

Jugular Romances

By

Diana E. Sáenz

Characters: Women: 10; Men: 12

Minimum requirement of 5 Female Actors and 8 Male Actors

In order of appearance:

1. **Raymond Ibarra** Vampire
2. **Marmot** Vampiress
3. **Rosa Palacios** Juan's Wife
4. **Grubb** Ibarra's former employer, now slave
5. **Clara Grubb** Married to Grubb
6. **Arabella Teasdale** Actress
7. **Henry Everett** Young Man / Octogenarian world traveler
8. **Muhammad** Native of Damashq
9. **April Darling** Native of Savannah, Georgia
10. **Richard Darling** Native of Brixton, GB
11. **Juan Palacios** From the Lovely little country of San Sonrisa
12. **El Moro** Matador, born in Seville / young man, middle aged and 90 years old
13. **Joe** April Previous Lover before her marriage to Richard
14. **The Waiter**
15. **Cecile** MC's the poetry reading.
16. **Tomasina** Prostitute
17. **Concepción** El Moro's wife
18. **El Generalísimo** Dictator of San Sonrisa

El Moro's family:

19. **Passionate Woman** Daughter
20. **Lawyer** Nephew
21. **Manolo** Son
22. **Pepe** El Moro's 8 year old great grandson.

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ACT I

SCENE 1

1892 — The Street: Ibarra, Marmot

IBARRA: IBARRA IS STAGGERING THROUGH THE STREETS, A FLASK IN HIS HAND. HE CURSES AS HE FALLS AGAINST THE WALL AND COLLAPSES. HE STARES ANGRILY AT HIS THOUGHTS. Bastard. The world is full of evil bastards. He could've said, Ibarra, get yourself to Hell, but get out of my sight. It's humiliation is what it is. That's the only reason he wants me around. I wouldn't want me around. But then who knows? If I were Grubb, what would I want? What makes Grubb, Grubb and me, me? That's what I'd like to know.

ENTER A DARK FIGURE. THE WOMAN STOPS AND GAZES AT IBARRA.

IBARRA: What do you want?

MARMOT: Your blood.

IBARRA: Now there Madam is an honest request. An honest woman? Then Sodom is safe. Sodom thanks you. You see, some women...they would say love, say love, but mean blood. But, unfortunately, you're too late, that bastard Grubb—Pardon my vulgarity. BELCHES. Pardon me all together. But Master Grubb is just what I said he was, and he has sucked me dry. One good wind would carry me away. There's nothing left. Find your blood elsewhere, my good and honest woman. Permit me to introduce myself. FUMBLES IN HIS POCKETS FOR HIS CARD. I had it in here somewhere.

MARMOT: Had what?

IBARRA: My name. Ah—here it is. HANDS HER HIS CARD.

MARMOT: Raymond Ibarra...

IBARRA: At your humble service.

MARMOT: Marmot.

IBARRA OFFERS MARMOT HIS FLASK.

MARMOT: No thank you.

IBARRA: Well enough. DRINKS. I want your advice. What would you do if you slaved for a bastard for fourteen years only so that he could cut your

already miserable wages in half, then marry the woman you adored? What would you do?

MARMOT: Kill Him.

IBARRA: I like the way you think...But then, one can't be too hasty. LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER AND WHISPERS. The gallows.

MARMOT: Ah, yes.

IBARRA: Ah, yes, how right you are, Madam. And besides, it wouldn't be the last laugh. Another thing, putting an end to his miserable life would be doing him a favor. I would rather arrange it in a manner where he thinks about me everyday. The way I've thought about him for the past fourteen years.

MARMOT: A kind of hell where you are Satan creating new tortures for all eternity.

IBARRA: Sure—at least until I tired of it. I begged her not to. I said, Clara, my love—a lovely name don't you think?

MARMOT: Lovely.

IBARRA: Yes. We'll go away from this place—to America. I could work in a slaughterhouse. We'd have our love, our children—she blushed—our old age, and two little plots, side—by—side.

There is more to life than that bastard, Grubb—
pah! Even his name is the name of a worm. She
was afraid. Can you blame her? I can. To
choose a life with that offal eating gutter drain—
over me? Not a bad specimen, I'll say it—if no
one else does. Have I been roused from the sleep
of asses and oxen? To wake up a wolf, would be
a dream come true. Believe me, I would relish a
sticky, a sweet revenge, but not if I can't be
around to enjoy it. Am I a coward?

MARMOT: Can a wise man be a coward?

IBARRA: You strike me as an enlightenment spirit. One
who looks out towards the stars, lifetimes away
and knows, somewhere between those burning
eyes and our private hells, there lies many
possibilities, answers.

MARMOT: There are and I have one of them.

IBARRA: What? Only one?

MARMOT: Consider your options.

IBARRA: Not many more than a beggar's, nevertheless, one
of discriminating taste....Although tonight, I am
capable of anything— What would you be
wanting for your single answer?

MARMOT: Only your friendship.

IBARRA: The way you look at me. Who are you?

MARMOT: I think you are a willing rogue. You may come
with me.

SHE TURNS AND EXITS.

IBARRA: Just like that? LURCHES AFTER HER.

SCENE 2

A room in Rosa's House. In her hand she holds several sheets of blue stationery, a letter from her twin sister, Marta.

Voice Over: Dear Rosa:

I write this letter only with the best intentions, knowing what pain it will cause you. You see by these photos Jorge was brutally tortured before he was murdered. But what you didn't know was that it was Juan who did it. Juan works for CISCA. I've been told he is one of their best interrogators.

Dear, dear Rosa, my beloved sister. As terrible as this is, I must tell you everything. Several months after Jorge's disappearance, I was at home. I looked up and there was Juan as if he had been watching me for some time. He didn't say a word, he just walked up and dragged me to the bed where I had shared my love with Jorge.

Later I recognized Jorge's key. It was unmistakable because he had put a nick in to identify it from a similar key. Juan had let

himself in with Jorge's key. This evening, an unknown friend sent me these photographs through the mail.

At first I was so ashamed—for what? Not being able to stop him? Then I was furious — to think that you, my most precious friend and sister continue to live with this monster—who continues to come to my house and defile life itself.

Please, please, Rosa, (I know you're capable of anything) whatever course you take, use extreme caution.

Your loving sister,

Marta

ROSA LETS THE PAGES FLOAT TO THE FLOOR. AND LOOKS AT THE PHOTOGRAPH IN HER OTHER HAND.

SCENE 3

1893, Marmot, Clara, Grubb, Mrs. Teasdale,

Ibarra.

CLARA: It's a lovely room. Isn't it, Mr. Grubb?

GRUBB: It is. Indeed it is.

MARMOT: Thank you.

CLARA: I would like to meet your decorator. The
problem with our home is it needs a woman's
touch.

MARMOT: My decorator is a man.

CLARA: Oh. Well, of course, but he would be a man who
understands a woman's touch.

MARMOT: Of course.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

MARMOT: Excuse me a moment, this must be the missing
guest.

Mrs. Teasdale: Don't you have a butler?

MARMOT: It's his night off. EXITS.

Mrs. Teasdale: Oh.

Mrs. Teasdale: It's a bit odd to have guests on the butler's night
off. Don't you think?

GRUBB: Well, I don't know. I suppose that's Mdm.
Marmot's choice.

Mrs. Teasdale: Well obviously.

CLARA: For once it would be amusing to not have
gossiping servants watching every move.

Mrs. Teasdale: Yes, however, I would like another spot here.

Quite frankly I don't care what my servants think.

They get their five shillings a day.

ENTER IBARRA AND MARMOT.

MARMOT: Our party is complete—Let me introduce to you
my dearest friend, Mr. Ibarra.

GRUBB: Ibarra—!

GRUBB IS SURPRISED BUT CLARA IS
STUNNED.

IBARRA: Grubb! How good to see you again. Are you
surprised to see me?

MARMOT: You know one another?

IBARRA: This is *the* Grubb, my previous employer.

MARMOT: What a coincidence! Of all the Grubbs in the
city and you are one and the same. It is a
marvelous world, isn't it?

GRUBB: Quite frankly, I am...very...happy to see you
doing so well. Small world. Isn't it Clara?

CLARA: Oh yes. And so unpredictable.

IBARRA: Very small. And allow me to say Mrs. Grubb,
married life appears to agree with you, my
compliments, Mr. Grubb

CLARA: Raym—I mean, Mr. Ibarra. I—I...You're so kind—

Mrs. Teasdale:How cozy! You all know each other. May I have—?

MARMOT: Oh please, allow me. Mr. Ibarra?

IBARRA: Nothing at the moment, Thank you. SHE
POURS Mrs. Teasdale ANOTHER BRANDY.

GRUBB: I see you've done quite well for yourself.

IBARRA: Yes, indeed. I've had a bit of luck.

GRUBB: Yes, apparently.

MARMOT: Mr. Ibarra is working with me.

GRUBB: Working for Mdm. Marmot?

MARMOT: With me, Mr. Grubb. As an associate.

CLARA: I've I — I — May I have a brandy?

GRUBB: Why, Clara...You never drink!

CLARA: Forgive me, Mr. Grubb, but I really must—That is to say, it's a bit chilly in here. And it would warm me up.

MARMOT: Here stand by the fire, Mrs. Grubb.

CLARA: You may call me Clara, actually, I prefer it.
Thank you.

MARMOT HANDS CLARA THE BRANDY.

MARMOT: Here you are, Dear.

CLARA: Thank you.

THEY WATCH HER DRINK THE BRANDY DOWN IN
ONE DRAUGHT.

MARMOT: Would you like another?

CLARA: I think I'd better. As I was saying, you've
changed...greatly, Mr. Ibarra.

IBARRA: I trust you mean for the better.

CLARA: Why, yes.

GRUBB: So you're an associate of Mdm. Marmot...

IBARRA: You're curious, of course.

GRUBB: Well—I—

IBARRA: It's quite all right. It's natural that you should be
curious.

CLARA: Curious about what?

IBARRA: About what I now do.

CLARA: Well I'm sure it's something very fine.

IBARRA: I've become a vampire.

GRUBB: I beg your pardon?

MARMOT: Mr. Ibarra's synonym for success.

IBARRA: Much like yourself. However, I mean it in the
most congenial sense.

Mrs. Teasdale: A vampire? There is an element of truth in what
you say. Don't you agree Mrs. Grubb?

CLARA: I find it extreme and unholy to joke about one's
immortal soul.

Mrs. Teasdale: Really? Why you haven't had time to even think
it over. A pretty young thing like you.

CLARA: I'm that sure—success or not if one abides by the
ten Holy Commandments—

Mrs. Teasdale: All ten? That seems like a bit much. Wouldn't
you think so Mr. Gross?

MARMOT: I beg your pardon, Mrs. Teasdale, it's Mr. Grubb.

Mrs. Teasdale: What?

MARMOT: Mr. Grubb?

Mrs. Teasdale: It's not Gross? Oh, I believe you're right!

GRUBB: I hope you'll forgive me, Mrs. Teasdale.

Mrs. Teasdale: Oh! Please forgive me, Mr. Grubb. How
perfectly horrid of me. But haven't you ever
noticed some names don't sit well. You almost
want to forget them. Teasdale is neither a noble
nor romantic but I find it easy to live with.

GRUBB: My father, bless his soul, was a man I shall
always admire and, of course, be honored to bear
his name.

Mrs. Teasdale: How lovely.

CLARA: BECOMING HEADY UNDER THE BRANDY.
But a Rose by any other name is still a rose.

IBARRA: Ah, a girl who misquotes Shakespeare.

MRS. TEASDALE GIGGLES.

CLARA: You never knew that?

IBARRA: So many things I never knew.

CLARA: Doesn't it always seem to be true.

Mrs. Teasdale: Don't you just love the unexpected?

GRUBB: The unexpected? That may be fine for some of us. But I revel in the simple pleasures. I wake up, shave, get dressed, breakfast, step into my carriage and am taken to the firm, Grubb and Associates...I revel in the sameness of it. A man such as myself could wish nothing more than what I have and am.

Mrs. Teasdale: A man of habit. Trust in a man of habit to keep doing what he's always done. There's a lot to be said for that.

CLARA: And at the same time nothing at all. Um—because of its simplicity. We all love and aspire to simplicity.

Mrs. Teasdale: Absolutely, My Dear. But it's such a challenge at times. The world is not a simple matter and we are unavoidably tainted by it.

CLARA: Yes, but habits die hard—which is good if your habit is simplicity.

Mrs. Teasdale: But, didn't you just say? ?

CLARA: Please, let us be gay tonight. What shall we do? Ah, let us call each other by our Christian names.

IBARRA: Clara.

CLARA: Raymond.

GRUBB: A man carves out his own life. Yes there is luck, fortune, chance, et cetera, however a man with a hearty will, will know when he can pluck those moments which determine the course of his life.

IBARRA: Providing how strong his will is and that his will never meets a stronger will, one that completely changes his plans.

CLARA: Are we forgetting the Good Sir above us has already determined our destinies?

Mrs. Teasdale: Then why did the Good Sir give us such a strong will?

CLARA: Why, to choose the destiny he has given us in his infinite wisdom.

