

A BURNING HORSE

BY

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EXT. HIGHWAY. NIGHT.

The sun is about to rise on a lonely highway near a big city in the south of the USA, there is a small farm nearby and we can hear a rooster. Then we hear some steps approaching.

RAMON, a 25 years old Mexican, walks determined along the highway carrying a heavy back pack. Suddenly RAMON stops and stares in front of him, there is a black horse tied to a tree a few steps from him. The horse raises its head and looks at RAMON, who remains motionless.

From a high shot we can see RAMON surrounding widely the black horse. He walks up to the highway asphalt and returns to his original path. Now, RAMON walks slowly with a serious expression on his face.

RAMON walks for a while until a small truck appears, playing Mexican music loudly, the truck stops near RAMON and a COUPLE OF MEXICAN WORKERS invite him to travel with them. We hear them since a distant point.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY. DAY.

The truck enters the big city, it's early yet and the sun hasn't risen at all, the traffic gets harder with big trucks all around. RAMON travels in the back of the small truck sitting among many boxes.

RAMON opens a small bag and takes out dozens of buttons of different colors and sizes and watches them one by one, putting them back again in the small box.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN. DAY.

RAMON walks through the streets downtown. It's a busy working day and many people walks hurried in all directions holding coffee cups and backpacks. the traffic noise is intense. RAMON looks everywhere trying to find his way. He waits on a corner for a green light among the crowd. RAMON looks an address on a piece of paper, it looks that he's lost but he doesn't ask for help.

CUT TO:

EXT. LATINO NEIGHBORHOOD. DAY.

RAMON gets into a Latino neighborhood which looks dangerous. The buildings are in bad shape, and there are teenagers on the corners listening to loud Mexican music in big radios. RAMON walks fearless and finds an immigrant religious community center and walks toward it.

CUT TO:

EXT. IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY CENTER. DAY.

RAMON rings the bell, it sounds bad and noisy. He waits for a while. It's an old two level building, it seems it has not received any maintenance for a long time, a blue cross on a wall seems to be about to fall. A fat woman who seems to be the COOK opens the door.

RAMON

I'm looking for the pastor.

CUT TO:

INT. IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY CENTER - DINNING ROOM. DAY.

RAMON is sitting on a lonely big table, eating desperately, there are some other tables in the white room, all of them empty and clean, the COOK has just finished cleaning up the last table, she picks up the dishes and leaves.

DON OMAR enters the room and walks toward RAMON until he is in front of him. DON OMAR who runs the place, it's a small man about 50 years old, we can notice in his particular accent that he is from South America even when he has been in the USA for a long time now.

DON OMAR

So, you are the famous Ramon,  
finally I meet you... Brandon told us  
a lot about you and some of your  
adventures, he told me you've been  
traveling for a long time, he says you  
don't like to stay too much in  
anyplace.

RAMON looks at him without any interest and continues eating.

DON OMAR

Brandon stayed here for a while, he started doing some calls looking for you until he got tired, he didn't want to leave this place, he was really waiting for you.

RAMON

Yes, I wanted to be here since some time ago but, I had some troubles.

DON OMAR

He said you might have returned to your home town, in Mexico.

RAMON

No, I've been in... some other places.

DON OMAR

Are you gonna stay here? Or are you just in your way to... any other place?

RAMON

Don't know yet.

DON OMAR

This could be a good place for you.

RAMON

Why do you say that?

DON OMAR

Well, it's a good place for me and for Brandon, so.

RAMON

I think all the places are just the same.

DON OMAR

The same? In a good or a bad way?

RAMON

It's up to you, I guess.

DOM OMAR takes a deep breath and sits carefully in front of RAMON.

DON OMAR

RAMON I've just met you but, I want to know... What's the reason you're here?

RAMON thinks his answer.

RAMON

I have no reason to stay. I have no other place to go.

