

Water & Power

by Richard Montoya

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



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WATER & POWER

By Richard Montoya for Culture Clash

The 2006 Ted Schmitt Award for the world premiere of an outstanding new play was awarded by the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle to Richard Montoya for Culture Clash for ***WATER & POWER***.

WATER & POWER premiered on July 27, 2006 at the Center Theatre Group's Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, California; Michael Ritchie, Artistic Director; Charles Dillingham, Managing Director; Gordon Davidson, Founding Artistic Director. The production was directed by Lisa Peterson with the following cast and creative team:

NORTE/SUR Ric Salinas
WATER (GILBERT GARCIA) Richard Montoya
POWER (GABRIEL GARCIA) Herbert Siguenza
ASUNCIÓN GARCIA Winston J. Rocha
DEER DANCER, GIBBY, GABBY Moises Arias
MINISTRO, VENDOR Emilio Rivera
THE FIXER Dakin Matthews

Set Design: Rachel Hauck
Costume Design: Christopher Acebo
Lighting Design: Alexander V. Nichols
Music And Sound Design: Paul James Prendergast
Dramaturg: John Glore
Fight Director: Steve Rankin
Choreographer: Jennifer Sanchez
Casting: Erika Sellin, CSA
Associate Producer: Kelley Kirkpatrick
Production Stage Manager: James T. Mcdermott
Stage Manager: Susie Walsh
Stagehands: IATSE Local 33

CHARACTERS

NORTE/SUR

WATER (GILBERT GARCIA)

POWER (GABRIEL GARCIA)

ASUNCIÓN GARCIA

DEER DANCER, GIBBY, GABBY

MINISTRO, VENDOR

THE FIXER

TIME

Before

PLACE

L.A.

For Mr. August Wilson and T Bird

El agua que no has de beber,
Dejala a correr.

The Water that you will not drink,
Let it run.

–Mexican saying

Danger: High Voltage Power lines underground.

–The DWP

*There is a street in East LA, a street that separates the City from the County, The Cops from the Sheriffs. Garfield High from Roosevelt High,
And there were two little boys who danced beautifully between those two worlds, under the watchful eye of a father, where a Mother needed to be in their fateful hour...*

Water and Power.

(No pre-show music.)

(House slowly lights down.)

(A single drop of water becomes thunder & rain.)

*(A rock song, something like Led Zeppelin's "The Rain Song" is heard. *)*

(A shaft of bright light to cut a sharp contrast across the stage.)

(A figure comes through the door.)

(It is NORTE/SUR. Wheelchair bound, NORTE/SUR is a Homeboy, a Vato from the street, a Veterano. He slowly wheels himself center stage then makes a large, ceremonial circle with his chair. He is deliberate, methodical, he rushes for nobody or anything.)

(In a door or pathway The DEER DANCER is revealed standing upstage right or left in the shaft of light.)

(He is a boy, shirtless, in white peasant pants, shakers around his ankles, he holds a shaker and wears antlers atop his head. He does not move except for an occasional flick of the wrist, this allows us to hear his shakers.)

*See Music Use Note on page three

(NORTE/SUR stops slightly up-center position, facing out. He reaches into the side bag of his chair, removing a black Piece Book – an art and poetry sketch book favored by graffiti artists – he opens the Piece Book – then slowly and respectfully closes it. He speaks to the audience.)

NORTE/SUR. It's been raining for seventeen days and nights in LA.

Raining real hard. Could be that the Gods are pissed off about something. Yup, the Lords of Death are back in town. For sure. You have to be extra *trucha* with the Lords of Death, for they will cut you up just to see what you're made of inside, and you will thank them because they are charming. They can hide behind a badge or sit in the back seat with a shotgun. They wear pinstripes and broken promises. They can make trains jump the track, they know when its supper time at your *jefitas* house. The Lords of Death can look at you from the other side of the mirror and you would never know. The Lords of Death like to punish us when we reach too high. What goes up must come down. Day/night. Good/evil. Life and death.

Smile now, cry later. 18 with a bullet. North. South. *Norte/Sur.*

Water and Power, torn together in that space between the Thunder and the Lightning where so much can happen, or nothing at all. Somebody prays for rain, somebody prays for it to stop. Record rainfall could wash LA away. I think the Lords of Death are fucking with us right now.

They like to throw us in the Dark House.

*(Thunder and **DEER DANCER** darts off.)*

Oddly enough, I'm looking for a Dark House right now. A place called the Motel Paradise, yup, you know it, you've driven passed it a hundred times, its one of those single story, sad affairs that snake up and down the eastside of anywhere, the eastern edge of Sunset Boulevard.