MRS. T: Well, as for me, I've never been much good at sitting on me happy side waiting for a miracle or destiny or what name you will.

You see, I learned in my early youth, the heartache of patience. I spent far too many a tedious hour waiting for some Gentlemen, to put a crown on a cur's wagging end.

CLARA: A what?

TEASDALE: A cur's wagging end. A crown.

MARMOT: Shall I refill your glass, Mrs. Teasdale?

Mrs. Teasdale: Oh, so kind of you. I do say, I love this philosophizing. It's not often one finds one's self on equal footing. Consider me a regular at your soirees. Thank you. ASIDE TO CLARA—I'll bet you held on to it until that gold was tightly wound round your pretty little finger, Clever girl, you!

IBARRA: Mrs. Teasdale has the rare quality of being entertaining even as she compels chandeliers to fall.

TEASDALE: So kind of you to say, Mr. Ibarra.

CLARA: Entertaining?!

GRUBB: Clara—! HE MOTIONS FOR HER TO CURB HER EMOTIONS.

MARMOT: Really, Mrs. Teasdale—She gets this way, don't mind her—She's really a dear.

Mrs. Teasdale: Just what are your intentions, Mr. Ibarra, Madam Marmot is very dear to me. TO MARMOT. It's clear that you and Mr. Dark and Handsome share a secret but these two poached eggs, they share nothing more than a common roof and a bank account.

CLARA: I do not appreciate the course this conversation has taken—

Mrs. Teasdale: Oh, so right, Luvy, neither do I. I prefer to talk
about the things that matter—APPRAISING

CLARA. But you're a bit more clever than you
let on, aren't you, Mrs. Grubb? I'll wager talking
to you woman-to-woman would be a right
education.

CLARA: SHE IS BEGINNING TO FEEL THE EFFECTS
OF THE DRUG SHE IN HER DRINK.

I don't care if she is drunk or mad, I shant subject
myself to this—this impetuoussness—

GRUBB May Dear, I think you mean to say impe—

Clara: Stop correcting me for once! What was I saying?
Your disregard for rules, Mrs. Teasdale. Yes
Rules do exist and for good reason. But then we
should all break them, discretely of course, but
definitely break those tedious rules.

MRS. T: The late Mr. Teasdale worshipped polite
intercourse. Sometimes I wish he'd been just a
little rude, it would've been so much more fun.
He might have even lived longer. One gets all
convoluted inside from too much restrain.

CLARA: I understood every word you said and every
word you meant. I do not think you amusing.
You are amoral or immoral or both. You have
questioned the Holy Commandments and I will

not stand mute while blasphemies are tossed
about. I would like my things. We're leaving,
Mr. Grubb. Questioning the Holy
Commandments!

GRUBB: But—

CLARA: Now!

MRS. T: Not all ten, Luv, just that one about coveting and
honoring your ol' mum and dad—There are
extenuating circumstances—

CLARA: You, madam, shall discover all too late that you
have extenuated yourself straight to Hell!

GRUBB: Clara!

MRS. T: What high spirits!

CLARA: How dare you say anything at all to me. And
you, Raymond, I am shocked, no not truly
shocked, because I would not marry a man who I
knew was capable of shocking me and I always
suspected you might shock me at some
importune moment. I am glad I did not marry
you. I pray thanks every moment that I am the
good Mr. Grubb's good wife—And that I had the
fortitude to curb my passions. Passions are
meant to be suffered and overcome especially
those passions that would never be appreciated
by a shocking man as you have proven yourself

to be—I—I— Oh my, I—! SHE COLLAPSES

IN IBARRA'S ARMS

GRUBB: Clara!—Is she all right?

IBARRA: Too much excitement!

GRUBB: She's not the fainting kind, believe me...

Mrs. Teasdale: She drank that brandy a bit to sudden, that's what happened.

IBARRA: When the soul resists most passionately, it makes it all the sweeter.

GRUBB: I say, lay her down in the divan—

IBARRA: I am moved by the spirited resistance that comes from the coolly mercenary and avaricious... None fight for life more desperately. It's their love of life and life's rewards not their fear of Hell that makes them so resistant. Reward is a mightier power than punishment.

GRUBB: Whatever are you raving about, good sir? I've had enough of these theatrics, give me back my wife— I say what are you doing? Oh my Dear, Dear, Dear, Dear God!

IBARRA HAS BURRIED HIS FANGS IN
CLARA'S THROAT. CLARA IS NOW HALF
CONSCIOUS. SHE STIRS.

IBARRA: The laudanum is working well. I feel it myself—

GRUBB: Laudanum?

IBARRA: Now you, Grubb.

IBARRA HANDS CLAIRE TO MARMOT
WHO FINISHES HER OFF. THE TERRIFIED
GRUBB NOW EYES THE DOOR. HE
MAKES A MOVE FOR IT HOWEVER
IBARRA STEPS AGILY BETWEEN GRUBB
AND ESCAPE.

GRUBB: You'll never get away with it. They'll know it
was you.

IBARRA: I'm not going to kill you, Grubb.

GRUBB: What? Why? what do you want with me?

IBARRA: I'm giving you life for as long as you amuse me.

GRUBB: What do you mean?

IBARRA: Come here.

GRUBB: No. Thank you.

IBARRA: Don't upset me. You must learn to do as I say.
You must learn to say, yes master and no master.

GRUBB: This is—this is preposterous!

IBARRA: I like that word, the latter is the former, an
absurdity, of course, or is it?—Charming word.

GRUBB: Is she...?

IBARRA: She never cared a fig for you. Come here.

GRUBB: Why?

IBARRA: Because the preposterous has occurred.

GRUBB: No, can't be!

IBARRA: Come here, Grubb.

MARMOT: Go to him, Grubb.

IBARRA: Come here.

GRUBB FINDS HIMSELF IRRESISTABLY
DRAWN TO IBARRA.

IBARRA: Good.

HE SEIZES GRUBB AND SINKS HIS TEETH
IN ONLY FOR A MOMENT THEN
RELEASES HIM. GRUBB SWAYS
GENTLY FOR A MOMENT. HENCEFORTH
GRUBB'S MANNER WILL BE ONE OF A
PLIABLE AND OVERSTIMULATED,
WILLING SEX SLAVE.

GRUBB: Master?

IBARRA: What is it, Grubb?

GRUBB: May I have permission to change my trousers,
Sir?

IBARRA: Master.

GRUBB: Master.

IBARRA: Not yet, Ibarra. First, give Mrs. Teasdale another
tea. It's the one on the right. Mrs. Teasdale
never touches liquor either.

GRUBB: Yes Master.

MARMOT: A wonderful performance, Arabella.

Mrs. Teasdale: Do you think so? I've always loved
improvisation. One appreciates what flatters one
most.

MARMOT: So when do you open?

Mrs. Teasdale: Not two months from now. We begin rehearsals
on the 15th. The Ides of August. Is that not
ominous? I shall adopt that air of insouciance
that you have. It is so original than the salivating
Draculas players are wont to play. I shall reserve
tickets for you and Mr. Ibarra.

MARMOT: You must wear black velvet.

Mrs. Teasdale: In the summer?

MARMOT: Especially in the summer, because no one else
will. Thank you, Grubb.

GRUBB: Mrs. Teasdale?

MRS. T: Thank you, Grubb. I do think you should go
change your trousers, now, Dear Grubb. EXITS

IBARRA: I don't have a clue why you invited Mrs.
Teasdale.

MARMOT: We met years ago, before her celebrity. It was in
a pub, I fell into a conversation with her, on a
whim, I had decided to get to know my victim
first. But she so amused me that I decided right
then that I adore actors, I really couldn't tell you
exactly why.

IBARRA: They only care for themselves

MARMOT: Why you're so right. They drink from humanity
to further their careers, stealing characteristics,
such as we steal blood.

IBARRA: Don't you think she is a little off her head? She
didn't flinch when we drank up poor Clara.

MARMOT: Mad as a hatter! But no one will notice as long
as she can memorize her lines.

IBARRA: I wonder what an actor's blood is like?

MARMOT: Don't bother, Dear One, I found it
disappointingly thin. I have a theory you would
have to drink when he was on stage? being
someone else.

LIGHTS DOWN.

SCENE 5

1921, A room in the home of Marmot, and Ibarra.

MARMOT: Is it possible that one's death can take this long?

IBARRA: Whose death?

MARMOT: Except, I loved my creator, in the beginning.

Then it took its natural course. You have never
loved me.

IBARRA: My dear Marmot, this display of human
sentimentality—

MARMOT: We're from that race, after all.

IBARRA: I've always been grateful to you.

MARMOT: Grateful as in voluptuous sensuality, like an
excellent whore, immensely please with her fee.
But never, never love.

IBARRA: Cruel words, Madam.

MARMOT: It hardly matters. The question remains, when
will the loathing commence?

IBARRA: Loathing?

MARMOT: Your loathing for me.

IBARRA: Is that a feature of your so—called vampire
creature's destiny?

MARMOT: Oh absolutely.

IBARRA: LAUGHS. You're too dear.

MARMOT: Then I am still amusing?

IBARRA: What if I choose not to loathe you?

MARMOT: It's not for you to decide. You see you are wed to me until I decide to leave. You couldn't leave if you wanted to.

IBARRA: I've never thought of leaving.

MARMOT: Never?

IBARRA: Not until this moment.

MARMOT: But now it's been said.

IBARRA: Am I supposed to loathe you because it's my destiny?

MARMOT: Our destiny.

IBARRA: Do you mean to say, we have no choice?

MARMOT: The way we shade the character, arrange the objects of our private hells is entirely our choice.

IBARRA: How can you maintain such a dim philosophy when your protégé is having so good a time!

MARMOT: Revenge has an amazing longevity. That is what has always burned in you. A revenge that allowed you to dispense with your beloved Clara without a second thought.

IBARRA: She gave me as much consideration.

MARMOT: The truth is you never loved the poor creature. This is why she married Grubb. She preferred

that someone love her rather than face your
indifference.

IBARRA: If you persist in this sort of morbid speculation, I
will learn to hate you.

MARMOT: A compelling situation.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 6

1931. A street in Damashq. Ibarra is strolling through the darkened streets. Henry Everett, intoxicated and wearing a few bandages is like a man possessed. He reels into Ibarra.

IBARRA: I beg your pardon.

HENRY: Watch where you're going.

HENRY: PEERING INTO IBARRA'S FACE. You're an odd one. What's your name?

IBARRA: My name?

HENRY: Have you seen her?

IBARRA: Who?

HENRY: My wife.

IBARRA: I don't believe so.

HENRY: Judith is her name. Hair like fire.

IBARRA: Red?

HENRY: Have you *seen* her?

OFFSTAGE.

MUHAMMAD: Henry! Henry!

ENTERS A DARK MAN, A NATIVE OF
DAMASHQ WHO HAS BEFRIENDED
HENRY.

MUHAMMAD: There you are. You are not wise to walk these streets alone, my friend, not in your

condition and, not in skin that illuminates the
night. Come with me. I know an honest inn.
Come.

HENRY DRUNKENLY ALLOWS HIMSELF
TO BE LED BY HIS FRIEND.

MUHAMMAD: TO IBARRA.

He just lost his wife. Very tragic, his caravan
was attacked by bandits. It's a miracle he
survived.

IBARRA: He's lucky to have a friend like you.

MUHAMMAD: LAUGHS. Yes, by all accounts I
should rob him and go my way, but Allah has
blessed me with the kind soul of a fool. Good-
night, my friend.

IBARRA: Good night, Muhammad.

MUHAMMAD: How—?LAUGHS—Yes, so many
fathers wish to name their son after the prophet,
literally it means praised. SHAKING HANDS
WITH HIM. A PUZZLED EXPRESSION
PASSES ACROSS HIS FACE AT THE
MOMENT OF CONTACT WITH IBARRA.

You see, I know a few western traditions.

IBARRA: I am Raymond, King of the World. The
delusions of fathers and goddesses.

MUHAMMAD: Without our delusions how could
we survive?

END OF SCENE

SCENE 7

1935 — Ibarra is dressed to go out. He flicks a speck of lint off a cuff. Marmot enters. She is also dressed for the night.

MARMOT: Are you going out now?

IBARRA: Yes. See you later.

MARMOT: No.

IBARRA: What do you mean?

MARMOT: I'm saying good—bye.

IBARRA: Good—bye?

MARMOT: It's my time.

IBARRA: I don't understand—Don't get me wrong, mind you, what you do is your business. Where are you going?

MARMOT: To the desert. I've been planning it for some time. I shall fly into the desert heading east, into the sun.

IBARRA IS DUMBFOUNDED.

MARMOT: That's how it's done. You didn't think we lived forever?

IBARRA: I've never given it much thought.

MARMOT: Then you'll be alone.

IBARRA: SMILES AT THE IDEA.

MARMOT: I know, you see it as finally ridding yourself of me.

IBARRA: I'm already alone, with or without you.

MARMOT: I have released all claim on both my human and vampire natures and now nothing remains but the burden of too many souls. When you can no longer bear the cruelty of such absolute aloneness, you'll find your mate. And then it'll be your turn to love and not be loved.

