFICE - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Ramon walks into Blanchard's office as Blanchard talks on his cell phone.

RAMON
We need to talk.

Blanchard stops and looks askance at Ramon.

BLANCHARD
(on his cell phone)
We'll finish this up later.
(to Ramon)
I don't have time for this.

Blanchard walks to his liquor cabinet and pulls out two glasses.

BLANCHARD
A drink? (to himself) Don't know
why I'm asking.

Blanchard goes to the bar and pours a drink for himself and for Ramon.

RAMON
Please sit.

BLANCHARD
If this is about a donation for the
Church -

Blanchard places Ramon's drink on his desk near Ramon.

RAMON
You know that Armanda isn't
Miguel's daughter?

Blanchard looks at Ramon.

BLANCHARD
I've heard the rumors. So my
granddaughter isn't my
granddaughter. Too bad. She's a
lovely girl.

RAMON
She is your granddaughter.

This slowly sinks in to Blanchard.

BLANCHARD
Ah. So the priest is not so
celibate. What a day this has been
for revelations.

RAMON
I love Angelina. I have always
loved Angelina and you took her
from me. Do you ever wonder why you
have no other grandchildren?

Ramon lets the question hang.

RAMON
Well you might with the prostitutes
Miguel favors.

Blanchard SIGHS.

BLANCHARD

Why are you telling me this? I have much more important matters to tend to. Talk to your priest if you need to confess. Now leave me.

RAMON

You can't have Armanda as your pawn. You won't steal her chance at love like you did for Angelina and me.

Ramon stands.

BLANCHARD

There are bigger plans than yours, Ramon.

Miguel walks in.

RAMON

Armanda is married to Javier. It's done. I married them last night.

Blanchard glares at Ramon as he gets his temper in check.

BLANCHARD

Only you would think a busboy and the son of a campesino is worthy of marriage to my granddaughter.

Ramon sees Miguel.

RAMON

(to Miguel)

I suppose you agreed to this?

MIGUEL

Agreed to what?

RAMON

Marrying Armanda to that juiced punk. Well you're too late. You're both too late.

Ramon walks to the door.

RAMON

(to Blanchard)

And yeah, you're right. I do think it's a worthy marriage.

Ramon leaves. Miguel sits down.

MIGUEL

Ramon and his causes.

Miguel picks up the drink Blanchard poured for Ramon and drinks it.

MIGUEL

For whatever it's worth, I really don't care who Armanda marries. But what are we going to do about Jorge?

Blanchard is lost in thought.

BLANCHARD

Hmm?

MIGUEL

Are you just going to let him walk off with a million dollars?

BLANCHARD

So you think Jorge planned the whole thing?

Miguel holds his hands out and shrugs.

MIGUEL

What else could it be?

EXT. BLANCHARD'S VILLA - DRIVEWAY - LATER

Ramon leans against Miguel's car door with his elbows on the roof and talks on his cell phone.

Miguel comes over.

MIGUEL

You still here?

Ramon turns and folds his phone.

RAMON

You have to leave.

Miguel JANGLES his car keys in Ramon's face.

MIGUEL

If you move, I'll leave.

RAMON

Blanchard is going to have you killed.

Miguel looks at Ramon like he's finally lost it.

MIGUEL

Still trying to get me to go to El
Otra Lada?

Ramon straightens up and gets in Miguel's face.

RAMON

He's certain you were behind what
happened at the airport this
morning.

MIGUEL

I was just with the old man. He
thinks Jorge did it.

RAMON

And I was just talking with
Ramirez. He has his phone tapped.
Blanchard told Benito he doesn't
have any choice but to kill you.

MIGUEL

Blanchard doesn't have the cajones.

RAMON

Maybe not. But Benito does.

MIGUEL

Benito's loco.

RAMON

I agree. That's why you have to go.
Look, Angelina got you a visa.
Armanda wants to leave and now that
she's married to Javier you need to
take him too.

MIGUEL

And what about my dear wife?

RAMON

She'll go too. Maria Elena's agreed
to run the restaurant.

MIGUEL

Sounds like you have this all
worked out.

Miguel smirks.

Ramon punches Miguel in the face.

Miguel reels back more surprised than hurt. He smiles as he massages his chin as Ramon massages his hand and grimaces.

RAMON

When are you going to start taking
this seriously?

Miguel LAUGHS.

MIGUEL

So what's the plan?

INT. POLICE STATION - RAMIREZ' OFFICE - LATER

Ramon sits across from Ramirez who's behind his desk.

RAMIREZ

I'm not sure this is a good idea.

RAMON

You're the one who told me about
Blanchard's plan to kill Miguel.

Ramirez starts to protest but Ramon cuts him short.

RAMON

Look, there's some questions about
whose side you're on.

Ramirez shrugs.

RAMON

I can tell you where Miguel will be
and when he'll be there.

RAMIREZ

You make it all seem so simple.