DON OMAR

But why now? You see, I'm only worried about Brandon, when he came here, he was really bad, it took me a big effort to help him. Now he's better, he found a job, a girl and I don't want to see him in any trouble again.

RAMON leaves his plate and spoon, DON OMAR is eagerly waiting for an answer and RAMON looks the words without any fear.

RAMON

Brandon is my friend, I've known him since a long time ago. I know him better than you and I don't want him in troubles either. So, if you wanna help me and tell me where he is, it's okay, but if not, I'm gonna find him anyway.

DON OMAR thinks for a second.

DON OMAR

Well, I think I can help you.

RAMON drinks from a plastic glass, NUBIA enters the room, she is a pretty 20 years old girl.

NUBIA

Don Omar, do you need anything else from the kitchen?

DON OMAR

No Nubia, thanks. Please just look up Brandon's phone number. We need to call him.

NUBIA

Sure.

NUBIA smiles to RAMON and leaves.

DON OMAR

He's gonna be happy to see you.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. DAY.

It's late afternoon, RAMON waits on a sidewalk, the heavy backpack is on the floor. Some people walk by.

BRANDON appears almost running, he shows a big smile when he meets RAMON and gives him a strong hug. BRANDON is a thin and brunette guy younger than RAMON.

CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC BUSS. NIGHT.

RAMON and BRANDON travel on the bus, BRANDON is happy and never stops talking, pointing to some places in the city, the night lights are colorful and bright. RAMON tries to follow his comments.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD APPARTMENT. NIGHT.

The door opens and BRANDON and RAMON enter. BRANDON shows the dirty and old place, RAMON follows him.

BRANDON  
The kitchen.

We can see dirty plates everywhere, garbage bags and a cupboard with a few food cans. BRANDON walks toward the stairs.

BRANDON  
The stairs.

Both of them go upstairs. The floor and the railing are all covered with dust.

BRANDON  
You know, we don't have a dryer, so you can use the railing as a clothesline.

They arrive the second floor, we can see a small hallway with a few closed rooms.

BRANDON  
We have a small terrace but we don't use it since a drunk dude fell off.

BRANDON points to a door.

BRANDON

That's the only bathroom, we must share it with the others, but right now it's just us.

BRANDON goes to a door with several padlocks and starts to open all of them. RAMON gets near a wall and looks at a few old decorative shelves with any kind of objects on them.

BRANDON

Those are our lost and found. They say that when you leave this place, it's good luck if you put something on it. Something you are not going to use anymore.

BRANDON opens the door.

BRANDON

Here, this is ours.

RAMON looks at the old and dirty objects. Then they both walk into the room.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM. NIGHT.

It's a small room with two beds. There's an almost empty closet and piles of clothes in the corners. There is an old, small table with a big old malfunctioning TV on it. A yellow light from an old street lamp comes through the window.

BRANDON and RAMON come in. BRANDON jumps into his bed and takes his shoes off without untying them.

BRANDON

That's your bed, it's really fucked but it's better than the floor.

RAMON sits wearily on the bed, it creaks, he puts his backpack on the floor and starts to untie his shoes.

RAMON

How much do you pay for the room?

BRANDON

Nothing.

RAMON

Nothing? How's that?

BRANDON

The dude that invited me told me that the old woman who owns this place stopped coming by for the money, just like that. Since then, people come, stay for a while then leave. They say maybe the old woman died, it seems she had no family. Nice, don't you think?

RAMON

Because of the old woman?

BRANDON

No, because of us.

RAMON

But, what if... What if some day you come from work and you find that this place has been closed?

BRANDON

Well my friend, that's why I always take all my underwear with me.

They both laugh. RAMON looks at his friend and the place.

RAMON

So, you're just fine, right?

BRANDON

You can say that. What about you?

RAMON

Well, I have no complaints.

BRANDON sits in front of RAMON.

BRANDON

I know you Ramon, I know you're here for a reason, if not, you wouldn't have looked for me.

RAMON shows a bittersweet smile.