IBARRA: I once had a collie that got into a case of sweets and ate himself blind. Perhaps you're so gluttoned with souls, you've convinced yourself your fate is also mine.

MARMOT: Insight requires no eyes. It comes from within, from memory and the drama of repetition. SHE TOUCHES THREE FINGERS TO IBARRA'S JUGULAR. IN SPITE OF HIS LOATHING FOR MARMOT, IBARRA CANNOT HELP BUT FEEL THE THRILL OF HIS MATE'S TOUCH. HE PULLS AWAY AFTER A MOMENT.

MARMOT: SHRUGS. I understand. Good—bye, Ibarra. EXITS.

IBARRA: Good lovely riddance you, pathetic, tedious, spent and pompous idiot.

GRUBB ENTERS WITH A SILVER TEA
TRAY, CONTAINING TEA AND BISQUITS.
IBARRA OBSERVES HIM A MOMENT.

GRUBB: Tea time!

IBARRA: Why do you insist on making tea, Grubb?

GRUBB: Tradition, Master, ceremony, guests may arrive
at any moment, the beauty of silver holding
golden liquid, the diamondsque glitter of sugary
lumps. The music of tea, Master. Don't you
agree?

IBARRA: I'm expecting no one.

GRUBB: LAUGHING. All speaking at once, they also
glitter——

IBARRA: What's that inside your pocket?

GRUBB: Pocket, Master?

IBARRA: I see it moving——

IBARRA: Oh nothing, Master, A little beetle, Master, for
my collection.

IBARRA: Why do you bother to hide it from me, don't you
think, I am aware of your predilection?

GRUBB: I—I——

IBARRA: Eat it, Grubb. I like watching a man enjoy his
dinner. I am somewhat of a gourmand myself.
Go on.

GRUBB DOES SO. WE ARE TREATED TO
THE SOUND OF CRUNCHING AS GRUBB
SAVORS HIS BEETLE.

IBARRA: Was it good?

GRUBB: Delightful, Master. TURNS TO POUR THE
TEA.

IBARRA: Hand me my gloves there...my top hat, and my
walking stick. I feel like celebrating tonight. I'm
going to the opera. I'll be home late as usual.
Have a good evening.

GRUBB: Bon appetite, Master.

IBARRA EXITS.

GRUBB: Tea time. SNIGGERING TO HIMSELF. Tea
time! Teeeeeeeeea time! FEELS THE
POCKET OF HIS TROUSERS AND TAKES
OUT ANOTHER LARGE BEATLE AND
RELISHES IT. HE SITS DOWN
UNCOVERING A BOWL OF A PREPARED
SALAD, OPENS THE JAR OF LIVE BEETLES
AND PROCEEDS TO EAT HIS MEAL WITH
A DELICATE CHARM. ONE BEETLE TRIES
TO ESCAPE. GRUBB STABS IT WITH THE
FORK AND POPS IT INTO HIS MOUTH.
There's no escape dear Clara. AS THE OTHERS

TRY TO MAKE IT OUT OF THE SALAD
BOWL HE TAPS THEM GENTLY BACK IN
THE BOWL WITH HIS FORK. EATING A
BIT OF SALAD AND BEETLE HE
CONTEMPLATES. Tomorrow and tomorrow
and tomorrow. Poor Master. Poor, poor Master.
I do my best but nothing can help him.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 8

The Present. Apartment. Two years before The Artemis, April and Joe.

APRIL: APRIL IS FRANTICALLY PACKING. SHE
GLANCES AT HER WATCH Half an hour.
OFFSTAGE JOE CAN BE HEARD COMING
HOME FROM WORK.

APRIL: Oh God? he's early!

JOE: ENTERS. Hi.

APRIL: Hello.

JOE: What's going on?

APRIL: I'm packing.

JOE: Packing? What for?

APRIL: I'm moving out.

JOE: Why?

APRIL: Because.

JOE: Because why?

APRIL: None of your business.

JOE: Where are you going?

APRIL: I'm moving in with a guy.

JOE: Who?

APRIL: You don't know him.

JOE: What does this mean?

APRIL: You're the genius.

JOE: You mean, you're just walking out—Right now—not even a sit down Joe, I've got something to tell you?

APRIL: I can't.

JOE: You can't? You can't?

APRIL: That's right, I can't. I don't have time and...and what good would it do anyway? I'm leaving and that's it.

JOE: I'm in shock.

APRIL: Of course. I'm sorry.

JOE: Okay. Okay. If that's how you want it. I'll help you. What about these? HOLDING UP A PAIR OF UNDERWEAR.

APRIL: I don't need any help. SNATCHES THEM AWAY.

JOE: No, I insist. The sooner you get your ass out of here the better for everyone.

APRIL: I don't want any help.

JOE: But I want to help. Who wants to be with a loser like you anyway? Oh God, I didn't mean that April, I'm sorry—

APRIL: You're right—Okay?—Let's just say, it didn't work out,

JOE: You're totally heartless. You shouldn't leave tonight. It's better if you sleep on it.

APRIL: Don't start begging, okay?

JOE: Begging? Begging? Me beg? LAUGHS. One last time, how about it? A farewell fuck. I think it's the least you can do—the only thing you can do. That doesn't mean I don't want you out in the morning.

APRIL: You've gotten more charity fucks to last me a lifetime.

JOE: Maybe a black eye—a black eye, yeah. I've been owing you one, for all the insults, all the times you had to be on top—knowing how hard it is for me to come when you're on top—Oh jeez, look what you're doing to me—I'd never hit a woman, even you—I—I. PAUSE. Sorry.

APRIL: You're stepping on my sweater.

JOE: Oh, sorry.

APRIL: Always apologizing. Do you know what the first words you ever said to me were?

JOE: Uh, it was, "Excuse me, Miss, but I'm going to have to check inside your bag."

APRIL: No it wasn't.

JOE: You were just about to walk out the—

APRIL: It was, "I'm sorry, Miss but I'm going to have to look inside your bag." I mean what can you do— besides remember everything you've ever read? You don't even make it as a lousy rent—a—cop.

JOE: I'm proud of the fact that I got canned. It's a fact, most shoplifters are compelled by feelings of inadequacy and frus—

APRIL: Shoplifting is an art, an event, a pastime, sweet revenge, a necessity, noble, honest and right! You—you see it as an unfortunate symptom of— of dysfunctional people. Do you see, Joe? Do you see why I'm leaving?

JOE: Okay, so you're leaving, but it's crazy to just move in with another guy—

APRIL: We're not just moving in.

JOE: What do you mean not just moving in?

APRIL: Nothing.

JOE: You mean you're actually marrying this guy?

SILENCE.

How long have you known him?

APRIL: We grew up together.

JOE: Grew up together? You mean they let your brother out?

APRIL: Don't you talk about my brother! Don't you say a word.

JOE: You just said—

APRIL: Never mind what I said. It's none of your business what I said. It's none of your business about this guy. It's none of your business anymore, you understand?

JOE: It won't work, April. It won't work because you'll never be satisfied until you've emasculated the poor fuck—That's the way you are, April. You'll snap the balls off any man and enjoy it. Now that I think of it you probably did it to your stupid brother—

APRIL: Oh yeah? Oh yeah?

JOE: What are you doing?

APRIL TAKES A NOTEBOOK FROM THE NIGHTSTAND AND BEGINS TEARING OUT PAGES.

APRIL: This is what I think of your stinking poetry.

JOE: GRABS IT AWAY FROM HER. I thought you loved my poetry.

APRIL: I just wanted to make sure I'd get laid every night. Otherwise I would've died of boredom. Before I only felt sorry for you, but now I truly, truly hate you...Where's my goddam red skirt?

SEARCHES UNDER THE BED UNSUCCESSFULLY.

APRIL: Look, I've got to go. I mean, the .38 my dad gave me for my birthday? I've been thinking of using it lately.

JOE: Your whole life has made you a slave to your impulses. There are so many options—

APRIL: Oh yeah, I could spend the price of a round—trip ticket from Tierra del Fuego to Istanbul, on some quack so I can talk about mommy and daddy.

JOE: You don't forget painful childhood memories, you only suppress them—

APRIL: Or, I could get ten to life for killing you—at best cop an insanity plea—if that still works and wind up holding hands with the criminally insane—
What? You thought I was thinking of killing myself? Jesus, you are sick. Don't you think it's a sign of rational behavior if walk out right now and avoid all of the above.

JOE: NOTICES THE MAGAZINE ON THE BED.
HE PICKS IT UP AND BEGINS THUMBING THROUGH IT. Where did this Time Out come from? It's a subscription—Who's Richard Darling? Who would want a calendar of events in London sent to Chicago?

APRIL: How should I know, I stole it from the guy's bag—maybe he likes to read the reviews.

JOE: Yeah right, like, "...But the worst offense was listening to Mary, Mother of God in her flat Midwestern—American twang, drop the H in herb in American twang. The verdict on this yet another U.S. box office garbanzo is nix." They hate us. I suppose the Mother of God went around screeching like a fucking upper class Brit Bitch—Oh! Pahdon can I have another herb? We're talking the island of toilet jokes, stand up poetry and restoration plays—!

APRIL: UNDER HER BREATH. Why don't you go beat a dead horse?

JOE: Shakespeare, Shakespeare, Shakespeare, that's all they got, like some ex—cheerleader bimbo, who peaked in high school.

APRIL: Don't be stupid. What about Shaw, and Wilde? They were great!

JOE: Irish, Irish, and Shaw talked too much and Wilde fumbled The Importance of Being Ernest in the last scene!

APRIL: What else? Make—up. Joe Orton wasn't Irish.

JOE: SUDDENLY SUSPICIOUS. Was he English?

APRIL: Of course he was English—

JOE: You love those Limeys, so either old Dick here is English, the great—grandson of Wendy Darling,

I suppose—Brits love to fling their lineage
around—

APRIL: Oh, now I remember! PULLS DIARY OUT
FROM UNDER THE MATTRESS. I haven't
finished reading the Time Out. HOLDS OUT
HER HAND.

JOE: IGNORES HER. I pity this poor schmuck,
maybe I should give him a few pointers. Let see,
Richard Darling...LOOKING AT THE
ADDRESS LABEL ON THE MAGAZINE. At
1301 Melbourne—

APRIL: SHE SNATCHES IT FROM HIS GRASP.
Memorize these facts, genius, he's not English,
he's not a poor schmuck and his name isn't
Richard Darling. EXITS.

JOE: HE RUNS AFTER HER. You're gonna end up
bad, April. You're gonna get the wrong guy and
whack, no more April. Mark my words. Just
like little Joe Orton, Whack. Whack, whack,
whack! LOUD ROCK PUNK TYPE MUSIC
BREAKS IN. You're gonna get your Joe
Ortoooooon!

END SCENE

ACT II

SCENE 9

First Night, Aboard the Artemis. Dinner Table, Ibarra, Rosa,
Juan, Henry, April, Richard, EL Moro, the Waiter

HENRY, NOW IN HIS 80'S, A MAN WITH A
HARDY APPETITE AND EL MORO, THE
MOORE, NAMED SO BECAUSE OF HIS
DARK BROWN COMPLEXION AND
TIGHTLY CURLED HAIR. EL MORO IS
ALWAYS IN THE COMPANY OF A POCKET
SIZE EDITION OF AN ENGLISH/SPANISH
DICTIONARY AT LEAST TWO INCHES
THICK FROM WHICH HE MEMORIZES
WORDS IN ENGLISH. HE HAS THE LITHE
AND QUICK MOVEMENT OF A STREET
WISE YOUTH AND WILL IN A FEW YEARS
BECOME ONE OF THE GREATEST AND
MOST DARING BULL FIGHTERS IN
HISTORY.

WHERE THE DARLINGS ARE RUDE AND
HOSTILE TO ONE ANOTHER, THE
PALACIOS ARE THEIR EXACT OPPOSITE.

WHEN THE WAITER APPEARS, THERE IT
BECOMES APPARENT THAT SOME
INTRIGUE HAS PASSED BETWEEN HIM
AND APRIL.

HENRY: It was 1931. We were coming back, my new
wife and I, Judith was her name, from a long,
grueling trip across the Sahara when our caravan
met up with a band of desert pirates. They killed
all the men—left me for dead, took the women,
Judith with them. STOPS TALKING AND
GIVES FULL ATTENTION TO HIS DRINK.

APRIL: Is that all?

HENRY: Beg pardon? Waiter—!

APRIL: They took your wife. What happened, how did
you manage to find your way out of the desert?

HENRY: Dumb luck, pure and simple. PAUSE. Where is
that boy?

ROSA AND APRIL AND JUAN ALL BEGIN
TO ASK MR. EVERETT TO CONTINUE HIS
STORY WHEN—

HENRY: Finally, I wandered onto an oasis and was picked
up by the owner of a brothel and brought back to
civilization. Damashq—Damascus to those of
you who remember. Yes.

IBARRA: And your wife?

HENRY: Nothing I could do. PAUSE.

I never forget a face and I have seen you before.

I have 80 years of faces stored right in here.

Very odd. Indeed. Your face is as fresh as an old memory.

IBARRA: LAUGHS. And I have a terrible memory.

HENRY: What was I saying?