That's the part of the *boulee* that you never wanna find yourself, on a dark and rainy night.

(Big thunder, or a shotgun blast. They sound the same on nights like this.)

(Another rock song, something powerful like Led Zeppelin's "When the Levee Breaks" slams in like a hammer.)*

(NORTE/SUR quickly pulls his hoodie over his head and dashes off.)

(huge thunder)

*See Music Use Note on page three

Scene One

(Motel Paradise is revealed: a sad room complete with twin Patrick Nigel prints bolted to the wall, they have stood witness to years of unprotected sex.)

(One man forces his way into the room. There is an altercation.)

(fight)

(Two men struggle, there are weapons as one man forces the other on a bed. Freeze. The men are face to face. One man points his LAPD revolver to the other.)

WATER. Hi.

(beat)

(They embrace, then a powerful push away. These are the Brothers Gilbert and Gabriel Garcia, also know as WATER and POWER.)

POWER. You – need – to – get – the – fuck – out-of – here, NOW!

WATER. Why are you hiding in this shit hole?

POWER. Don't ask.

(WATER sees a AK47 and a Mack 10 on bed and dresser.)

WATER. Oh Jesus, shit, why do you have so many God-damned guns?

POWER. Who made you Mr. Consent Decree?

WATER. Have you been drinking again?

POWER. Get the fuck out of here senator. The shit is about to hit the fan.

WATER. What sort of trouble are you in?

POWER. Big.

WATER. How big?

POWER. There's been a breakdown.

WATER. What kind of breakdown?

POWER. Just a breakdown. That's all I can tell you.

WATER. Call for back up.

POWER. I *am* back up.

WATER. Great.

POWER. How did you know I was here?

WATER. You called me asshole.

POWER. The fuck I did.

WATER. I have a text message right here, Motel Paradise,
see Power, room 13.

POWER. It wasn't me. I don't text.

(POWER slams a magazine into his AK47 for punctuation.)

POWER. It's gay.

WATER. Stop fucking around. I'm here already. What's up?

POWER. I'm in deep water.

WATER. How deep?

POWER. Over my head deep.

WATER. Yeah?

POWER. It's bad.

(A Blackberry phone rings. POWER draws his gun. WATER carefully points to his coat pocket as an explanation:)

WATER. My Blackberry. Easy.

(He looks at the call.)

WATER. I gotta get this. Sober up, fucko.

(WATER answers.)

WATER. Mister Speaker! Hey, no, perfect timing sir.
Couldn't be better. What do you mean what's in the
Green Bill? Have you read my fucking Green Bill?

(POWER is lining up blow on the dresser.)

WATER. It doesn't "pole well"? Were you not a radical
hunger striker at Berkeley pal? Let me tell you some-
thing, from one humble public servant to another,
this piece of fine legislation has real support, it's got
coalition building all over it. I've got the teachers, the
nurses, the Gay Latino Firefighters in fact I'm talking
to the Police Union right now.

*(POWER does a blast of cocaine sounding like a small
steam engine.)*

WATER. We're at Starbucks, more steam please.

C'mon BOB, co sign this thing with me, the leadership always follows you and I swear to God we'll have green space – a million fucking trees – on 40 acres of LA River on the Eastside. The Cesar Chavez River Walk Way.

As unlikely as a Cornfield in Chinatown.

How about less asthma for eastside third graders, huh? Why should kids west of the 405 get to breathe better air? Because you owe me fucker! Gotta go Bob. Late.

(WATER hangs up as POWER does another huge blast of the blow.)

WATER. What the hell are you doing you Hoover vacuum cleaner fuck?

POWER. Want a bump?

(POWER is back at the yayo pile.)

POWER. C'mon, do a bump with your bro.

WATER. I can't do blow with you.

POWER. Since when?

WATER. I'm running an important campaign at the moment fuck-stick.

POWER. You still boning your campaign manager?

(WATER finds meds and an asthma inhaler on a bedside nightstand.)

WATER. *(reading label)* Oxicontin.

(WATER puts the bottle in his jacket. He picks up an asthma inhaler.)

WATER. Sweet. Your inhaler is empty.

(WATER picks up a triple beam scale used to measure drugs and precious gems. He reads a sticker on the scale:)

WATER. Oh Jesus, "Do not remove from Rampart Evidence Room."

(He discards it like a hot potato and wipes his prints off it.)

POWER. It's okay, as long as you bring it back. It's like Netflix down there.

(WATER picks up a big black binder.)

WATER. LAPD Murder Book?

(WATER looks through the book.)

WATER. Who are all the dead guys?

(POWER does a short blast.)