BRANDON

But I know you're not going to tell me anything even if I ask you one hundred times, you fucking fool.

RAMON, avoids his friend worried.



BRANDON

Tell me, where have you been? Tell me everything!

RAMON

In some places.

BRANDON

Hold on there, I'm going to piss, when I come back I want the full story.

BRANDON gets up and leaves the room, we can hear the bathroom door. RAMON, worried, opens his backpack and takes a folded paper and watches it. BRANDON comes back and jumps onto his bed.

BRANDON

Can you believe it? I have a girlfriend, and I think this time it's serious.

BRANDON gives a big yawn.

BRANDON

I'll talk to my boss tomorrow, he'll hire you, you'll see.

BRANDON turns around on his bed, RAMON takes a deep breath and opens the folded paper.

RAMON

Brandon, I came to give you this, it's from your sister... Brandon?

RAMON looks at BRANDON for a while, it seems that he is deeply asleep as he starts to snore noisily.

RAMON

Brandon?

RAMON folds the paper relieved, and puts it in the backpack. He lays down, the bed creaks and RAMON watches the ceiling thinking with a sad look.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEVEN ELEVEN. DAY.

BRANDON and RAMON wait outside of a Seven Eleven, it's early in the morning and people walk by in a hurry. A white truck arrives with a few WORKERS in the back side and parks in front of the store. BRANDON and RAMON get next to the SUPERVISOR who's driving the truck, BRANDON introduces RAMON to him, the SUPERVISOR

watches RAMON and then he nods. BRANDON and RAMON get on the truck in the back side. BRANDON happily greets his COWORKERS. The truck starts and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION. DAY.

The WORKERS, BRANDON and RAMON work hard on a building under construction, they sweep away dirty floors, pick up garbage and big pieces of construction rubbish. The work is really hard, sometimes dangerous and the heat is overwhelming.

We follow RAMON as he works really hard for the next days. He makes a big effort to accomplish all the difficult tasks. All the workers and BRANDON try to get some fun, making jokes to each other, relaxing and catching their breath between their tasks but RAMON is working hard all the time, quietly and concentrated, he doesn't care if he's tired or in pain, he just keeps working as if he's punishing himself.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD APPARTMENT. DAY.

BRANDON enters the kitchen and kisses his girlfriend, NELLY, who was waiting for him, they are ready to leave for a ride. BRANDON wears his best clothes.

Upstairs RAMON is sitting on an old couch and slowly takes off his shoes and socks, his feet show small wounds and band-aids, one of it with a blood stain.

BRANDON gets near the stairs and calls RAMON.

BRANDON

Don't you really wanna come with us?  
Last chance to say yes.

RAMON doesn't answer. BRANDON tired takes NELLY's hand.

BRANDON

Let's go.

BRANDON and NELLY leave closing the door.

CUT TO:

INT. OLD APARTMENT. DAY.

RAMON washes some clothes in the bathroom in a few plastic containers. Later he hangs the wet clothes on plastic chairs in the terrace where the sunlight hits hard.

RAMON looks for something to eat in the fridge and the cupboard, he finds an old ham can, he opens it and eats directly from it. He pours a glass of tap water and noisily drinks it.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM. DAY.

RAMON is lying on his bed, wearing only boxers, he doesn't move, he can barely breath, he's only watching the ceiling with an empty look.

Near him, on the old TV, there is a yellow envelope with RAMON's name handwritten with a blue pen, the ajar envelope shows inside some untouched bills.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRIP CLUB. NIGHT.

RAMON, BRANDON and some COWORKERS arrive laughing to a cheap and ugly strip club after work, around the place there are some bars and a sex shop. BRANDON goes to the DOORMAN of the strip club.

BRANDON

Hey man. What kind of woman do you have in there?

DOORMAN

We have a Russian, a Polish, some latinos, a red haired girl and today is coming Vicky from Canada.

BRANDON

I'm sure they are all fat ones.