APRIL: You lost your wife—

HENRY: Then I became lost. I didn't know where, who and even what exactly happened—and believe me, no one was about to go out there. It was a fool's mission, but one I relished. Perhaps she became the prized possession of a rich sultan. It's the best I can hope for. Waiter! She had a head on her shoulders that girl. If anyone could survive it was Judith.

WAITER: ENTERS. YESSIR? HE CASTS A QUICK GLANCE AT APRIL WHO HAS THE APPEARANCE OF A CAT LICKING HER PAWS.

HENRY: More wine, my good man, more wine! And some bread before we all perish of hunger!

WAITER: Yessir.

HENRY: Pick it up, there. Shouldn't let the guests go thirsty. Bad form, very bad form. Hunger, that's only tantalizes, thirst, that is the first and foremost consideration. The secret of good waiting—Are you listening to me?

WAITER: Yessir.

HENRY: Then look at me when I talking to you, not her—she's got an empty glass that needs filling. Well? What are you waiting for? Another bottle!

WAITER EXITS.

RICHARD: Do you mean to say, you just went home?

HENRY: What?

RICHARD: You're wife? you didn't try to sus out what had happened to her?

APRIL: Or try the Embassy, at least?

HENRY: Oh my, young woman, I tried everything. I was a hot-blooded young fool, like anyone of you here. I combed the Middle East for ten years. After that, well. I still keep one eye open. Became sort of a habit, 'spose. SIGHS. Oh in the name of Marie Antoinette ? where is that blasted bread?

IBARRA: What a sad story.

EL MORO: Boh—tor.

HENRY: Beg pardon?

EL MORO: Boh—tor—mantequilla.

APRIL: The butter.

EL MORO: Muchas gracias—LOOKING INTO APRIL'S
EYE HE IS BLATANTLY SMITTEN TO
EVERYONE'S DISCOMFORT EXCEPT
APRIL'S.

RICHARD: IN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE FOCUS
CHANGES THE SUBJECT. TO ROSA AND
JUAN. This is my first cruise.

ROSA: Is it?

EL MORO: La Vida is a bowl of Bullshit. Asi se dice?

ROSA: Bulllll shit.

JUAN Rosa!
ROSA SMILES SWEETLY AT HIM AND
KISSES JUAN ON THE CHEEK.

EL MORO: Gracias, Majita Huapisima. Booll-sheet.
Everything! Todo! Sabes? But not for me. I am
the bravest matador in all of Spain!

RICHARD: At least you step in bullshit.

EL MORO: What? TO ROSA Que dice?

JUAN Is this the first time for your wife also?

RICHARD: Oh no, she's been at it since she was? 15?

APRIL: WHISPERING. We are talking about the cruise,
stupid.

RICHARD: We only boarded yesterday. There's no telling.
PINCHING HER JUST HARD ENOUGH.

APRIL: Ow!

RICHARD: WHISPERING. I'm going to strangle you.

APRIL: You haven't got the guts. TO THE OTHERS:
Was it an obsession, Mr. Everett?

HENRY: Obsession?

APRIL: Yeah, I mean you spent 10 years searching for
your wife.

HENRY: No. I wouldn't call it obsession. Looking for
Judith went hand in hand with traveling. A
romantic idea that took my fancy—

IBARRA: A Quest?

HENRY: Yes, I believe you hit the nail on the head. I
realize it's very popular these days with young
people? but obsession is not some ephemeral
flirtation. An obsessed is a lost soul, possessed
by the belief that he will find himself in the
object he has chosen for his torment.

EL MORO: What? Que cosa?

RICHARD: But successful men are often obsessed.

HENRY: POUNDING THE TABLE. Don't confuse a
driven man with the Malady of Obsession. A
man obsessed can't recognize his own success,
can't believe when he's actually attained it.

Perhaps I was a little obsessed. It was not a happy time of my life.

ROSA: Would you care for more legumbres, Juan?

JUAN Por favor, mi amor.

IBARRA: You seem to know a lot about the subject, Mr. Everett.

HENRY: Well, during my eighty years around this world, I've had more than one brush with Death.

IBARRA: I can only imagine.

EL MORO: TO APRIL. What? What? TO OTHERS.

DRAWING OUT THE WORD,

D e s p a c i o—I beg you!

APRIL: Obsesión.

EL MORO: Ah, Obsesión!

APRIL: Si!

EL MORO: Que mujer! Yes. Salud. Como se dice? A toast.

A Obsesión. To obsesionar! Me—I am

obsesionado—Muchos demonios. TO JUAN

AND ROSA. Como se dice?

ROSA: Devils.

EL MORO: Dee—bols, Yes! Obsesionado with the Bull—

Huh Toro, Toro—y las damas, una dama.

Obsesionado with one woman. TOASTING THE

TABLE IN GENERAL Salud. Salud. Salud.

Old man—?

HENRY: Eh?—Oh. Salud.

EL MORO: Yes, now I it feel. Pow! Pow pow pow! En Sevilla, el vino es like blood, thick and rich and free to be poured.

IBARRA: Salud!

EL MORO: You go to Sevilla?

IBARRA: Yes, I have visited Sevilla.

EL MORO: UNDERSTANDING ONLY THE WORD Sevilla. Si—Yes!

ROSA: Do they fight bulls in Sevilla? Bailas con los toros y La Muerte en Sevilla?

EL MORO: Si, como no?

ROSA: Y porque viajas solo? Yo pensaba que matadores viajaban siempre con su cuadrilla?

JUAN: My wife has asked Mr. Moro—

EL MORO: El Moro, por favor.

JUAN: El Moro why he isn't in the company of his cuadrilla—His entourage—

ROSA: Oh much more than entourage, Amor. They are the—Como va, los varios en su cuadrilla?

EL MORO: Ah, two picadores and three banderilleros.

ROSA: Without these brave men, the Matador would be unable to fight the bull.

APRIL: I feel sorry for the bull.

EL MORO: Que dice?

ROSA: Que tendiera piedad por el toro.

EL MORO: Y porque? Señorita—

RICHARD: Señora.

EL MORO: Señora, No piedad for the bull.

APRIL: But—

EL MORO: No! He have the cuernos—MAKES
APPROPRIATE MOTION. I have
the...LOOKING FOR A CAPE FACSIMILE,
PULLS OFF THE NAPKIN HE HAD TUCKED
IN HIS COLLAR AND JUMPING FROM HIS
SEAT BEGINS FIGHTING AN IMAGINARY
BULL TO THE DELIGHT OF HIS
COMPANIONS.

JUAN: Ole!
THE OTHERS JOIN HIM AS EL MORO
AGILY AVOIDS THE MURDEROUS HORNS.

EL MORO: He have all the oportunidad to kill me. No? Si.
Entonces I go. Si?
THEN EL MORO PREPARES FOR THE KILL.
FIRST HE DEDICATES THE BULL TO
APRIL THEN, WITH A FLOURISH HE
TOSSES THE NAPKIN AWAY AND WITH
TWO EATING UTENSILS GOADS THE
"BULL" TOWARDS HIM AND MAKES THE
THRUST. OF COURSE, A PERFECT AIM,

BETWEEN THE SHOULDER BLADES AND
INTO THE HEART.

THE OTHERS CHEER. EL MORO BOWS
AND JOINS THEM AT THE TABLE.

JUAN A toast: To a most delightedful voyage—where
we can enjoy and be ourselves and forget the
indignities of everyday life.

ALL TOGETHER.

EL MORO: Salud! ROSA: Salud! IBARRA:

 Salud HENRY:

 Cheers. APRIL: Let us forget!

HENRY: To the comradeship of fellow travelers.

APRIL: To ships passing in the night.

IBARRA: And the secrets they take with them.

ROSA: To their final destination.

RICHARD: DESPERATE TO SAY SOMETHING.

 To love—

APRIL: Oh boy—

RICHARD: QUICKLY TACKS ON.

 And hate.

ALL FALL SILENT EXCEPT FOR EL MORO

EL MORO: Salud—Salud!

END OF SCENE

SCENE 10

Along side the Rail, El Moro, Rosa & Ibarra

EL MORO: Como se dice, te amo?

ROSA: I love you.

EL MORO: I lohb youh.

ROSA: I love you.

EL MORO: I lohhhh you. Not you, perdóname—yo se que eres casada y tengo todo el respecto para la institución de matrimonio!

ROSA: Then who is it that you love?

EL MORO: What?

ROSA: Quien amas?

ENTER IBARRA. HE STANDS QUIETLY ALONG THE RAIL, PRETENDING TO IGNORE THEM.

EL MORO: Who do I love? Abril. Que nombre!

ROSA: April? But she's married.

EL MORO: No. Oh no. She is no married aquí. HE MOTIONS TO HIS HEART. HE CLICKS HIS TONGUE SUGGESTIVELY AND BRINGS ROSA'S HAND TO HIS LIPS, KISSING IT.

EL MORO: Fácil.

SHE SLIPS HER HAND AWAY AND TAPS
HIM ON THE CHIN. HE SMILES, NODS
AND STROLLS OFF, HUMMING A
CORRIDA.

ROSA: What do you want, Mr. Ibarra?

IBARRA: I was only admiring your delicate manner with
El Moro.

ROSA: It's the only way one can be with Mr. Moro. But
he's quite harmless.

IBARRA: For you, perhaps.

ROSA: That's all I care about.

IBARRA: Really?

ROSA: Yes. Why do you question that?

IBARRA: Because it's quite clear, to me anyway, you're not
the kind of woman who thinks only of herself.

ROSA: You don't know me at all then.

IBARRA: But I can see your face. The Aztecs believed that
the face was the soul. And I respect those
ancient beliefs when people were closer to nature
and to themselves.

ROSA: Then I am wearing a mask.

IBARRA: The Aztecs wore masks so they could wear the
souls of other entities, and in that way get closer
to their own natures.

ROSA: Well I'm not an Aztec.

IBARRA: Aren't you? Some part of you, I think shows through.

ROSA: I'm not Mexican. I've only been there once when I was a little girl.

IBARRA: I've been watching you and somewhere in your line an Aztec princess lived.

ROSA: It's always a princess. If I had to be part of that bloody legacy I would prefer to've been an ordinary woman whose only blood she shed was in giving birth to her children. And another thing, I don't like being watched, in particular, the way you watch me.

IBARRA: How was I watching you?

ROSA: You tell me.

IBARRA: But I was only—

ROSA: I know when someone's lying...I didn't used to, but these days, I have a second sense.

IBARRA: I never argue with a Lady.

ROSA: Especially when nothing is up for debate.

IBARRA: Perhaps I should excuse myself.

ROSA: Have a good night, Mr. Ibarra.

HE EXITS. SHE STARES
CONTEMPLATIVELY AT THE PARTING
WATERS.

SCENE 11

Second Night, Cabin, Ibarra and Grubb

GRUBB IS STARING AT IBARRA WAITING FOR HIM TO WAKE. IBARRA OPENS HIS EYES.

GRUBB: Master...I have some very bad news to tell you. Do you remember that chimpanzee the matador brought? That horrible creature in the cage they put down below? Well, they made a mistake and they also put your crate of blood down there. And I was going, as soon as I figured out what happened, to bring it back up here, I was right on my way when I heard this horrible noise, screeching and, and, and—

IBARRA: And what?

GRUBB: And what?

IBARRA: Yes, Grubb, and what?

GRUBB: And splashing.

IBARRA: Splashing?

GRUBB: Splashing and smashing, Master. The chimp spilled your blood—What a mess! I cleaned it all up, but these made it worth my time.

HOLDING UP A JAR OF ROACHES.

IBARRA: Never mind! Was it all destroyed?

GRUBB: Oh no, Master, you have six quarts left.

IBARRA: Six quarts?! Can I survive on one forth of my nightly requirement?

GRUBB: I doubt it very much, Master.

IBARRA: How could you overlook such a vital matter—
Why do I even keep you alive, if not to see to my welfare?

GRUBB: I—I—thought—

IBARRA: You thought—?

GRUBB: I didn't think—

IBARRA: You have nothing to think with—

GRUBB: SOOTHINGLY. Master, it is no use crying over spilt milk—

IBARRA: ICY COLD. Shut up and let me think. There's four more days 'til we reach Jamaica. I should be able to survive on six quarts. I'll be ravenous but I'll make it. We can't have the passengers just disappearing—I know—

GRUBB: Yes, Master?

IBARRA: I'll start with that damned ape first. Pah! How I loath the blood of souless beasts! We'll devour him together, Grubb, I, the blood and you, the flesh.

GRUBB: Thank you, Master...but...but—

IBARRA: But what?

GRUBB: There are so many nice fat rats, and bugs, these are but a few beautiful specimen...I—I couldn't—
could never...EVEN TO VERBALIZE IT
MAKES HIS FLESH CRAWL.

IBARRA: Yes, for you, it would be tantamount to cannibalism. Get out.

GRUBB: Thank you Master. Thank you! GRUBB
PROCEEDS TO GROVEL HIS WAY OUT.

IBARRA: Grubb—!

GRUBB: Yes, Master?

IBARRA: I know you're gloating over my predicament. There's no need to pretend.

GRUBB: Yes, Master.

IBARRA: I know you loathe me.