POWER. Monsters. I chase monsters, bro. And if I have become a monster, then maybe that makes me a better monster catcher.

(WATER tosses the book back on the bed.)

POWER. You guys said "more cops on the street," that's what it looks like.

WATER. That was a campaign speech, asshole.

POWER. That's the problem with you guys, you don't mean what you say.

WATER. I stand by every word.

POWER. Did you not say "get drugs off the street?"

WATER. Absolutely.

(POWER smiles and does another blast.)

POWER. Well, I'm just doing my part, bro.

(WATER lunges for the top of the dresser shoving the coke to the floor.)

POWER. Hey! What the hell. Oh man. That was the last of my shit.

WATER. Good.

(POWER picks up his stuff.)

POWER. I haven't seen you in months, and now you come crashing my party? Fuck that, Gilbert.

WATER. I was gonna call, Gabe. Everything's been non stop, 24/7.

POWER. Everything is everything. Everything is everything.

POWER. I saw my daughter today.

WATER. Yeah?

POWER. God, her mom's a cunt. There's this picture of them on the fire place that *I* built. The new guy standing right there, holding my daughter man, like she was his. A few years ago that was me, you know. I was photo shopped right out of the fucking picture. Invisible. And the day started with so much promise.

WATER. (*relieved*) Is that what this is all about bro?

(**WATER** places a brotherly hand on **POWER**'s shoulder.
Blackberry chirp.)

POWER. Gonna answer your *crackberry*?

(*Blackberry rings.*)

WATER. Fu'uck. (*He answers.*) Bob? What do you mean you've got to ask Gloria first? Molina? No, LA County's fine with this. She'll be unhappy with me? She's from Pico Rivera, have you ever met a happy person from Pico fucking Rivera?

(**POWER** is rifling through an old tool chest that reads
D.W.P. on it.)

WATER. East LA Machine politics babe, it still works. Old Man Roybal built it I just gotta live *in* it. Yes that is true, I'm getting very close to governor so I can't let this thing get derailed by the slightest or it's dead in the arroyo, I'll be floating face up in the Fernando Valenzuela Wash with my Tongva ancestors.

Do this for me and I'll get you T time at Pebble Beach for the Crippled

Chicano Children golf tourney! You can be the Great White Hope, all hero and shit.

Hey, hey, no need for name calling Bob, listen, I've been a Chicano since 1993, (**POWER** *re-enters from the john wearing sunglasses and LAPD jacket*)

What do you say pal? Uh, huh. Yes. Oh thank you assembly member. You are a rock star. Bless you for your support, sir. Green Space, it's so important man. One Million Trees in East LA! Thank you my Jewish brother. You just did one hell of a Mitzvah pal. Thank you dude! Mazeltov!

(WATER hangs up his cell phone.)

Oh yeah. That's how laws are made. Your brother is a stud, a proud progressive but still a stud.

(POWER slams down his nightstick down on the dresser.)

WATER. Whoa!

POWER. Fuckers lose respect for the badge, gotta go about things in a different fashion know what I mean bro?

WATER. What?

POWER. People see a cop...sometimes they isolate you. You find yourself all alone, out there, sometimes you got no choice but to bust a few bald *cholo* heads.

(POWER slams the nightstick again.)

WATER. Was that the "to protect" or "to serve" part of your job? Jesus.

(Another swift move with the baton and we know its deadly force.)

POWER. I wanted to be a cop for all of Los Angeles, but they wouldn't let me bro.

WATER. Who wouldn't let you?

POWER. Everybody on the other side of that door.

(POWER does a long shot at Cuervo from the handle bottle.)

WATER. This shit is making you paranoid and toxic.

POWER. Me toxic?

WATER. Uh, huh.

POWER. You would know. Weren't toxic land deals with minority developers your main boogie before you got on the green gravy train?

WATER. Fuck you softly...

POWER. Just making *abondigas* man, don't be such a pussy.

(POWER places a hand on WATER's shoulder, it almost comforts WATER.)

POWER. Relax homey.

(POWER runs his hand down the back of his brother's shoulder tenderly.)

POWER. You wearing a wire? Huh? You wearing a wire little fucker?

(POWER was serious. WATER squirms away.)

POWER. *(cracking himself up)* Always wanted to say that. "You wearing a wire?"

WATER. Let's get the hell out of this shit hole right now, grab a cup of coffee. Sober up. Just you and me, like we used to.

POWER. Can't do.

WATER. Can do. I know a coupl'a detectives, Robbery Homicide guys, I'll make the call right now.