DOORMAN

Oh, no, not fat ones. Not fat ones.

The WORKERS laughs.

BRANDON

And Mexicans? Do you have any Mexican woman?

DOORMAN  
Sure man, they're our best.

BRANDON  
Well, we'll see.

Some of the WORKERS get in the place. RAMON takes BRANDON by an arm and pulls him.

RAMON  
This place sucks, I'm leaving.

BRANDON  
Come on, it will be fun.

RAMON  
Are you really gonna drink again?

BRANDON  
Come on, it's only a beer.

RAMON  
Well, good luck with that.

RAMON walks away, BRANDON is angry.

BRANDON  
Yeah, whatever, fucking Ramon. Drink some milk for me, all right?

BRANDON goes to the strip club door, he is about to get in.

ELOISA  
Brandon? Is that you?

BRANDON turns over and finds ELOISA, a pretty 25 years old woman who clearly is a stripper, walking with another YOUNG WOMAN. BRANDON is surprised and ELOISA smiles happily. BRANDON looks for RAMON, he is a few steps from there.

BRANDON  
Ramon!

RAMON turns around and finds ELOISA standing next to BRANDON. RAMON is surprised in a bad way. The smile of ELOISA fades away.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR. NIGHT.

It's an old and almost empty bar, with a jukebox playing a sad and old Mexican song. RAMON and ELOISA are sitting at the lonely

bar with a couple of beers in front of them. RAMON is uncomfortable and ELOISA is nervous.

ELOISA

It seems you're not that happy to see me.

RAMON

Should I?

ELOISA

I was wondering all this time how you'd be.

RAMON

How do I look?

ELOISA

The same... Where have you been? No one could tell me anything about you.

RAMON

In someplaces.

ELOISA

Did you knew someone?

RAMON shakes his head.

ELOISA

I'm with someone now. But of course, you don't care about it.

RAMON

Why should I care about it? You wanted me out of your life, so, I did.

ELOISA

Me? I wanted...? No, you're wrong, it was you, you wanted to go.

ELOISA gets emotional and tries to not cry.

ELOISA

I loved you so much. I really loved you... But you never loved me, you never loved anyone. I think you don't even love yourself.

RAMON

All right, if you say so.

ELOISA looks at him, encourages herself.

ELOISA  
Ramon, I had a daughter of yours.

RAMON tries to understand.

RAMON  
What?

ELOISA  
Her name is Mia.

RAMON  
Oh no, that's not possible.

ELOISA  
I knew it after you left. I tried to find you and tell you, but you just disappeared.

RAMON  
No, this is wrong, this is...

ELOISA  
I have a picture.

ELOISA takes her purse.

RAMON  
I don't wanna see it.

ELOISA  
I'm not asking you for anything.

RAMON  
Then what? What do you want from me?

ELOISA  
She's your daughter! I thought you'd like to know.

RAMON  
Well, I don't like it. I really don't.

ELOISA takes his hand and silently cries.

ELOISA  
I was alone, afraid and alone. I wanted to find you and convince you to come back with me... She reminds me to you, and the good time we had... I really believed you were happy with me.

Ramon moves his hand away.

RAMON  
I'm never happy. I don't know what  
happiness is.

ELOISA  
Do you wanna meet her?

RAMON  
No, I don't. For me it never happened.  
I don't have a daughter, I already  
forgot you. And it would be better for  
everybody if you just forget me.

RAMON puts a bill on the bar, stands up and leaves. ELOISA stays  
at the bar sad and confused.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION. DAY.

RAMON is trying to demolish an old brick wall with a big hammer,  
the task is really difficult but he's trying harder and harder.  
It seems that the wall is never going to fall down, and RAMON  
is angry and desperate, he takes the hammer with both hands and  
hits the wall with all his strenght. Two COWORKERS look at him  
concerned.

The wall finally falls down noisily, some bricks fall and hits  
the RAMON's arm. RAMON drops the hammer and rubs his arm in pain.