GRUBB: Yes, Master.

IBARRA: But remember, if anyone deserved this fate, it was you.

GRUBB: Yes, Master.

IBARRA: What a bastard you were. A beast without mercy.

GRUBB: Yes, Master.

IBARRA: 13 years of my life—

GRUBB: Begging your pardon, Master, 14 years—

IBARRA: 13 years, 9 months. Until this happened to me.

GRUBB: And now you have all my wealth, more—and me
to serve you, your loyal ssservant, ssslave.

Aren't you happy, Master?

IBARRA: What does happiness have to do with it? What
you are, you made yourself and that's the truth,
isn't it?

GRUBB: Yes, Master.

IBARRA: Stop agreeing and tell me the truth!

GRUBB: It is the truth.

IBARRA: Not the truth—truth, the what—you—actually—
think—truth. Damn you, Grubb.

GRUBB: Yes, Master.

IBARRA: I can't bear another moment of your loathsome
face.

IBARRA SEIZES GRUBB ABOUT TO SINK
HIS FANGS IN. GRUBB PRACTICALLY
SWOONS WITH PLEASURE. OBLIGINGLY
OFFERS HIS THROAT.

No! I wouldn't do you the favor. It's what you
want. Besides, I need you because I know you
suffer more than me—I know you do!

GRUBB: Yes M—m—m—m—m—

IBARRA: Shut up!

GRUBB: Yes Master.

IBARRA, IMPOTENT WITH RAGE,
THROWS GRUBB OUT OF HIS CABIN.
TURNS FROM THE DOOR. TAKES AN 8 OZ
WATER GLASS, FILLS IT WITH BLOOD.
DRINKS IT IN ONE DRAUGHT. POURS A
SECOND GLASS. BEGINS TO DRINK IT
GREEDILY ALSO, THEN STOPS HIMSELF
AND BEGINS TO SIP IT. HE STOPS,
HOLDING THE GLASS TO THE LIGHT AND
STARES INTO IT AS IF LOOKING INTO A
CRYSTAL BALL.

LIGHTS DOWN.

SUDDENLY THE SCREAM OF A TERRIFIED
CHIMP IMPALES THE PEACE ABOARD
THE ARTEMIS.

SCENE 12

Fourth Night, Cabin, El Moro, April & Richard

EL MORO: DESPONDENTLY LEAFING THROUGH HIS
DICTIONARY.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Who is it?

APRIL: It's me, April.

EL MORO: La huerita? DESPITE THE AGONY OF
LOSING HIS APE, EL MORO RESPONDS
WITH ALACRITY.

APRIL ENTERS.

EL MORO: Chica! Huapa!

APRIL: Hi.

EL MORO: Hola, Hola! Sientate—You drink?

APRIL: Thank you.

HE POURS HER A DRINK.

EL MORO: Sangre de Toro?

APRIL: Lovely!

EL MORO: Marvioso!

APRIL: I just came to tell you how sorry I am.

EL MORO: Yes?

APRIL: About your pet.

EL MORO: Yes?

APRIL: Getting lost.

EL MORO: Yes?

APRIL: Your chimp.

EL MORO: Chimp?

APRIL: Ooo ooo! Triste.

EL MORO: Ah si, me bebe.

APRIL: Maybe she's hiding somewhere.

EL MORO: What?

APRIL: Hiding.

EL MORO: Hiding?

APRIL: Oh what's that stupid little town in California?
Escondido. She is in Escondido.

EL MORO: Ah escondida! No. No. se a pierdido. Ooo
ooo—MAKES DIVING MOTION THEN
SPLASHING SOUND. Yo lo se. I it know.

APRIL: Don't give up hope. Esperanza.

EL MORO SHRUGS.

APRIL: Maybe you're right.

EL MORO: I am right not wrong. I am right. PAUSE. I
lohb you.

APRIL: What?

EL MORO: I loooooohhhb you.

APRIL: Oh. PAUSE. Do you want to—INDICATES
BED.

EL MORO: Ah, fuck!

APRIL: Si!

HE LEAPS ON HER AND THEY BEGIN TO
KISS PASSIONATELY. SUDDENLY THERE
IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. THEY BOTH
FREEZE.

APRIL: Are you expecting somebody?

EL MORO: No.

APRIL: Don't answer it.

EL MORO: Puede ser mi mono. La monkey. EL MORO
ANSWERS THE DOOR TO FIND RICHARD.

RICHARD: I knew it, you little tart!

APRIL: Oh shut up, Richard, you're making an ass out of
yourself as usual.

EL MORO: Ahorita lo voy a sacar—

APRIL: You have no shame.

RICHARD: Me? Me? I—

APRIL: Why don't you go write one of your simpering
poems?

RICHARD: I've got one for you right now—
There was a nympho named April—

APRIL: Oh, this is going to be one of your better ones. I
can tell.

RICHARD: *A mean, vile slut and unstable—
She awoke old and grey
And alone in the hay*

Coz by then no one'd fuck poor ol' April.

APRIL: Too many syllables—

RICHARD: Something like your indiscretions—

EL MORO: Silencio! You and me fight. Luego her fuck the
best man

RICHARD: I don't want to fight you—Come on, April—

EL MORO: Ahora, vamos, vamos. Aqui! EL MORO
BEGINS CIRCLING. RICHARD TRIES TO
GRAB APRIL AND PULL HER OUT BUT
SHE RESISTS HIM.

APRIL: Let go—I'm staying right here!

EL MORO: Que se quiere quedar!

RICHARD: She's coming with me—!

APRIL: Now wait a minute! Richard, we agreed a long
time ago that we could do this.

RICHARD: It's not working out—

APRIL: I like it just fine—

RICHARD: That's 'cause it so happens I've got the loyalty of
an Staffordshire Terrier and you're the biggest
bitch in heat.

APRIL: Get out before I slap you!

RICHARD: Don't ever let me catch you alone, you stupid
cow. EXITS.

EL MORO: Cow?

APRIL: Moooooo.

EL MORO: Ah, Vaca. Y ya se fue, no vuelve? Que pasó?

APRIL: Kaput! SHE STARES FOR A MOMENT AT
THE DOOR FEELING A GREAT LOSS AND
AT THE SAME TIME, NOTHING AT ALL.
SHE TURNS TO EL MORO AND BEGINS
TAKING OFF HER CLOTHES.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 13

Fifth Night, Palacios' cabin, Rosa, Juan and

Ibarra

JUAN & ROSA ARE HAVING A PRIVATE
DINNER. THEY CLICK GLASSES.

JUAN This is perfect, a private dinner on the last night
of our voyage.

ROSA: To us.

JUAN You are amazing, my love. You must be
psychic. How did you know I was getting a little
tired of our dinner companions?

ROSA: It's just that you seem to be having more than the
usual trouble with your digestion, Darling. I
thought it was perhaps too much excitement at
the dinner table.

JUAN: They were beginning to wear on me, but you
seemed so amused by them all, I didn't want to
disappoint you. SHE SMILES SWEETLY AT
HIM. THEY EACH TAKE A BITE OF THEIR
FOOD.

ROSA: Juan.

JUAN Yes, my love?

ROSA: Would you like some more wine?

JUAN Thank you.

ROSA: I've been meaning to ask you about your promotion.

JUAN What of it?

ROSA: Just exactly what were you promoted to?

JUAN Exactly? FROWNS. More responsibility.

ROSA: Oh. You mean you were doing the same thing as before, but you have more responsibility. But see how stupid I must seem to not know anything about your job? Not one thing.

JUAN Why bore you with the details of making a living?

ROSA: I want to be bored if you're bored.

JUAN: Why discuss something that bores me? Great novelists represent us as cockroaches—

ROSA: What do they know?

JUAN: LAUGHS. It's just that I wouldn't know where to start and after that, where to finish, which in any case you would soon be asleep and a perfect night would be lost.

ROSA: But you must have pleased someone to be given more responsibility.

JUAN: Oh that. Occasionally someone dies, as with old Chato, whose place I took or maybe it was to rationalize that long overdue raise I had coming.

What it comes down to is a few more men to take the blame for if something goes wrong. You know how these things are.

ROSA: No.

JUAN No what?

ROSA: No, I don't know how these things are. How are they?

JUAN: Really, Rosa, I thought we were on a pleasure cruise. The last thing I want to do is discuss my work. Is there any more gravy?

ROSA: SHE POURS HIM MORE GRAVY. But Juan, as your wife, I want to know about your work. It occurred to me that I never asked you a thing about it. I just enjoyed the benefits of your salary. Do you like this dress?

JUAN: It's lovely, especially on you.

PAUSE AS THEY EACH TAKE A BITE OF THEIR DINNER.

ROSA: Selfish!

JUAN Wha—What?

ROSA: I've been so very selfish to never think of your work.

JUAN: Rosita, lets talk about something else. I have no complaints. I see you as the perfect wife. I look around, see other women, and think to myself,

none of them compare to you. You're a credit to me. Even that ass, Cuerva—whom we all refer to as Sr. Intocable—is charmed by you.

ROSA: Cuerva?

JUAN My boss.

ROSA: Oh that ass.

JUAN: Are you all right?

ROSA: Of course, why do you ask?

JUAN: I—I don't know. Let's change the subject, can we? This is turning out to be more work than work itself, Rosita.

ROSA: Of course, mi amor, I'm sorry if I've upset you, but you know how I am once I get a wild hair up my ass.

JUAN: Are you sure you're all right?

ROSA: Why do you keep saying that?

JUAN: It's just that you never use this kind of language.

ROSA: Oh. But I do think it, darling. After three years of marriage, we should dispense with our petty hypocrisies. Don't you think?

JUAN: Of course, except...

ROSE: Yes?

JUAN: Nothing—nothing that can't be forgotten by tomorrow. This steak is delicious.

ROSE: It is but it's missing the flavor of La Pampa. I don't think it's from Argentina.

JUAN: I believe you're right, my Love.

PAUSE AS ROSA CONTEMPLATES HER NEXT MOVE. THEY EACH TAKE A MOUTHFUL, CHEW AND SWALLOW. SHE WATCHES HIM TAKE ANOTHER BITE.

ROSA: Jorge.

JUAN What?

ROSA: Jorge and Marta.

JUAN: He should have had the decency to tell her he was abandoning her. But it happens all the time. Not a word, no warning.

ROSA: They were mad for each other. Something happened to him and you know it.

JUAN I don't know it.

ROSA: You do know it!

JUAN: AMAZED AT HER UNPRECEDENTED AUDACITY.

Are you calling me a liar?

ROSA: Yes, I am.

JUAN Then what am I lying about?

ROSA: Mmm, let me think, oh...Everything. About Jorge. About Marta, about your filthy work,

about us and that you're an evil, murderous,
disgusting, bloody swine!

HE SLAPS HER. SHE SLAPS HIM BACK.

HE REELS, LOSING HIS BALANCE.

ROSA: Surprised? The credit to your image must be
stronger than you imagined.

JUAN I feel...

ROSA: Dizzy? The truth is intoxicating. Why in a
moment I went from zero to sixty per second, per
second. You simply can't imagine.

HE FALLS TO HIS KNEES. HE ATTEMPTS
TO GET UP BUT FALLS TO THE FLOOR,
UNCONSCIOUS. SHE MAKES SURE THE
DOOR IS LOCKED AND TURNS TO JUAN.

SCENE 14

The Rail, April leans on the rail staring at the parting waters.

IBARRA: Hello.

APRIL: Hi.

IBARRA: A lovely night.

APRIL: Mmmm. Have you had dinner?

IBARRA: Not yet, why?

APRIL: You should eat. You hardly touched your food the other night and I haven't seen you at dinner since.

IBARRA: I'm never tired until almost sunrise, so I sleep most of the day. There's an energy at night that makes any other time of the day tedious, for me anyway. CHANGING THE SUBJECT. What were you thinking before I interrupted you?

APRIL: Nothing.

IBARRA: Nothing?! I look into your eyes and I see a terrible sadness. What is that saddens you?

APRIL: If I told you, it would only disgust you.

IBARRA: Perhaps not.

APRIL: You really want to know?

IBARRA: I'd like to know what makes you so sad.

APRIL: I wasn't always. For the first thirteen years of my life I was very happy. Then they sent my brother away.

IBARRA: Sent him away, where?

APRIL: To a monastery. He was almost fifteen and I was thirteen.

IBARRA: You loved your brother.

APRIL: Yes, I did.

IBARRA: I see.

APRIL: Do you? Me, this big in my crib. Looking up at him.

We used play at getting married and fall asleep in each other's arms. At first they thought it was sweet. But then when we got a little older they made us sleep in different rooms. I cried and cried. John wouldn't speak to anyone for a long time.

One day, we were playing in the attic and we found one of those sex manuals fathers buy.

PAUSE. And what followed were the two most wonderful years of my life. We discovered everything together. It was just pure joy. Until they found out. John was sent away and I put in parochial school.

I mean how could the love we had—that felt so right—be bad, as long as we didn't hurt anyone? Stupid morays somebody made up to please themselves.

IBARRA: But your children?

APRIL: When I learned that royalty married brothers and sisters. And little fool that I am, I say, Oh I get it, they're afraid we might have idiot kids—I never had a desire to breed.

