Please Enjoy the Following Sample

- This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.
- This sample is for **perusal only** and may not be used for performance purposes.
- You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.
- We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.



For more information about licensing or purchasing a play or musical, please visit our websites

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench-london.co.uk

La Puta Vida Trilogy

by Reinaldo Povod

Original New York Production by
New York Shakespeare Festival
Produced by Joseph Papp

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830
New York Hollywood London Toronto
SAMUELFRENCH.COM

Copyright © 1988 by Reinaldo Povod

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *LA PUTA VIDA TRILOGY* is subject to a licensing fee. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. In its present form the play is dedicated to the reading public only.

The amateur live stage performance rights to *LA PUTA VIDA TRILOGY* are controlled exclusively by Samuel French, Inc., and licensing arrangements and performance licenses must be secured well in advance of presentation. PLEASE NOTE that amateur licensing fees are set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. When applying for a licensing fee quotation and license please give us the number of performances intended, dates of production, your seating capacity and admission fee. licensing fees are payable one week before the opening performance of the play to Samuel French, Inc., at 45 W. 25th Street, New York, NY 10010.

licensing fees of the required amount must be paid whether the play is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged.

Stock licensing fees quoted upon application to Samuel French, Inc.

For all other rights than those stipulated above, apply to: William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, 1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019.

Particular emphasis is laid on the question of amateur or professional readings, permission and terms for which must be secured in writing from Samuel French, Inc.

Copying from this book in whole or in part is strictly forbidden by law, and the right of performance is not transferable.

Whenever the play is produced the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc."

Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play.

No one shall commit or authorize any act or omission by which the copyright of, or the right to copyright, this play may be impaired.
No one shall make any changes in this play for the purpose of production.
Publication of this play does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised in their own interests to apply to Samuel French, Inc., for written permission before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre.
No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

ISBN 978-0-573-66204-1 Printed in U.S.A. **#14673**

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of LA PUTA VIDA *must* give credit to the Author of the Play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production. The name of the Author *must* also appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type.

IN ADDITION, the following *must* be included in all programs:

Original New York Production by
New York Shakespeare Festival.
Produced by Joseph Papp.

The Public/LuEsther Hall

A New York Shakespeare Festival Production

JOSEPH PAPP

presents

LA PUTA VIDA TRILOGY

THIS BITCH OF A LIFE

by

REINALDO POVOD

Directed by
BILL HART

with

RAFAEL BAEZ
MICHAEL CARMINE
MIGUEL CORREA
ROSANA DeSOTO
MICHAEL GUESS
JOHN LEGUIZAMO
JOHN TURTURRO

Scenery by
DONALD EASTMAN

Costumes by
GABRIEL BERRY

Lighting by
ANNE MILITELLO

Sound Designer/Composer
DANIEL MOSES SCHREIER

Casting by
ROSEMARIE TICHLER/NANCY PICCIONE

Associate Producer
JASON STEVEN COHEN

Prologue

Papo ..... MICHAEL CARMINE

South of Tomorrow

Time: Fall, 1978

Lookout ..... RAFAEL BAEZ
Alley Boy ..... JOHN LEGUIZAMO
Randy ..... MICHAEL GUESS

Nijinsky Choked His Chicken

Time: Summertime

Raisin ..... MIGUEL CORREA
Chino ..... JOHN TURTURRO

Poppa Dio!

Scene I: Autumn

Scene II: A few hours earlier

Angelo ..... JOHN TURTURRO
Mafia ..... ROSANA DeSOTO

Epilogue

Papo ..... MICHAEL CARMINE

THERE WILL BE TWO TEN-MINUTE INTERMISSIONS.

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement for the appearance is made at the time of the performance.

For Michael Carmine and John Leguizamo—Rafael Baez;
for Miguel Correa—Rahshan Orange.

THE PROLOGUE

SCENE: The LIGHTS RISE on the stage to reveal the playing area littered with empty cans of "Goya Beans," empty milk cartons, bottles of "Miller Beer," "El Diario." Newspaper is scattered about. Empty food stamp booklets lie where they have been thrown in disappointment.

AT RISE: The sounds of a BABY CRYING are heard faintly, and the VOICES of a man and a woman are heard loudly arguing in Spanish. A BUS PASSING by is heard. A MAN HAWKS: "Ups, downs, loose joints." A police SIREN is heard. CHILDREN LAUGHING. All come together and build to a climax.