RAMON is sitting in a corner, he moves his hand slowly and rubs  
his arm again, he is really angry at himself. BRANDON approaches  
with concern.

BRANDON  
Ramon?

RAMON  
Go away.

BRANDON  
Are you okay?

RAMON  
Go away!

BRANDON stops, takes a fast look to see if he's all right then  
he leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER. DAY.

There are 40 young men in a small auditorium, sitting and listening to a Latino hip hop musician on a small stage. The musician sings a religious song using the street language and all young men follow the rhythm clapping and screaming, BRANDON is among them.

DON OMAR leans against a wall watching the musician and the young men. Finally he finds RAMON standing without any expression on his face at the bottom of the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER. NIGHT.

Some young men play basketball and hang around in the backyard, they're all smiling, having a good time. RAMON comes from the building and looks for BRANDON and walks toward him.

RAMON

I think it's time to leave.

BRANDON

What's the hurry?

RAMON

It's getting late.

BRANDON

Don't worry, we can spend the night here and leave in the morning.

RAMON

Well, if you want to stay... I'm leaving.

BRANDON

Come on man, I'll take you in the morning to a Mexican restaurant near here. The pozole is great.

RAMON

Do I look like I want some pozole?

BRANDON

Well you need it, my skinny boy.

RAMON

Fuck you.

RAMON turns around and leaves angrily. BRANDON smiles.



CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER. NIGHT.

RAMON is lying on a bed in a dormitory with a large line of beds, all of them with young men sleeping, BRANDON is among them snoring.

RAMON can't sleep, gets up and leave the room avoiding to make any noise.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER. DAY.

RAMON gets out from a bath room and closes the door quietly, he walks through the hallway, suddenly he hears a door that opens. NUBIA approaches running nervously, when she finds RAMON she stops worried and frightened.

RAMON  
Everything all right?

NUBIA  
Yeah.

RAMON looks at the girl without understanding.

RAMON  
Okay.

RAMON walks to the dormitory.

NUBIA  
Wait. Can you help us?

RAMON turns around, worried NUBIA looks at him.

CUT TO:

INT. DON OMAR ROOM. NIGHT.

The door opens, RAMON and NUBIA get inside the small room, they find DON OMAR moving on his bed, sweating and talking deliriously, the COOK is next to him and tries to pacify him. The COOK is surprised with the presence of RAMON and looks at NUBIA angrily.

RAMON

What happens to him? Have you already called a doctor?

COOK

This is not a doctor's business.

RAMON looks around and finds remains of a marihuana cigar on a night stand.

DON OMAR

(Delirious.)

I know what the dark is, this is it, all of this...

RAMON

He smoked that...right?

COOK LADY

What do you think?

The COOK takes a glass of water and tries to give it to DON OMAR.

RAMON

Don't do that. He'll get worse.

COOK LADY

I don't know what to do, he's who manages this kind of things.

RAMON

All right, you need to turn the light off, just leave that lamp on. He also needs fresh air, open the window. He'll be fine in a moment.

COOK

Are you sure?

RAMON

It's nothing, he'll be fine.

COOK

Open the window Nubia.

The woman follows the instructions; RAMON walks to the night stand, takes a bit of marihuana and smells it. He frowns.

RAMON

Take this out, it's better if you throw it away.

NUBIA approaches and cleans the night stand.

RAMON

Let's leave him alone for a while, he  
needs to relax.

DON OMAR surprisingly takes a RAMON's wrist and holds it  
strongly.

DON OMAR

(Delirious.)

No, don't leave me alone, stay with  
me, stay with me.

The worried woman looks at RAMON. He nods.

COOK

I don't know you, but please, if  
someone knows about this...

RAMON

Don't worry about it, this it's not my  
business.

COOK

I'll be in the kitchen, I'll get some  
tea for him.

The COOK leaves the room. NUBIA looks at DON OMAR crying quietly.