POWER. RHD? Hell no. You make that call my SWAT brothers are here inside three minutes, Tactical in four, Mental Assessment Response Team in five. Forensics before the sun comes up. They'll come like a hard rain for their own.

(WATER's Blackerry chirps: duty calls.)

WATER. Speak. Dude, I can't get away. Cover my ass on the "Green Space Bill" for one hour, be my laser. Buy me some time, you are my bulldog assistant, do it, possess the skill set I taught you or I will send you back to you back to Id-a-fucking-ho where you came from. Go.

(WATER hangs up and sees that POWER has slumped into an emotional state and clutches his chest.)

WATER. Hey, hey now, what's going on over here...

POWER. My heart. Feel.

(POWER places WATER's hand on his heart.)

WATER. Racing.

POWER. I know, huh.

(WATER is taken aback for a moment when he sees something:)

WATER. You got some blood on your badge bro, let me hit that for you.

POWER. Shaving. Must have cut myself a little too close to the bone.

(**WATER** cleans the blood with his kerchief.)

WATER. Yeah. Good to go.

POWER. Good to go. Who ah!

(**POWER** playfully punches **WATER** in the gut. **WATER** tries to calm him.)

WATER. Easy now. Gabe sit down. Hey, do you remember, remember that time Dad told us to beat the crap outta each other?

POWER. When did he say that?

WATER. That time he made us box in front of his *compadres*.

POWER. Oh *yeah* that time. That was brutal man.

WATER. Nah, we got a little bloodied that's all.

POWER. I got bloodied Bro.

(**POWER** sits across from the bed on a hotel chair.)

WATER. I was bigger than you then Gabe.

POWER. Once upon a time.

WATER. On those Eastside streets babe.

POWER. I could always dance though, bro. Dad learned me to bob and weave real good. That was the difference. Then I could go toe to toe with you.

WATER. You did beat the shit out of me that time we fought in the Secret Circle.

(We hear children playing in the distance.)

(A slow smile crosses **POWER**'s face. **WATER** coaxes **POWER**'s grin.)

WATER. You remember that bro? It's a fond memory for you isn't it. Let me see that smile. What's up *carnal*? What sort of trouble are you in lieutenant?

(**WATER** places a tender kiss on his brother's cleanly shaven head.)

WATER. There you go, Gilbert and Gabriel. Gibby and Gabby. The Twins. Together again. Remember those guys, bro?

POWER. Water & Power baby.

WATER. Estrada Courts to the max.

POWER. Barrio Nuevo.

WATER. Where ever we went.

POWER. Who *ever* we met.

WATER. The Russian's on Lorena Street. Bologna sandwiches from *Angel's Market*. *Spam* when we were *good*.

POWER. We're a long way from Costello Park, bro.

WATER. Dacotah Street is just down the road.

POWER. Seems far, like way down there.

(pointing off then a deep breath)

POWER. Woosh. Weird.

WATER. Easy.

(A sudden energy surge from POWER as he rises from his chair.)

POWER. Montebello Nights!

WATER. With our Beatle Boots? You thought you were a Jetter man.

POWER. *Chale* homes, I was a Phantom.

WATER. I thought you were in the Magic Club?

POWER. No, from the heart of the ghetto and shit home-boy.

(That gets a chuckle from WATER.)

POWER. Water and Power strutting to the Friday night football games. Shit, even the brothers from 103rd Street respected us.

WATER. That's because we *respected* the brothers from Watts.

POWER. I heard that niggah!

WATER. N. Shhh...

POWER. Little Hazzard, Happy Valley, *Maravilla*, we went everywhere, homes.

(WATER sits back in the chair and shines his shoes.)

WATER. Actually, we never went to *Maravilla*, it was too dangerous.

(We hear distant popping. POWER crouches like a soldier.)

POWER. (*whisper*) Hear that bro?

WATER. What?

POWER. Firing range at the academy, right on time.

WATER. Maybe it's some *cholo's* down the street.

POWER. No. Above the lodge, Elysian Park.

WATER. How can you be certain.

POWER. Short blasts. Rata tat tat shit. Impatient cop action.
Strictly 9 millimeter.

(**POWER** *climbs on a hotel chair, draws his weapon and strikes his expert firing pose.*)

WATER. Easy. Easy.

(*We hear a distant train whistle.*)

POWER. Union Station, right on time too.

(**POWER** *checks his watch. We hear Ranchero music from a distant nightclub.*)

WATER. You had to pick the loneliest mile on Sunset boulevard.

POWER. It ain't so bad.

WATER. The Life of Riley over here.

(*Far upstage of the action, a MAN slowly across the stage, with large water bottles*)

POWER. Listen!