Silence.

A large empty glass candle will roll down the center of the stage. A YOUNG MAN will enter right behind it. HE has a cane and walks with a limp. He is lean and very handsome. Although he is in his mid- to late-twenties, his greatest charm is his boyishness. HE stares at the audience. He is dressed in dirty jeans, motorcycle boots, and wears a sleeveless denim jacket with a white fox collar over an ankle-length leather jacket. He has a nicely trimmed van-dyke on his face, and long shoulder-length hair.

PAPO. *(Touches his leg.)* Gun shot wound. A .22 went

clean through. Thank God. How'd I get it? How did I get shot? On the subway. I was takin' this guy off in the subway — cowboying 'im — when I went for my piece. Bang! I shot myself. Pulling it out, you know? No big deal. It be's that way sometimes. As we take-off artists say. Life ain't that important to me. What is important is how it's affecting my mother. What I gotta do for me and her to survive this Puta life. It hit me when I got shot. She gotta heart condition and I can't let my Puta life do her in. She's all I got. And I'm all she's got. And the saddest sight in the world is a man without a mother. And worst, you know, a mother without a son. Think about it. That's hard, man, a mother who's no longer a mother — she's no longer called a mother. 'Cause her kid don't exist — ain't there for her — 'cept in her heart. She's jus' a broad, nothin', that's all. My mother is in the hospital now — gotta fifty-fifty chance. An' it's all because of this "Puta Vida." I been with her 26 years — never missed a day not being with her. And it never crossed my mind she not being with me. Until the day I got outta the hospital. Instead of going home to her — I spent ten hours in a shootin' gallery. Ten hours shootin' coke. Ten fuckin' hours. It was exactly six in the morning when I got outta the shootin' gallery. Something was sayin' to me, go home, man, hurry up, go home. My arm was swollen from hittin' myself all night. —An' every time I leaned on the cane it hurt. I tried to walk as fast as I could. My heart beating against my ribcage — from all the coke I shot up and from fear. She's dead. I know. Yer gonna find her dead. I am—. Hurry up, man. She's dead in the house — alone. All by herself. Where were you? I know. She was

yours. Nobody else's. She belonged only to you. Where were you? I know. In a shootin' gallery. Yeah. I was in a shootin' gallery and she was alone, dying. We both were. I opened my door. Cold. It was cold inside. I hate when she sleeps on the sofa. I hate it, man. I don't like you sleepin' on the sofa. That thin sheet — I hate that even more — that thin white sheet all us poor ass Spanish people use to cover ourselves in the winter time. I saw her deformed feet — pale with cold — and I wanted to cover them with the white sheet. But I hate that white sheet! I looked at her. Her thick snow white hair — I wanted to touch it, smell it. Kiss her head. Ohh, man. I really did. But I never touched my mother in that way. I'd kill myself for her, but I can't, you know, touch her — that way. That's me. I want to — I want to hold her in my arms — I know a lot of sons do that — I dunno — I can't! I looked at her — down at her chest — she's old— It hurts me to see her breasts sag — weak. I seen pictures of her when she was younger, man, those things were hard and strong — I know God licked his chops everytime my mother touched her breast in praise of his name. I put my face right up to hers to see — I didn't want to. I wish I didn't have to — 'cause if she suddenly woke up and caught me worried — she'd make a big deal outta it 'an embarrass me. I know she'd feel good, seeing me caring, you know? But I'm the man. You know? The man of the house — gotta be strong. She was hardly breathing, man, my eyes swelled up — I couldn't breathe — All of a sudden I wanted to lay down next to her — Like maybe if I held on to her — I'd be able to go with her — She'd take me with her. I ran to Cuca next