RAMON

Don't cry, he'll be fine.

NUBIA

No. I don't think so.

NUBIA leaves the room crying. RAMON sits on a chair nearby. DON  
OMAR sweats, and sadly looks at the ceiling.

RAMON

Don't worry Don Omar, you're gonna be  
fine, you just need to relax.

DON OMAR

I don't wanna die alone.

RAMON

You're not alone. You have this house  
full of friends.

DON OMAR

House. I had a house once. A house near to a mountain, a woman, kids... I let them down, I left them on their own and now...look at me. I don't have anything. I'm alone. On my own.

RAMON looks the man, sad, thinking deeply.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM. DAY.

RAMON finishes to button a new plaid shirt, he takes a denim jacket and puts it on, he looks at himself in the mirror. He's worried because of his appearance. He goes to his bed, takes a shopping bag, opens it and takes out a pink teddy bunny, he watches it for a while and puts it in his backpack. RAMON nervously takes a breath and then leaves the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELOISA'S HOUSE. DAY.

It's a small, dirty old house in the middle of a poor Latino neighborhood. ELOISA gets out of the house carrying a garbage bag, she wears tinny shorts and a sleeveless shirt. She puts the garbage bag in a container and walks back to the house, suddenly finds RAMON walking in front of her sidewalk.

ELOISA

Ramon! Ramon! Here it is. This is my house.

RAMON crosses the street, ELOISA smiles excited.

CUT TO:

INT. ELOISA'S HOUSE. DAY.

ELOISA and RAMON enter in the small and messy house, there are cloths everywhere and dirty plates on the table. JULIAN, a man in his 30's, is watching TV, but when sees RAMON walking in he stands up angrily.

ELOISA

Come in, come.

JULIAN

What's this mother fucker doing in my house?

ELOISA

Don't start, we have already spoken.

JULIAN

Yeah, we've already spoken and I tell you I don't want him around.

JULIAN gets closer threatening RAMON. RAMON fearlessly holds JULIAN'S gaze. JULIAN has been drinking some beers. RAMON finds out a gun resting on the couch next to a motorcycles magazine.

RAMON

Maybe it's better if I go.

JULIAN

Yeah, that's a good idea.

ELOISA

Shut up Julian, he's just visiting Mia. This is his right, he's her father.

ELOISA approaches to the table, takes a plate and dishes up a piece of fried chicken, then she fills a feeding bottle with coke.

JULIAN

That baby doesn't need any other father than me...

ELOISA

(To RAMON.)

Don't listen to him, he's drunk. Come in, it's meal time. Come.

ELOISA walks to another room and waits for RAMON to follow her. RAMON respectful looks to JULIAN and carefully walks and follows ELOISA.

JULIAN

Eloisa you fucking bitch!

CUT TO:

INT. MIA'S ROOM. DAY.

It's a small messy room with a few colorful toys around. The door opens, ELOISA gets in and sits near to a crib. RAMON stands quietly at the door.

ELOISA

Come in... I bathed her in the morning and now she's dirty again. Look Mia, look who came to see you. Get up, baby, get up.

From the inside of the crib two little hands appear, MIA holds on the crib and stands up, she is a two years old girl disheveled and dirty face.

ELOISA

Look baby, I bought some chicken for you... Come Ramon, you can help me, you can give this to her for me.

RAMON doesn't know what to do, he stares at MIA, but he's totally uncomfortable, he seems he's about to give a step forward but then surprisingly turns around and leaves.

ELOISA

Don't go Ramon! Don't go!

CUT TO:

INT. ELOISA'S HOUSE. DAY.

RAMON walks throughout the place and tries to reach the door. JULIAN crosses his way threatening.

JULIAN

That's it, motherfucker, get off once for all... I'm their man now, they don't need anything from you or any other son of a bitch. I don't wanna see you again around here, next time I wont be this nice. She's now my bitch.

RAMON

Do you want her? Take her and keep it. Good luck on that.