RAMON

If Miguel isn't in jail he's going
to be dead. It's as simple as that.

RAMIREZ

Why am I arresting him again?

RAMON

It's Mexico. You need a reason?

EXT. CHURCH - EVENING

Angelina, Armanda, and Javier climb the steps to the church.
All carry luggage.

Ramon meets them on the steps.

JAVIER
I'll stay out here.

RAMON
You're part of the family now too.

JAVIER
I know. But I'll stay out here. You
and Armanda have a lot to work out.

Javier leans against the pillar and lights a cigarette while the others enter the church.

Ramon takes Javier's luggage and ushers them into the church.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

They leave the suitcases by the narthex and walk to the front of the church where Miguel sits.

Angelina sits with Armanda in the front pew as Ramon paces back and forth and Miguel smokes.

RAMON
(to Angelina)
You know Armanda and Javier won't
get on the plane without you

MIGUEL
We'll be one happy family again.

Ramirez comes out of a side door, gun drawn.

RAMIREZ
Miguel, you're under arrest.

Ramon raises the gun that's been hidden in the folds of his cassock.

RAMON
Change of plans.

Ramirez frowns then smiles.

RAMIREZ
Ramon, what are you doing?

RAMON
Miguel and Angelina are leaving for
the United States tonight. They're
taking Javier and Armanda with
them.

RAMIREZ

Oh really.

RAMON

I'd hate to shoot you but I will if you come between me and my family. Now call Blanchard's pilot and have him meet us at the plane in thirty minutes. And don't forget this gun is pointed directly at your heart.

RAMIREZ

My least vulnerable spot.

Ramirez lowers his gun.

Ramon motions for Ramirez to give him the gun. He hesitates then complies. Ramon empties the clip, pockets it, and throws the gun on the table.

Ramirez digs out his cell phone and dials.

RAMIREZ

Juan, have the plane ready in thirty minutes.

INT. BLANCHARD'S VILLA - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Blanchard sits in a chair in an elegant robe, phone to ear.

BLANCHARD

Who is this? Ramirez?

RAMIREZ

(on phone)

I know it's late but Blanchard needs the plane. We're at the church now but should be at the airport in thirty minutes. Make sure the plane is ready. Four passengers for El Paso.

Ramirez disconnects leaving a confused Blanchard.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

As before.

Ramirez closes his phone and Ramon holds his hand out for it.

Ramirez hesitantly hands the phone to Ramon who scrolls through the prompts, sees the number he just called, and throws the phone back to Ramirez.

RAMON

Try again.

Ramirez SIGHS and dials again.

RAMIREZ

Juan, have the plane ready in
thirty minutes. (beat)
I don't care. Have some coffee and
meet us there in thirty minutes
ready to take off.

Ramirez closes the phone and hands it to Ramon. Ramon goes through the prompts again, nods, then SMASHES the phone on the back of the pew.

Ramirez winces.

RAMIREZ

I liked that phone.

RAMON

We'll use your car. I wouldn't want
to be stopped.

Ramirez turns to leave.

RAMON

Esteban, you'll be staying here.

RAMIREZ

As you wish.

Ramirez hands Ramon his car keys.

RAMON

Into the confessional.

RAMIREZ

But I haven't been in there in
twenty years.

RAMON

Then you and God have a lot to talk
about, don't you?

Ramon motions with the gun and Ramirez goes in.

Ramon wedges a chair against the door.

INT. BLANCHARD'S VILLA - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Blanchard hangs up the phone and stares out the window frowning. He quickly gets up and leaves the room.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Javier still leans against the pillar and smokes as Benito approaches.

BENITO
Hey, pendejo. I've been looking for you.

Javier straightens up.

JAVIER
Got nothing to say to you.

Benito motions to the sanctuary.

BENITO
My bride in there saying her confessions?

JAVIER
Beat it, Benito.

Benito climbs the steps until he's even with Javier.

BENITO
Can't wait to pop her cherry, man. Give her a taste of what it's like to be with a real man.

JAVIER
You're a little late.

BENITO
Don't tell me you had the cajones to pop her before you were married.

JAVIER
We were married last night so who's the pendejo now?

Benito takes a knife from his pocket, flicks it open, and holds it against Javier's throat.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Angelina still sits. She holds Armanda's hand while Miguel still smokes and Ramon still paces.

RAMON
I have a little money saved to help you get started.

MIGUEL

Money is not the problem. The problem is Blanchard will have an easier time of killing me there than here.

RAMIREZ (O.C.)

(from the confessional)
He's right.

ARMANDA

I don't understand. Why does Abuelo want to kill Miguel?

MIGUEL

He thinks I stole his money.

ARMANDA

Did you?

MIGUEL

Yeah.

JAVIER (O.S.)

Arrrgghhhh...

Ramon, Angelina, Armanda, and Miguel race to the door of the church.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Javier writhes on the ground clutching his stomach as Benito wipes the blade of his knife against Javier's leg.