door — told her to call the ambulance. *(Long pause.)* She's in intensive care now. And I know she's gonna die. That's why I'm here. I know tonight, she's gonna die. In a few hours I'm gonna be motherless. And I'm gonna be angry. Hateful, angry. *(Long pause.)* In school, a teacher once asked me, "Raphael, why are you so full of hate? You're a hateful shild — you mustn't be that way." *(Long pause.)* I'm here... 'Cause if... When my mother dies — I'm gonna kill someone. I'm gonna use this cane to beat the anger outta me. I know. But I don't care. I gonna kill someone in a few hours. Has anyone here ever sat down with a Latino? A Latino like myself — and listened to him? *(Slowly, for effect.)* Listen to 'im... Because he has something to say. Lissen to 'im— Not — because he needs guidance, or assistance from you, you know, for food stamps, welfare, brother can you spare a dime. Lissen to 'im— Not — because you wanna hear him tell why he stabbed that one-hundred-and-ten-year-old woman in Soho. Forty times. Lissen to 'im— Not — because you hate Spiks, you hate and identify everything that is wrong, from pushing in the subways to child molestation with him. Lissen to 'im, because he is a man. And men do these things. And are gonna keep on doin' these things! Look at me. Look me up and down. I feel proud. I wouldn't be askin' you to check me out if I didn't feel proud. Dangerous. O.K., that's enough. I wanna give you all something. *(Takes a knife out.)* Awright, nobody move. Gimme all yer money! *(Pause.)* This is not what I wann give you. *(As he folds knife and puts it back in his pocket.)* I didn't want to let those of you out there who were expectin' something like this from me — I didn't wanna let

yous down. *(Long pause.)* I don't know anymore. It makes me angry sometimes. Stereotypes. Us. And other times it makes me proud. Yeah, we're bad. We're surviving the ghettos. Not many can. Like the Warsaw Ghetto... I dunno, man. I know my mother dies — I know what I'm gonna do. I awready told you what. I don't care. And if she don't die — that's why I wrote this Trilogy. "La Puta Vida." I wanna put my "Puta Vida" up on stage. Step back and see this Puta world my mother and me live in from where yer sittin'. *(Long pause.)* What yer gonna see here are three one-act plays. It's more for me than for you people. You can go home afterwards. I can't. I have to stop. Stoppit all. I don't wanna hurt no one. I don't wanna hurt none of yous out there. I know. I'm gonna. If I don't stop. I'm gonna hurt myself too. If I don't put a stop to it. Please bear with me. Somehow. I feel, you know, this is selfish — what I'm doing here. But I need help. Stay here with me, O.K.? For a little while. At the end of the play you tell me what I'm suppose to do. *(Long pause.)* And if my mother dies? Run! 'Cause I swear to God, man. I'm gonna kill somebody. I don't care who. I dunno who? Maybe a mother, maybe a son... Like me... Help me, please. Or, please stop me. My thing ain't hurtin' people. *(HE slowly turns and walks away. The LIGHTS on stage will slowly dim out.)* But I don't want my mother to die. *(He sobs loudly.)* Oh, God. Don't let it. *(Sobs.)* No don't. *(Sobs.)*

SOUTH OF TOMORROW

CHARACTERS

RANDY: *A black man in his mid-thirties. A Vietnam War veteran. Wears a patch over his eye.*

ALLEY BOY: *A 17-year-old. Hispanic.*

OFF-STAGE: *A young raspy voice. Rough, from years of heroin abuse.*

SCENE: A shooting gallery. A bare stage except for a plastic milk container filled with water, and a tin can of coffee filled with one hyperdermic syringe. And also a small coffee mug. Darkness.

TIME: Fall of 1978.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Redlight. Don't go in. Redlight. Cops coming down the block. La Jara, man, keep walkin'. Move, bro. No, nah, man, don't stand there. MOVE! YO?? YOU? Yeah!!

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* Sorry.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Let the cops go by. Yeah. *(Long silence.)* Get in, c'mon, hurry up. Let's go! You slow bro.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* Sorry.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Git yer money out.

RANDY. *(Off.)* How much to git off?

OFF-STAGE VOICE. You got works?

RANDY. *(Off.)* I gotta "cooker."

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Three dollars. How 'bout you, bro?

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* ... Sorry.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. *(Upset.)* Sorry for what, bro?

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* Excuse me?

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Yo, man. Take a walk.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* I'm sorry.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Stupid guy like you — I can get busted for a stupid ass like you.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* I'm sorry.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Gimme three dollars. *(Annoyed.)* Gimme, c'mon, bro. What the fuck is this?

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* Three dollars.

RANDY. Man, can I go in? I awready paid you.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Yeah.

(RANDY enters the stage.)

OFF-STAGE VOICE. This is a five, bro, I only take singles.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* I'm sorry.