RAMON pushes JULIAN and leaves quickly.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD NEIGHBORHOOD. DAY.

RAMON walks hastily on a lonely street. He stops in front of a big garbage container, opens his back pack, takes out the pink teddy bunny and throws it away. RAMON takes a look to the bunny for a moment and then walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON ROOM. NIGHT.

BRANDON sleeps on his bed in a really bad position, with his extremities hanging from the bed. The sheets are a mess.

RAMON is sitting on the floor near the window, he can't sleep and plays with some buttons, he compares them, makes them twist now and puts them in a row then he looks sadly through the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION. DAY.

RAMON, BRANDON and the COWORKERS are at their lunch time, heating tacos and other meals around an improvised stove with weld equipment.

BRANDON  
Again beans tacos, Doña Maria?

WORKER LADY  
Shut up! What about you? I'm sure you're gonna eat your weird tuna and pineapple tacos.

BRANDON  
What can I say, I'm the son of a tropical beach!

The COWORKERS laugh.

WORKER 1  
Look that people. What are they looking for?

They all look around and find a black truck getting close to them. Inside the truck we can see JULIAN, ELOISA and MIA.

BRANDON  
Ramon?

BRANDON shows the truck to RAMON with a gesture.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION. DAY.

The black truck parks close to him. ELOISA gets off carrying MIA, RAMON walks to her.

ELOISA  
Ramon, I need your help. It's an emergency.

RAMON  
Get out of here, take that girl out of my sight.

ELOISA  
Listen to me first.

RAMON  
I don't care what you can say.

ELOISA  
Listen to me! We're on a difficult situation and we need to leave the city for a few days...

RAMON  
That's not my problem.

ELOISA  
I can't take Mia with me, it's dangerous.

RAMON  
Well, I'm sorry, I can't help you with that.

ELOISA  
It's just for a few days, all you have to do is to take her to the nursery and feed her at night.

RAMON  
Go away, go away and fuck someone else's life.

ELOISA  
Don't you care about her? She's your daughter!

RAMON  
Well, I'm not that sure.



ELOISA

You're not sure? Really? Think about the dates!

RAMON

Think about the dates? Do you really believe I'm gonna trust in a bitch who works in a strip club?

ELOISA angry slaps RAMON. MIA gets scared and starts crying.

ELOISA

How could you know? How could you know about all I needed to do to raise my child? What you know about it if you left me on my own.

ELOISA cries. In the background we can see JULIAN getting out off the truck and approaching angrily carrying MIA's small suitcase.

ELOISA

Look, I know this is not the best option, I don't want to leave her but really I don't know what to do, I don't have anything else. It's a really complicated situation, please help me. Please.

RAMON

I'm sorry, I can't, I'm sorry.

JULIAN approaches them, he holds RAMON from his clothes and pushes him violently against a mesh wall

JULIAN

Look, you little bastard, you're gonna help us even if you don't want to and you're gonna do it very well, because if something happens to the girl, I'm gonna kill you when we return. Do you get it? Do you get it?

JULIAN takes out a gun and points it to RAMON's head.

ELOISA

Put that thing away, Julian! Put it away!

JULIAN

What do you think about it? Do you agree?

JULIAN grabs RAMON's head and forces him to nod then he takes MIA and gives her to RAMON. MIA cries and is about to fall but RAMON takes her. JULIAN throws MIA's small suitcase to RAMON's feet and walks to the black truck.

JULIAN  
Let's get out of here! Now!

ELOISA cries and gives a last look to MIA and RAMON.

ELOISA  
Good bye, Mia... It's just for a few  
days. Take care of her, please.  
Please.

ELOISA walks away, gets in the black truck. The truck starts noisily and leaves at a high speed. RAMON scared stays quietly next to the mesh wall carrying MIA, who cries frightened. A few COWORKERS approach slowly trying to help them.

CUT TO:

END OF FIRST ACT.