Armanda rushes to Javier's side.

Ramon steps between Benito and where Armanda kneels with Javier.

Benito sees Ramon's gun, drops the knife, and pulls out his Glock.

RAMON

Drop the -

Benito FIRES and Ramon is hit.

Ramon FIRES into the steps of the church.

Angelina and Armanda SCREAM.

Benito turns and runs as Miguel bends to pick up the gun Ramon has dropped. He FIRES but Benito is gone.

ARMANDA

Popa!

I/E. BLANCHARD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Blanchard races through the streets.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Benito runs around the corner and is hit by Blanchard's car.

I/E. BLANCHARD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Benito's gun goes off and hits Blanchard between the eyes.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Benito struggles to his feet as Blanchard's car continues on stopping only when it hits a shop.

BENITO

Fuck me.

The horn BLARES as Benito runs off.

INT. WHORE HOUSE - NIGHT

Benito comes through the front door looking crazed. Carmen walks up. Benito throws his arm around her.

BENITO

Ya know, I was going to marry
Miguel's daughter.

Benito walks with Carmen toward a couch. Benito SHOUTS at the bartender.

BENITO

A bottle of your best tequila.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Miguel walks down the street not bothering to hide the gun in his hand earning him some concerned looks from the CITIZENRY.

INT. WHORE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Benito bends over a low table next to the couch. He cuts the white powder then organizes it into long rows.

Benito offers Carmen the rolled \$100 bill. She SNORTS a line and shudders before falling back in a daze.

Miguel enters and sits next to Carmen. He puts the gun under a nearby magazine unnoticed by Benito and Carmen.

BENITO

Hey Miguel, just in time.

Benito takes the bill from her hand and leans over the lines and SNORTS one line in each nostril. He wipes the residual from the table top and rubs it on his gums before he takes a deep swig on the TEQUILA BOTTLE.

BENITO

Fuck me.

Benito's gun is on the table near the half-empty tequila bottle.

Benito picks up his gun and Miguel reaches for his.

Benito's eyes are closed and white powder clings to his nose.

Benito plays with the gun's clip, engaging it then releasing it. Engaging and releasing. He sees white powder clinging to the gun. He licks it off.

The gun EXPLODES. The shot propels Benito against the back of the sofa.

BENITO

Fuck me.

Benito dies.

MIGUEL

Well, that saves a bullet.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT - LATER

Consuelo enters the church and covers her hair with a brightly colored scarf, dips her fingers into the holy water, genuflects, and approaches the row of candles located next to the confessional.

She drops some coins into the box and picks up a match to light the candle when SNORING erupts from the confessional.

She notices the chair propped against the door and approaches, intrigued.

She removes the chair and opens the door to find Ramirez, head back, drool on his Federale shirt.

She smiles, looks around, then enters the confessional.

INT. WHORE HOUSE - MORNING

Sunlight filters through the blinds as Miguel sleeps, his arm draped over Carmen.

FEDERALES CRASH through the door, guns drawn, lead by Ramirez.

One of the men yanks Miguel from the bed and ties a zip-tie around his hands behind his back as Carmen SCREAMS and attempts to cover herself with the sheet.

Miguel looks accusingly at Ramirez who only shrugs as if to say *I've protected you as long as I could.*

EXT. CHURCH - LATER

The church bells PEAL as PEOPLE make their way into the church.

INT. CHURCH - LATER

Father Nunez makes his way to the front of the church assisted by one of the altar boys where two caskets are laid out - one fancy and one plain - amid a forest of flowers as organ music PLAYS quietly.

Father Nunez stands before the congregation and places a hand on each casket.

FATHER NUNEZ

What can we learn from these
tragedies? This senseless violence?

Father Nunez pauses and looks about the gathered mourners.

FATHER NUNEZ

About forgiveness? About greed?
About revenge?

INT. WASHINGTON DC - NEWS CONFERENCE - DAY

Flash bulbs go off as GERARD WINTHROP III, 40s, Head of Homeland Security steps up to the podium festooned with microphones.

WINTHROP

It's with a sad heart we announce
the murder of William Blanchard,
the regional head of Homeland
Security for El Paso, at the hands
of the drug cartel in El Verano,
Mexico.

Church -

The organ MUSIC continues as Father Nunez makes his way with
the altar boy slowly up the steps of the dais where he joins
Ramon, his arm in a sling but otherwise looking none the
worse for wear.

WINTHROP (V.O.)

A tireless and selfless warrior for
the security of the United States
of America, William Blanchard
always had the welfare of the
people foremost in his mind...

Angelina sits in the front pew next to Armanda and a wan
looking Javier. Both stare vacantly into the middle distance.

WINTHROP (V.O.)

...the people he worked with, the
people of the United States, and
the people of Mexico. He will be
sorely missed.

FADE TO BLACK