RANDY. Hey, mah man, there ain't no lights in here.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Light a match — there's candles.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* I'm sorry, I didn't know — here's the three dollars.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. See it? *(RANDY lights a match.)*

RANDY. Yeah. *(Proceeds to light the candles on stage.)*

OFF-STAGE VOICE. You in't coming in next time.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* I'm sorry. Here. One. Two, three

dollars. I didn't know.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Everybody knows — it's three dollars to git off in a shootin' gallery — you jus' slow, bro.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* Sorry.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. In there.

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* In here?

OFF-STAGE VOICE. You deaf?

ALLEY BOY. *(Off.)* Sorry?

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Git the fuck in there.

(TEDDY enters the stage.)

ALLEY BOY. Ah, excuse me — but you still have my five dollars.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. You didn't gimme no five dollars.

ALLEY BOY. Yes I did. I gave you a five dollar bill.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. I ain't got it.

ALLEY BOY. Yes you do.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Motherfucker, I said, I ain't got it. *(Shoves Alley Boy violently back onto the main playing area.)* Yo, man, don't come out till I say Green Light.

RANDY. Awright, man.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Green Light.

ALLEY BOY. Green Light?

RANDY. Yeah, Green Light.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Red Light—

ALLEY BOY. I thought you said — Green Light?

RANDY. Let 'im talk.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Hey, stupid.

ALLEY BOY. Yes, I'm sorry. I'm sorry to interrupt.

RANDY. This guy - is gonna get us busted.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. You get me busted, bro, I'm gonna stab you.

ALLEY BOY. I'm sorry.

RANDY. Shut up, man. You a sorry dude - Shut up.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Green Light - you come out. Red Light, you stay inside.

RANDY. I gotchu, brother man.

ALLEY BOY. Yes, thank you.

RANDY. Don't thank 'im, man.

ALLEY BOY. Yes, you're right. We're the victims.

RANDY. Huh?

ALLEY BOY. Nothing. *(pause)* Boy, it's the ante chamber to hell.

RANDY. What?

ALLEY BOY. It's the ante chamber to hell.

RANDY. Yeah. This place is South Of - Tomorrow.

ALLEY BOY. South of Tomorrow.

RANDY. Yeah. Like you said, "It's the ante chamber to hell."

ALLEY BOY. South of Tomorrow - I like that. *(RANDY takes one of the candles to look at the tin can of coffee to see how many hypodermics there are. seeing only one, HE becomes upset. Extremely angry.)*

RANDY. Ahh, shit, this can't be happening. No, man, nothin's right. Again?! God. Again from Poo nang - *(Slaps his thighs.)* All over, all over, all over. *(HE stops.)* It's foo nang all over again.

ALLEY BOY. Foo nang.

RANDY. Foo nang. Poo nang - It's Poo nang, all over again!

ALLEY BOY. That one I know 'cause you said it.

RANDY. Yeah, it's Foo Man Chu.

ALLEY BOY. *(To himself.)* Foo Man Chu, I know that name. Christopher Lee, right?

RANDY. *(Walking around, to himself.)* Poo nang, to Foo nang, to Foo Man Chu nang, to shit man!

ALLEY BOY. Shit man?

RANDY. To Danang.

ALLEY BOY. Ohh, shit, man, I got you...Vietnam!

RANDY. *(Long pause - to himself.)* That must be why these brothers out here tattoo on their arms - "Mi Vida Loca." Ain't no other way but to accept this shit and understand it a crazy life.

ALLEY BOY. What's wrong?

RANDY. I don't.

ALLEY BOY. What?

RANDY. I been singled out, B.

ALLEY BOY. I believe you.

RANDY. I have - man.

ALLEY BOY. Do you know for what?

RANDY. *(angry)* For what? For what? Use yer eyes - For what??

ALLEY BOY. Yes.

RANDY. Look.

ALLEY BOY. For what?

RANDY. We only got one set of works - only gimmicks.

ALLEY BOY. Be my guest. It's not a big deal.

RANDY. To me it is. *(RANDY prepares his shot of dope. Taps out the contents from his dime bag into his cooker. [Bottle Cap] Applies water. Heats. Withdraws the solution into the syringe. But*

now and then HE stops to talk to ALLEY BOY.) I got a bitch of a habit.

ALLEY BOY. I don't have a habit.

RANDY. You don't know how lucky you are. You bless.