At sixteen I pack up a few things and track John down at the monastery. He comes out and I know something ain't kosher, 'cause William Holden comes to mind, with his face in a rat cage in 1984 and him crying, “Kill her not me.” And afterwards how stiff and cold they were after they had betrayed each other?

John shows me the scars where he punished himself every night for the things we had done and told me I should do the same. And for a long time after that in my dreams I'd hear echoes of John screaming, “*Kill her not me!*”

Do you "see" or understand anything at all, hm, Mr. Ibarra? SHE LEANS PRECARIOUSLY OVER THE RAIL.

IBARRA: Careful there—

APRIL: LAUGHING. No one would suspect I'm really a ghost. Maybe its some crazy fascination that keeps me going. Maybe it's the eve of the last moment before I dive—

IBARRA: You might go over—

APRIL: Yes, I think so. SHE STARTS TO CLIMB OVER.

IBARRA: Just a minute—

APRIL: Hey, it's my business—Get your hands off me—!

IBARRA: I want you first.

APRIL: Really? SLOWLY GETTING DOWN. I never got that hit from you...I mean, I can usually tell if a guy is thinking, you know. I can feel you shaking and you're so cold—! SHE FREEZES AS HE HOLDS HER WITH HIS EYES. HE GENTLY SINKS HIS TEETH INTO HER THROAT. SHE RESPONDS AS IF IN A SEXUAL SWOON. WHEN SHE IS EMPTIED, HE PICKS HER UP, THROWS HER OVER THE RAIL THEN DISAPPEARS INTO THE SHADOWS.

SCENE 15

Fifth Night, Palacios' cabin, Rosa, Juan and Ibarra

JUAN IS SITTING ON A CHAIR, HIS HANDS
SECURELY TIED BEHIND HIM HIS LEGS
TIED TO THE LEGS OF THE CHAIR. HE IS
GAGGED. AROUND HIS NECK, ONE OF
HIS LEATHER BELTS IS SLIPPED
THROUGH THE BUCKLE.

ROSA IS ASTRADDLE A CHAIR DRESSED
EXACTLY AS IN SCENE 2, EXCEPT THAT
NOW THE SCENE IS COMPLETE WITH
JUAN ACROSS FROM HER. SHE LETS THE
PAGES FLOAT TO THE FLOOR. AND
LOOKS AT THE PHOTOGRAPH IN HER
OTHER HAND.

ROSA: "...Your loving sister, Marta." SHE PAUSES AS
SHE SURVEYS HER SOON TO BE EX—
HUSBAND.

Oh Juan, don't. Don't let's be
mediocre—what, why, how, you say. Let's have
respect for each other. Let's start by giving each
other the benefit of the doubt.

You're very thorough—are you really their top interrogator? I mean you do always get the information you want from them. Yes? Well maybe not always. Nobody can be perfect, not even my Juanito. Whether they're guilty or not. Guilty! Did I say guilty? I'm thinking the old way. I'm changing that. It won't take long.

What? Don't please, I beg you, don't bother with denials. I've been listening to drivel my whole life. I never admitted it to myself, though. To admit forces me to reconsider my whole existence. That's exactly what has happened. Which brings us to you—the last bridge to burn.

Oh no, I didn't believe it right off. Do you think I, the good wife, would believe my own sister. Of course not, don't look at me like that. I thought she was traumatized by the disappearance of Jorge, even jealous of us—poor thing—our perfect marriage. I thought she'd lost her mind. But it was me. Yes my darling, why do you argue? Or lie? You should know how liberating the truth can be. So...I did my own investigation. It wasn't easy. I even disguised

myself. Do you know what one of the disguises was? A prostitute. SHE LOOKS AT HIM AND KNOWS HIS QUESTION.

Yes, I did. One of your own men. He told me I reminded him of his boss's wife. You have some strange little men working for you. Did you know that Darling? Well of course you do. He had some strange requests. I guess you can't help but take your work home. Or someone else's.

Is it because we're twins? You always had a thing about that, didn't you? I knew it, really, in my heart. I just put it where I put the drivel that I'd been listening to all my life. In a part of my brain that was not to be opened Except, like Pandora's Box, it was. By you.

What am I most upset about? Because you're a man who extracts bits and pieces from human beings, information for flesh. Is that it? What if you murdered Jorge for no other reason than to rape his wife? Or was Jorge involved in politics? I wondered about him...But that was another thing I locked away too. In a way, you and I belonged together. My vanity and obviousness and your...well all that you are.

Maybe it's all those things—God,
I hope it's all those things—Yes, yes it must be, it
is. I wouldn't be like this if it wasn't for
everything that you are. THE FEELING THAT
SHE IS LOSING HER MIND FIGHTS
AGAINST HER FIGHT FOR CONTROL.

Juan? I loved you. You don't know how much. I
don't even know. I don't fool myself to think that
I'm doing humanity any great favor by
eliminating you. They'll find someone to replace
you—like that! I know it. I'm doing this out of
love. Yes, really. Love. Really. Can you
believe that?

It's the only way I can get you out
of my mind. To go on wondering about you.
Where...what...who...between your ear lobe and
the line of your hair. Filthy swine, vicious
butchering bastard of a mangy bitch that you are.
While you went on...tearing and scorching the
earth and the people around you. Como la
maragunta!...At times I see and I see all men. So
animal and perfect in your own right. So
childlike and I think, what beautiful creatures
they are.

I'm going to use these pictures of Jorge, poor Jorge, so beautiful he was. Gone...all the parts a loving wife kisses at one time or another. KISSES THE PHOTO ON THE PARTS WHERE JORGE'S VARIOUS ORGANS HAVE BEEN RIPPED OUT. THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. JUAN CRIES OUT IN SPITE OF HIS GAG. ROSA TIGHTENS THE BELT AROUND HIS NECK TO CHOKE OFF ANY SOUNDS.

IBARRA: FROM OUTSIDE THE CABIN DOOR. Mrs. Palacios—?

ROSA DOESN'T ANSWER.

I know you're in there. I know what you're doing, Rosa. I'm coming in.

ROSA: I'm sick. I have a headache. Please go away, my husband will be furious if he catches you at my door.

DESPITE THE LOCK, THE DOOR HANDLE TURNS EASILY. IBARRA ENTERS. HE SURVEYS THE SCENE WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST REACTION. SHE DOESN'T LOOK AT IBARRA. SHE CONTINUES TO PREPARE JUAN FOR THE COMING TORTURE.

IBARRA: I have come for you. Will you?

ROSA: I'm busy now, go now, come back later.

IBARRA: It is time.

ROSA: I am a wife and concern myself with wifely duties. I'm in love with Juan, my husband. Now, Go away, I'm very busy right now.

IBARRA: Come here.

ROSA: You are trying me. Please leave us alone.

IBARRA: Come here.

ROSA: Have I read about you in one of those slick and trashy gossip magazine? Or perhaps it was my sister who read about you. How did you open that door? I know I locked it securely. Why am I not afraid of you? Juan is sick with fear. Look at him. SHE CROSSES TO HIM. SHE COMES TO HIM AS IF IT WERE OUT OF PURE CAPRICE, HER OWN IDEA, TEASING HIM.

IBARRA: You can't tear your eyes away from mine.

ROSA: I can, I just prefer not to. Never let on you're afraid.

IBARRA: Are you afraid?

ROSA: Never let on.

IBARRA: Offer to me, your throat.
SHE LAUGHS, THROWING HER HEAD BACK AND EXPOSING HER THROAT. HE

TAKES HER IN HIS ARMS. FOR A
MOMENT SHE FREEZES, THEN HE SINKS
HIS TEETH INTO HER JUGULAR VEIN,
THEN WHEN SHE IS ABOUT TO
COLLAPSE, HE PLACES HIS FINGERS IN
HER MOUTH.

IBARRA: Bite them. Now drink. Drink!
SHE DOES, GAINING STRENGTH AS SHE
DOES. SHE GAZES AT HIM THROUGH
HALF CLOSED EYES BUT NEVER TAKES
THEM OFF HIS. SHE IS IN ECSTASY.

That's enough! Steady now.

ROSA: The room. I can see. Everything was black and
white and now, the colors have returned. What's
that?

IBARRA: What?

ROSA: Laughter!

THERE IS NO SOUND.

IBARRA: Your senses are not human anymore.

ROSA: Not human?

IBARRA: What else, Rosa?

ROSA: SHE STARES AT HIM A MOMENT NOT
COMPREHENDING AT FIRST. THEN IT
DAWNS ON HER. I'm starving. My
appetite...But for...

IBARRA: What, Rosa?

SHE TURNS TO THE HORRIFIED JUAN
AND SLOWLY ADVANCES TO HIM WITH
THE MOTION OF TENDER LOVE AND THE
TEMPERATURE OF ICE. SHE SINKS HER
NEW FANGS IN AND DRINKS THE LIFE
FROM HIM.

SCENE 16

Sixth Night, The Bar, El Moro, Richard, Henry & Ibarra

EL MORO, IBARRA AND HENRY ARE
SITTING IN THE LOUNGE HAVING A
DRINK. IBARRA DOES NOT DRINK.

HENRY: So I said, no problem, Constable, and opened up
the trunk and what did I find? But Yopel's 100
pounds of opium, neatly packaged and—
ENTER RICHARD. HE IS DISHEVELED,
UNSHAVED, ANGRY AND WORRIED.

RICHARD: Where is she?

HENRY: Who?

RICHARD: My wife. TO EL MORO. Where's my wife,
asshole?

EL MORO: Your wife, asshole? I cannot all the time do to
your wife. She is a beautiful cow, she look for
the best bull. Toro, eh? I learn good the English,
no? Un natural, que no?

HENRY: Too good.

RICHARD: She was with you last.

EL MORO: TO IBARRA. Que dice, este cornudo?

IBARRA: Que estaba la señora con ti la ultima vez que el la miro.

EL MORO: La noche pasada, pero luego se fue—que tal encontró otro macho. Es una mujer de apetencia enorme.

RICHARD: What did he say?

IBARRA: That she went back to her cabin.

RICHARD: What was that about macho?

IBARRA: Nothing—

RICHARD: I heard something.

IBARRA: That perhaps your wife met another man and that...

RICHARD: And?

IBARRA: And that she has an enormous appetite.

RICHARD: I'd throttle him, if it weren't true.

IBARRA: Do you really think she's missing?

RICHARD: I don't know what to think. She could be anywhere, even at the bottom of the...I'd better report this to the captain.

EL MORO: Que dice? El Capitán?

HENRY: If she's gone, young man, at least you won't need to comb the desert looking for her.

RICHARD: Jesus Christ—

EL MORO: El la mato!

RICHARD: What did he say?

IBARRA: Callete—!

RICHARD: What did he say?

IBARRA: I think you should speak to the Captain right
now.

EL MORO: No lo crees!

RICHARD: What did he say?

HENRY: I'll go with you, young man. What's your name?
I have so much trouble these days remembering
names.

RICHARD: What'd you do to her? HE ATTEMPTS TO HIT
EL MORO WHO LAYS RICHARD OUT
COLD WITH THE DICTIONARY.

EL MORO: Get the Capitán. I think he too stoopid to kill
her.

END OF SCENE

ACT III

SCENE 17

Several months after The Artemis, Poetry Reading MC,

Richard and JOE

MC: And now for our next to last reader—

SQUINTING AT THE SIGN UP SHEET.

I can't read it.

JOE: Joe Wuchesky.

MC: Joe Wuchesky, from America. We only have
time for one poem.

JOE: What?

MC: In five minutes we're getting the boot and there's
one last reader after you.

JOE: Where is he? Who's the last reader?

RICHARD: Here I am.

JOE: How long's your poem?

RICHARD: Two minutes.

JOE: Two minutes? Well mine is only two minutes
too. It would be a problem right now, if you, Mr.
MC hadn't taken fifteen minutes to flap about the
fucking ruins in fucking Greece in a cheap
imitation of Rilkes Torso of Apollo.

MC: Fuck you.

JOE: Fuck you too.

MC: Just read the bloody poem? Thank you.

JOE: That's all I needed to hear. Thanks.

MC: It better be good.

JOE: Why should I be the one to set a precedence?

RICHARD Read! Read the poem, Man. Cecile, just shut up and let the man read. Read!

MC: Oh right, I m the designated time keeper of a bunch of zebras!

POETS: Give us a break! Read! Read! Get on with it.

JOE: Awright! HE COLLECTS HIMSELF TAKING A POETIC STANCE AND A DEEP BREATH.

I call this April

Sometimes when we weren't tearing at the soft

underbelly

revealed in the after midnight confessions trying

to get to the core of the

unattainable

we might be riding an undulating train

sharing the compartment with a couple of

bargain hunters

talking cheap bed & breakfast or a free bag of

peanuts

I would wonder if they'd seen the silent mosques

*Or drank the bleeding greens through the river
in the crook of the arm
April would turn and say, traveling can narrow
your horizons
then laugh and I would come up for a breather
raised for a moment from the slimy residue of
grocery lists
of the fractures and contusions from the bestial
quest
for a meager immortality and say out loud, this is
sick*

RICHARD LAUGHS A LOUD AND LONG
LAUGH THAT LOOKS ALMOST PAINFUL
AS THE REST GRUDGINGLY CLAP.