ALLEY BOY. I only got what they call - I think - a chippy?

RANDY. Lemme tell 'ya blood...Lemme hold 'ya hand. Gimme yer hand for a second. *(ALLEY BOY does.)* Yeah. I knew it. It's warm and real. *(Releases his hand.)* You know what happened to me today? You know what they say about a nigguh? Yeah, I'm a nigguh. Today I'm a nigguh - today - anybody who goes into a shootin' gallery is a nigguh - On other days - I am a "Negril" but today I'm a dumb ass nigguh - You dig what I'm saying? I'm saying - everybody says - a nigguh's cock - make a fist - like that. Yeah. Everybody says - That's the head of a nigguh's cock. Whadda you say?

ALLEY BOY. I say I envy you.

RANDY. It's true - It's true what they say we got b'tween our legs.

ALLEY BOY. I believe you.

RANDY. You didn't know?

ALLEY BOY. No.

RANDY. You never saw one?

ALLEY BOY. Sorry.

RANDY. I won't show you mine.

ALLEY BOY. Thanks.

RANDY. But it's like that. *(Shows ALLEY BOY his fist.)*

ALLEY BOY. Yeah, you showed me.

RANDY. No. You missin' it. *(Shows ALLEY BOY his fist.)*

It's clenched full of pride. That's what these motherfuckers out here always leave out when they talk about a nigguh's cock. Pride.

ALLEY BOY. I always thought it was like a pepperoni stick. Italians are proud too. It's almost the same thing.

RANDY. *(Ties his arm with a belt.)* Today. I walked into a temp agency. Lookin' for work. This nigguh here, this proud Negril - said - Good morning. I wanna work. Please. Excuse me. Good morning. I wanna work - I say again to the receptionist. Please. She ignores me. Excuse me. I wanna work, please...Excuse me. Finally - she acknowledges this potentially but hard earned dangerous stare of mine. You know? She lowers her eyes the way she suppose to. "What have you been doing with yerself?" What have I been doing with myself? Man, I told this over-estimated bitch! "I want a job!" "But what experience do you have?" *(angry)* I spent two fucking years in the bush - two Jesus fucking Christ years, lady, in the bush. *(soft)* Now, ma'am, don't you think I can clean toilets? I heard her say when I tip'ed - "That guy got a problem." Me? I been out here on these streets, brother man, a long time - been here on this grinnin' face planet - feel like longer than mankind, yeah. But I never, man, never been humiliated like I was in that office. Out here on these streets, man - I been physically abuse, been verbally abuse - but never been degraded. *(Shoot up his heroin. Long silence.)* Here. *(Give ALLEY BOY the hypodermic.)* Clean 'im - clean 'im good before you use them. This 3-star dope - is bullshit. It settled my stomach - but it didn't get me high. Ain't that some shit.

ALLEY BOY. ...Can I see your eye?

RANDY. What did you say? Did you say - you wanna see my eye?

ALLEY BOY. Yes.

RANDY. *(laughs)* Holy shit. Am I suppose to be impressed, or something?

ALLEY BOY. No, of course not.

RANDY. You wanna surprise me with yer skinny ass se'f?

ALLEY BOY. No, I don't.

RANDY. Whachu think you lookin' at?

ALLEY BOY. ...I'm lookin' at you.

RANDY. Right. *(shouts)* Yo? I'm comin' out!

ALLEY BOY. Don't go.

OFF-STAGE VOICE. Red Light - stay inside.

RANDY. You lookin' at my eye, fool.

ALLEY BOY. I know.

RANDY. It's the eye I ain't got you wanna check out.

ALLEY BOY. Yes - if you don't mind.

RANDY. What s'matter? - This here one eye bores the shit outta yer tight ass self?

ALLEY BOY. No.

RANDY. You wanna freak out on the one - got pop'd outta my head - and buried in the ground - like a dog burying his bone.

ALLEY BOY. No.

RANDY. No. Shut the fuck up with them no's. That all you can say?

ALLEY BOY. *(pause)* No.

RANDY. No.

ALLEY BOY. I'm sorry.

Hungry for More?

This is a Sample of the Script

Buy the **full script** and explore other titles

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench-london.co.uk



[Breaking Character]
An Online Resource for Theatre Makers

Follow Us On twitter

Find us on Facebook

Titles are subject to availability depending on your territory.