MC: Thank you, Mr. Wuchesky from the U.S. of A.
And now Ladies and Gentlemen, for our last but
let us not hope least reader, Richard Darling.

JOE: Hey—I know you!

RICHARD: RICHARD STEPS UP. I want to thank our U.S.
of A friend for sharing that with us. And even
though I was going to read my cheap imitation of
Benny Hill, one of the better Stand—Up Poems
of the decade called, "A beastie lad surprises
Debra McGregory dossing, Saves her from a
hack gone amok at the zebra crossing, she then,

sweet child, desires to express her gratitude, but he's a misogynist." Instead, I would like to share this poem written...well it's been awhile. It's called April as well.

*you seek to eat all me, the road in front of us
you all ready ate up yourself
at the frog stage in your mum's womb
you are the imagination of an evil fairy tale
your ruby lips shoot out like flying Chinese razor
disks*

your sense of humor is in hospital WITH

SENTIMENT

*as I watch you singing something Sid vicious
pissing behind a lorry. STEPS DOWN.*

JOE: APPLAUDS LOUDLY. What is this obsession we have for the unattainable?

RICHARD: We're a civilization of vampires, insatiable, heartless, self—absorbed, and we disintegrate in the harsh scrutiny of sunlight. You're not the Joe April, left for me, are you?

JOE: I guess I am, if you're the Richard Darling who had a subscription to *Time Out*.

RICHARD: I still do.

JOE: You're not still with her are you?

RIC: She disappeared one night, but not in her usual way. We were crossing the Atlantic from Spain to Veracruz, I think she was shagging the waiter and I know she was shagging some macho bull fighter.

JOE: No kidding? You mean like she went overboard? Jeez! That's too bad. You think one of them did something?

RIC: Yes, I mean what do I know? But what else could it have been?

JOE: I told her, you know, I predicted such a thing would happen.

RIC: Hmm.

JOE: Were you as crazy about her as I was?

RICHARD: Depends on how crazy you were.

JOE: Big time crazy.

RICHARD: She knew how to pick 'em. She went for the same type, somebody solid that would get whacked out about her. She saw right into us.

JOE: So she could sleep around with the dangerous ones.

RICHARD: And torture the filial ones.

JOE: VOICE BREAKING. That she did. WIPES AWAY HIS TEARS. She did me a favor by

leaving. I wasn't healthy with her. What about you?

RICHARD: Nobody could be sane living with April.

JOE: I'm sane now.

RICHARD: Are you?

JOE: At least I'm not drinking, sleeping, eating April. That's a definite step up. I paid some clown many, many dollars to tell me April was a substitute for my mother, who abandoned me.

RICHARD: The ol' mum, eh?

JOE: Embarrassing isn't it?

RICHARD: You don't have to believe that, you know. They just latch on to stuff like that, coz it's easy.

JOE: Who's to say. It doesn't matter now much anyway. But I've been mad at April all this time—not all the time, but once in a while I have a big conversation with her alone in my room. Waiting to meet up with her again so I could, I could...

RICHARD: What?

JOE: I don't know. Do all the talking I guess. Fuck it. It feels pretty weird to be mad now.

RICHARD: It's not about her—it never was.

JOE: Yeah, yeah, 'course not.

RICHARD: Don't know what my problem was. Just fucked up, I guess. I must've liked the way she just went for the throat. Sometime you admire something you don't have. But I think she cured me too.

JOE: You mean you make better choices now?

RICHARD: You mean women? Yeah, I avoid them like bubonic rats.

JOE: You got a long ways to go.

RICHARD: What about you?

JOE: I got a long ways to go.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 18

Thirteen years after The Artemis, El Moro and his wife,
Concepcion

EL MORO HAS JUST BEEN SERVED A
PLATE OF FOOD BY HIS WIFE,
CONCEPCION.

EM: What is this? Que es esta mierda?

CONCEPCION: Exactly what the doctor ordered.

Eat it. With the condition your stomach's in, you
should be happy you are not eating through the
veins.

EM It looks macrobiotic.

CONCEPCION: It isn't.

EM: It looks like it.

CONCEPCION: I don't even know what macro—
tontaria is so how can I prepare it for you?

EM: Then what is it?

CONCEPCION: Oats.

EM: Oats?

CONCEPCION: Yes, oats.

EM: What else?

CONCEPCION: Crushed seeds

EM: That figures. What kind of seeds?

CONCEPCION: I don't know.

EM: You don't know? You're serving me something
and you don't even know what it is?

CONCEPCION: Look here, Morenito, the doctor
wrote it. No one but a pharmacist can read a
Doctor's handwriting. I took it to the pharmacist
and he gave me a bag of seeds. I tasted one. It
wasn't bad.

EM: You ate one of my seeds?

CONCEPCION: All right then, starve to death.

EM: What kind of seeds do you get from a
pharmacist? Farmer. A farmer is who you buy
seeds from. I don't like them.

CONCEPCION: You haven't even tasted them.

EM: What else?

CONCEPCION: Buttermilk.

EM: Buttermilk?

CONCEPCION: Yes, remember how much you
like buttermilk?

EM: Only if its fresh.

CONCEPCION: It came out of the cow this
morning.

EM: Which cow?

CONCEPCION: We have two dozen cows.

EM: And they are the best cows.

CONCEPCION: Heaven forbid you should have an inferior cow.

EM: Heaven has nothing to do with it.

CONCEPCION: Keep your godlessness to yourself.

EM: I keep my godlessness to myself much better than your sister who is here every Saturday to speak for the Holy One.

CONCEPCION: I don't like the way you said Holy One.

EM: Holy Holy Holy One One One.

CONCEPCION: Why don't you go kill a bull? That's the only time you are at all bearable.

EM: In fact, I am quite charming on those days. I am los cat's pajamas. As they say in English.

CONCEPCION: You and your English. I'm going to water the garden.

EM: Stay away from the cucumbers!

CONCEPCION EXITS.

EM: What do you know about fear? What do you know about glory? You can't know one without the other. You just live your life, year to year, like a water clock. Drip drip drip, drop to drop. When I'm out there with the bulls and their smell and their blood mixing with my men's and the

horses—Let it be said, El Moro de Sevilla has never once greeted the horns of a bull with his flesh. **KNOCKS ON THE TABLE.** In the arena, everything...makes sense. Life is the indignity.

CONCEPCION: **FROM OFFSTAGE:** That's

because you don't know how to live.

EM: Living as you call it is for nincompoops! What do they know about adrenaline? One day on a boat I took across the ocean, I decided to learn the English. I bought one of those books with Spanish on one side and English on the other. I surrounded myself with natives of the English idiom and a sprinkling of Latinos to translate the more dramatic moments. All were passengers, mind you, I had no money then to hire tutors or translators. This may shock you but I wasn't always rich. There was a time when you wouldn't have even spit in my direction.

I slept only with gringas—as you Mexicans are fond of saying—which is the best way to learn a new language. I fought off their husbands, all in English.

CONCEPCION STANDS AT THE DOOR IN A SUN HAT AND GARDEN GLOVES.

CONCEPCION: What does that have to do with
adrenaline, life or nincompoops?

EM: I was not like those stupid Gringos, obsessed
over women. Mine was a noble obsession! The
passion of life and death, the struggle and drama,
played—Honor and bravery!

CONCEPCION: To kill bulls—this is what you
call a noble obsession?

EM: You love the bullfight! You had your own
private box seat before I even knew you!

CONCEPCION: So? I like to stare at car wrecks
and bullfights like the next person. I need a day's
peace. EXITS.

EM: The glory of the arena ridicules the mediocrity of
washing your neck and talking to your wife!
SIGHS. She's right. You take the bull around a
few times, then kill it off quickly before he
realizes it's not the cape he should be goring but
the tight-assed little clown in satin breeches. She
is always right. BEGINS EATING HIS FOOD.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 19

60 years after The Artemis, Street, Rosa and Tomasina

ROSA: STEPS OUT OF THE SHADOWS. Hello
Tomasina.

TOMASINA: CARRYING A BOX IS HURRYING HOME.
Oh! You scared me. Where do I know you
from?

ROSA: A party.

TOMASINA: Oh. Maybe that's why I don't remember you.
Sorry.

ROSA: I want that dress.

TOMASINA: What, this old thing?

ROSA: The dress you have in the box.

TOMASINA: How do you know I have a dress in here?

ROSA: A little bat told me.

TOMASINA: I don't like bats.

ROSA: How many have you met?

TOMASINA: I read a book. Now excuse me, I'm late.

ROSA: STEPS IN HER PATH. But you can't read.

TOMASINA: Say you know too much about me—what's do
you really want?

ROSA: The dress.

TOMASINA: I said, get your own dress! This one ain't your style, anyway. Besides this little fairy dress is money in the bank.

ROSA TAKES TOMASINA'S ARM.

Hey! PULLING OUT A KNIFE. Now step aside 'cause you wouldn't be the first.

ROSA: All I wanted was the dress and now you've made me hungry for you.

TOMASINA: Not for all the rubles in Russia. I know when I smell a rat—

ROSA: A bat...a bat. ROSA ENVELOPES HER WITH HER CAPE. THE BOX FALLS TO THE GROUND REVEALING A SCHOOL GIRL'S VIRGINAL WHITE DRESS. ROSA DRINKS TOMASINA'S BLOOD THEN STEPS BACK, EASING TOMASINA TO THE GROUND.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 20

One hour later. Ibarra Grubb, and Rosa

ROSA IS PUTTING ON THE FINISHING
TOUCHES ON HER DISGUISE OF A
PROSTITUTE DRESSED LIKE A SCHOOL
GIRL. IBARRA ENTERS.

IBARRA: Now what are you up to?

ROSA: Why don't you learn to knock?

IBARRA: Who is it this time?

ROSA: The General.

IBARRA: Not El Generalisimo?

ROSA: The very soul.

IBARRA: A very black soul.

ROSA: Mmmm, If you can imagine a dark red bougalais
with sediment so thick it settles and resettles at
the base of the bottle...and about to decay. Try it
sometime.

IBARRA: I'll take your word for it. It's not a healthy
vampiress who does this.

ROSA: I killed a poor whore last night.

IBARRA: That's not your style, Rosa, I thought you only
went for the Juan Palacios of the world.

ROSA: I don't know what came over me. She was—
rude.

IBARRA: Of course, a capital offense.

ROSA: It has made feel like sixty—three years ago—as
if I've been flayed—raw—the night you
swallowed up my soul.

SHE LUNGES AT HIM AS IF TO TEAR HER
SOUL OUT OF HIS CHEST. HE CALMLY
CATCHES HER BY HER WRISTS, LONG
ACCUSTOMED TO HER OUTBREAKS.

ROSA: Where's Grubb? Grubb!

IBARRA: What do you want with him?

ROSA: To kill him. I can't take the sight of him another
moment! Grubb!

GRUBB ENTERS.

GRUBB: Yes, Mistress?

IBARRA: Get out!

ROSA: Come here!

IBARRA: Go, I say!

ROSA: Stay, Grubb. I have a box of crackers for you.

GRUBB: Oh...Grasshoppers?

ROSA: Grasshoppers from the Savanna.

GRUBB: Of Africa, Mistress?

ROSA: Of course—large ones, Grubb.

GRUBB: How large?

ROSA: Come see for yourself.

GRUBB: LOOKS IN THE BOX. Oh thank you, kind mistress.

ROSA: Come here, I'm going to kill you.

GRUBB CROSSES TO HER AS IF ANTICIPATING SOME TREAT AND OFFERS HIS NECK.

ROSA: Ugh!—You're a horrible slimy creature, Grubb.

GRUBB: Yes, Mistress.

ROSA IS REPULSED BY GRUBB. NOW HE IS CLOSE TO THE BOX OF GRASSHOPPERS AND PEERS INTO THE BOX. SHE QUICKLY TAKES HIM. HE FALLS LIFELESS TO THE FLOOR.

IBARRA: Why did you do that?

ROSA: To destroy the last memory of your life before me. It is a common practice amongst the possessive.

IBARRA: But you are not possessive.

ROSA: Tonight I am.

IBARRA: I'd grown rather dependent on him. I'd long forgiven him of his past iniquities. Time heals all. Now we'll have to find another, train him. It's just an extra worry.

ROSA: When are you going to fly off into the desert?

IBARRA: I love you, Rosa.

ROSA: Your love is impure. It has always been. Even as you watched me take Juan, watched me drink his blood, drooling avariciously at every drop I drank, you were only looking into your own reflection and loving yourself.

IBARRA: While you, bursting with love and human tenderness, you had Juanito trussed up like a sacrificial goat.

ROSA: That was a matter of Justice—

IBARRA: And revenge.

ROSA: I despise you.

IBARRA: Rosa...HE TOUCHES HER JUGULAR AND GAZES INTO HER EYES. A blood sucker is not cut out to be a super—heroine. It is as absurd as a charity ball where more is spent dressing up like Marie Antoinette than gathered for war orphans.

SHE TAKES IN THE SENSATION AND RELAXES.

ROSA: Time heals nothing.

IBARRA: You haven't had enough time. Shall I wear this ring?

ROSA: I despise that ring. What are your plans tonight?

IBARRA: Nothing lofty, a sodden transient down on his luck.

HE TAKES A PAIR OF CUFFLINKS AND WALKS TOWARDS HER. SHE TAKES THEM AND FASTENS THEM FOR HIM. ALL THIS IS A SINGLE SMOOTH MOVEMENT.

ROSA: You could at least get a good bourbon from a gentlemen's club.

IBARRA: Too complicated, and besides, unlike you I have lost my sense of romance.

ROSA: Romance?! He deserves to die and I deserve to kill him. We are suited for one another. You on the other hand, lie to yourself with your feigned bon homme and nonchalance.

IBARRA: A wise man once told me, with delusion there's hope, with hope there's life. And you wonder, what hope can he possibly have? And I answer, what hope do you have?

ROSA: LOOKS AT HIM THEN GENTLY CLOSES THE DOOR BEHIND HER.

IBARRA: You may get up now, Grubb.

GRUBB: Oh thank you, Master...Um—?

IBARRA: In there.

GRUBB: TAKING HIS BOX OF INSECTS. Oh Master?

IBARRA: What is it Grubb?

GRUBB: I want to thank you for that lovely eulogy. I was touched.

IBARRA: Get out, Grubb, please.

GRUBB: Thank you, Master, Thank you.

IBARRA TURNS UPSTAGE. SOFTLY AT
FIRST, HE BEGINS A MOAN THAT
BECOMES A LONG WAIL.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 21

Two hours later. Rosa and the General

EL GENERALISIMO IS WEARING ONLY HIS
UNDERSHORTS, SOCKS AND DOG
COLLAR. HE IS FUSSING ABOUT
ARRANGING "THE SET". HE POSITIONS
THE CHAIR JUST RIGHT. THE RIDING
CROP IS LYING ON THE CHAIR. HE TESTS
IT.

El Gen.: Yes, good. New leather.
DOOR KNOCKS. Ah she is here! ANSWERS
THE DOOR.
ENTER ROSA. SHE IS DRESSED LIKE A
GIRL AT HER CONFIRMATION.
Come in, come in, my dear. What is your name?

ROSA: Rosa.

El Gen.: What a lovely name. Just stand over there. Not
there—there. Yes that's better. Lovely. Um—
hum. Rosa is a lovely name. I'm new at this,
you know. Have you had much experience?

ROSA: No, Señor.

El Gen.: Good. Excellent, two fledglings. You see I was
talking to the Bishop about this dream that has

been haunting me for a long time now.

Reoccurring dreams, they're called. Do you ever have the same dream over and over?

ROSA: I dream of flying, at least once a week.

El Gen.: Flying? How sweet. Perhaps we can settle all our dreams here and now, eh? But see, my dream is much different. More troubled, more complicated. After all I am faced with grown up problems. HANDING HER THE WHIP. Here. Hold it like so. Good. Smart girl. Yes. Now sit down. Uh—huh. Lovely, lovely.

ROSA: What is your dream about, Señor?

El Gen.: Did His Holiness speak to you?

ROSA: No Señor.

El Gen.: Oh. SHUDDERS. Well, my dear, I'm only telling you because a holy man, a man of God, has given me this as penance. Do you understand?

ROSA: Oh yes, I know what penance is.

El Gen.: Of course you do. You are a good girl. So—Oh yes, my dream? You see, in my dream, I am surrounded by cloven—hoofed beasts—

ROSA: Satan is cloven—hoofed!

EL G: Yes, yes—I am well aware of that—And these beasts, goats, sheep, cattle and the like are and flattering me, but in their beast language—

ROSA: You mean they are baa—ing and moo—ing?

EL G: Just like that, yes—to everything I say, no matter what it is, these baa—ing and moo—ing sycophants. But only because they each want something precious from me. Then suddenly, I am garnished like a suckling pig, the main dish in a banquet I've paid for with the gold in my teeth and I am under their hooves and they are devouring me.

ROSA: How sad, Senor.

El Gen.: Are you comfortable, my beautiful mistress?

ROSA: Yes, very much, Senor. Senor—My dress—

El Gen.: Ah yes, let us not spoil it. FUSSING WITH HER DRESS. Then, as I am being carved up until there is nothing left but a few picked bones and my eyes so all the unpredictable corners, the sharp and courageous edges I took for granted in my youth, that forged my manhood, have been digested and excreted—

ROSA: Excreted, Senor?

El Gen.: Yes, yes, flushed down the toilet—and in this form—

ROSA: What form, Senor?

El Gen.: What form? Don't be stupid—in the form of excrement—I am—I am slithering away into a swamp of mediocrity, filled with human bones. It's so horrible!

ROSA: And when you wake up, nothing has changed.

El Gen.: Indeed.

ROSA: Then why don't you change it?

EG: Ho—ho! What a simple—lovely thought from a simple, lovely child. I have some very important obligations to many, many people, who wouldn't understand my skipping out on them. But something else. It's as if it were in my blood now. I've never told anyone before my darling...The power over the lives and deaths of others. It seems I've acquired a habit I haven't the conscience to break...With you, I hope to relieve those cruel little wishes disturbing my sleep.

ROSA: The sensation of filling yourself with the living liquid of another soul.

EG: You're a strange child.

ROSA: How sad it must be for you. Are you lonely, Senor?

El Gen.: Of course, I am lonely.

ROSA: Then you must pray for forgiveness.

El Gen.: Should I get on my knees?

ROSA: Yes. Now speak to me, your confessor.

El Gen.: I am the worst monster in San Sonrisa. I pray to St. Uranus of sensuality for forgiveness. You shall be my penance. You see my point, dear child?

ROSA: What shall I do, Senor?

El Gen.: Whip me! Sácame sangre! Beautiful Mistress, I've been bad, I've been very, very bad and deserve what you give me—wait a minute—All right, let's see what you have in here.

UNBUTTONS THE FIRST BUTTONS OF HER DRESS AND PEERS IN. Lovely. Keep it on for now. Imagination itself is an aphrodisiac. At my age, you learn to appreciate everything because it'll soon come to an end.

SHE STARTS TO BUTTON UP AGAIN.

Leave the button, my pitiless mistress. Now take the riding crop, and do you see? Don't be a stupid girl, now.

ROSA: Am I to use it on you, Senor?

El Gen.: What did I say before, weren't you listening to me?

ROSA: It's you I want to answer me.

HE IS FROZEN A MOMENT AND IN THAT
MOMENT THE TRUE IMBALANCE OF
POWER IS SUDDENLY REVEALED TO HIM.

A secret, Señor? I shall have to spank you. Very
hard.

HE IS NOW SHAKEN BUT HE ATTEMPTS
TO BEHAVE AS IF HE'S SEEN NOTHING,
SO TORN IS HE BETWEEN ANTICIPATION
AND FEAR.

El Gen.: Yes! A naturally gifted child—what luck! The
Bishop was right. I must thank him when I see
him. Oh—Oh!

ROSA: SHE FLICKS THE WHIP ON HIM. You
haven't answered my question, Señor.

El Gen.: Little mother, please don't spank me—

ROSA: You must be punished every time you
misbehave.

El Gen.: Please don't make me pull down my pants—
YEOW!

ROSA: Silence excrement! You're not to say a thing
unless I tell you. SHE BEGINS CIRCLING
HIM. I shall make you bleed yellow liquid. I
shall make you rage and change shape, and
prepare you for the final moment when you and I
become one.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 22

70 years after The Artemis, El Moro at his death bed, his Family
& Death

EL MORO, 93 YEARS OLD, IS ON HIS
DEATH BED. HE HAS LIVED A LONG AND
PROSPEROUS LIFE AND IS SURROUNDED
BY HIS GRIEVING FAMILY. HE HAS
OUTLIVED A WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN
AND WILL BE SURVIVED BY FIVE
CHILDREN, 23 GRANDCHILDREN, 14
GREAT GRANDCHILDREN. HE IS
FONDEST OF THE YOUNGEST
GRANDCHILD, PEPE, NAMED AFTER HIS
CHRISTIAN NAME. THE LIGHTS ARE
VERY LOW SO AS TO LOOK LIKE
CANDLES. THE FAMILY AROUND HIM
ARE MOSTLY IN SHADOWS. HIS
DAUGHTER IS SOFTLY WEEPING.

EL MORO: Where is the lawyer?

LAWYER: Here I am, Tio.

EL MORO: Write this down. Twenty of my finest fighting
bulls are to be sold. Half to the Guatemalans—

LAWYER: Which—?

EL MORO: Los guerrillas. who else? Talk to Carlos del Rio, he'll know how to get the money to them. The other half is to go to Miguel Tomas and Julia Rojas. When they are married.

PASSIONATE DAUGHTER (PD):

But their families forbid them to even see each other, marriage is out of the—He's not of the same class as she, Papa.

EL MORO: Nothing will stop those two. Did you get all that down?

LAWYER: Si, Tio.

EL MORO: Bueno, where is Pepe?

PD: Outside, we didn't want him disturbi—

EL MORO: Bring him in, I'm not dead yet.

THEY BRING PEPE. A BOY OF 8.

EL MORO: Come here, mijito. I want to talk to you. You must listen carefully. Some dedicate their lives to revolution, some to love. They are the true heroes. Because I was horrified by the possibility of self-delusion, I dedicated my life to the adulation of the crowd, to the moment of truth—as they call it. I am a coward—

SON: Papa—a coward! You were the greatest bull fighter the world has ever seen!

EL MORO: Silencio! Manoleto, despenselos. TO PEPE.

Yes, mijito, now you and I share in the secret that your grandfather, El Moro de Seville was a coward. I had to cover up by waving my belly at dangerous but stupid animals. The only time I was not gagging with the bitter taste of fear in my mouth was when I was in the ring. Listen to the words of a dying man.

PEPE: Are you dying, Granabuelo?

EL MORO: Si.

PEPE: Porque?

EL MORO: Porque? Because everything else was a lie, the lies of a man who has nothing.

NEPHEW: But uncle, you are a rich man, you've raised the finest bulls in Cuernavaca, your children are devoted, we grieve at your passing—

EL MORO: Who dares to disagree? Is that you, Manolo? I will cut you out of my will.

MANOLO: No it wasn't me, Uncle.

EL MORO: Who was it?

SILENCE.

EL MORO: Well at least you show some character by sticking together.

PD: You were blessed, papa.

EL MORO: I was obsessed. I was obsessed from the start.
When I was young, too young to be obsessed
over anything I was obsessed to be obsessed.

PD: I never knew you were obsessed, Papa.

EL MORO: How would you know? Do you think it's
something that you bring up at the dinner table
and toast like a new baby or an ocean voyage?

PWR: Every breath you take anticipates the dream wish
come true. Like a prayer you recite it before you
go to sleep at night. Your wishes form your
dreams at night and in the morning, when you
awake and realize nothing has changed, the cycle
of agonizing denial and ecstatic sensations is
renewed.

EL MORO EMITS AN AMUSED GRUNT.

EL MORO: That's only the first stage. Eventually you realize
it for what it is, stupidity and cruelty—the
thalidomide fruit of your own self—hatred.

PEPE: Granabuelo, is it true that one time you killed
eight of the bravest toros in one afternoon, never
once missing. You drove the sword right in to
their hearts—WHOOSH! Every time!

PEPE FOLLOWS THE MOTION OF THE
THRUST FALLING AGAINST HIS
GRANDFATHER.

PWR: Pepe—quidado!

EL MORO: Do not teach him to be afraid! Besides I can't feel that area of my body anymore.

THE ROOM DARKENS.

PD: Aye aye aye!

PEPE: And the horns were so sharp and they came so close to you that they tore your jacket—Tu traje de luces—right off?

EL MORO: So the story goes.

PEPE: POINTING AT THE TROPHIES ON THE WALL. Granabuelo, are those the ears and tale and feet of the toros they gave you that day?

EL MORO: Si, mijito.

PEPE: Will you give them to me when you die?

MANOLO: Pepe!

EL MORO: They are already yours, my son. SHUDDERS. To save myself, I became a business man. I did everything, trying to fill the hole that ate away at me. I cluttered up my life with furniture, cattle, children, as if they would bind me to the world of the living. And I drove your poor grandmother to an early grave with my fears and superstitions.

SON: She was 83, Papa.

EL MORO: La meda hija del diablo. Do you understand what I have told you, mijito?

PEPE: No.

EL MORO: Good for you. Save it. Put it away. Don't disappoint me.

PEPE: I won't disappoint you. I'm going to be like you. I'm going to kill bulls like they have never seen before!

EL MORO: What if they kill you?

PEPE: They never killed you.

EL MORO: Si, pero era mi castigo

PEPE: But why were you punished, Granabuelo?

EL MORO: Because I was a fool and because I wasn't. You have my blessing, be a Matador, mijito. As long as you believe in something that has never been seen, they will call you a visionary. What a coward I've—DIES.

PEPE LOOKS WONDERINGLY AT HIS GRANDFATHERS FACE. HE REACHES UP TO TOUCH HIS CHEEK. LIGHTS FADE. CURTAIN.