(*We hear far off* **CHOIR VOICES:**)

CHOIR VOICES. ...*agua que va El Senor Jesus Cristo...*

POWER. The Mexican Evangelical storefronts.

(**WATER** *hears this.*)

POWER. Damn, the city is working tonight.

WATER. Just like Dad used to say bro.

(*From offstage we hear the stern yet loving voice of:*)

FATHER. (*offstage*) Boys! C'mon.

(*Dad's familiar whistle.*)

WATER. Breath brother. Breathe.

(**POWER** *takes a deep breath and doubles over.*)

WATER. Good.

FATHER. (*offstage*) Let's go boys.

(POWER crumples as WATER helps him down from the chair.)

WATER. You gotta calm down lieutenant, pull it up. You've got to tell me what went down tonight bro, walk me through it, all of it.

POWER. I'm hanging on here, bro.

WATER. I'll hang with.

POWER. I may need a good lawyer.

WATER. You know I'm a lawyer, *cabron*.

POWER. I said a *good* lawyer.

(WATER starts to clear the bed of weapons.)

POWER. My brother, graduated from the Peoples Law School! 300th in your class. Passed the bar on his 13th try. Perry Mason in the house.

I got in an accident and my brother got me 500 dollars!

WATER. Okay.

POWER. Shit, all your Latino elected's have their law degrees, but they're *escared* to take the bar. That's chicken shit, but not my bro. You got balls Gibby.

WATER. You gonna tell me what happened to you?

POWER. Can you *handle* it bro?

WATER. Got to.

POWER. Because you were always kind of a pussy about shit like this.

WATER. I'm with you now Gabe. And what ever it is we'll flip it. We have the skill set. What would pop say? Pop would say that every situation has pluses and minuses, together we'll find the pluses.

POWER. Water and Power?

WATER. That's right. Dad's Pride and Joy.

POWER. Those brothers were blessed.

WATER. We're still blessed bro.

POWER. You think?

WATER. Oh yeah.

POWER. You gonna back my play, Gibby?

WATER. What ever it is, we'll handle it. Okay?

(WATER flashes his confident smile for good measure.)

POWER. Don't leave me here, bro.

WATER. I couldn't do that.

POWER. *(awe)* LA is full of ghosts man.

(We hear thunder.)

WATER. Don't go there man.

POWER. Okay. Right.

WATER. Right.

(WATER has made it better and smiles at his bro.)

POWER. I killed a man tonight.

(WATER's smile goes away.)

POWER. Killed him. Sure enough.

(Enter a young GILBERT GARCIA/WATER and his father ASUNCION GARCIA.)

(MR. GARCIA wears D.W.P. work overalls with his name tag and department logo of that era. He places a chair just downstage of the previous Motel scene. WATER & POWER never leave the stage.)

Scene Two

(Enter ASUNCION GARCIA: Department of Water and Power reservoir and irrigation field man in Southern California wears thick black glasses of that era. Father is followed by a young GILBERT GARCIA/WATER.)

(MR. GARCIA wears D.W.P. work overalls with his name tag and department logo of that era.)

(LITTLE GIBBY has on boxing headgear and converse lace up sneakers. Father holds up his dukes as "Gibby" punches them like a little tough guy and quite a good little fighter.)

FATHER. Did you knock the shit out of your brother like I told you *mijo*?

(The boy shrugs.)

FATHER. Where is he?

GIBBY. In the room crying like a little pussy.

FATHER. *Por que mijo*? Why is he crying?

GIBBY. Because I hit him.

FATHER. With a hook or an uppercut?

GIBBY. With a flurry of jabs!

FATHER. Atta boy.

(GIBBY strikes a Pachuco pose.)

GIBBY. Just call me Golden Gloves ese!

(FATHER smacks him upside the head.)

GIBBY. Ouch.

FATHER. Don't get cocky little man.

GIBBY. Yes sir.

FATHER. Did you shine your black shoes like I told you at least?

GIBBY. Not yet, pop.

FATHER. *Chingow. Como eres Gilbert.*

GIBBY. Wool...*(well)*

FATHER. Como que wull?

(yelling off)

FATHER. GABBY!

POWER. (*upstage of the scene*) I don't feel good dad!

FATHER. Chihuahua, your brother is going to be late for his own damn funeral.

GIBBY. (*sort of confused*) A funeral for Gabby?

FATHER. Gilbert, your brother, how do I say it, well, he's slower than you. He doesn't use his *cabeza*.

GIBBY. Is he a retard dad?

FATHER. Well, mijo, I'm gonna tell you something and I want you to listen extra good, okay?

GIBBY. Sure dad.

FATHER. Always, always no matters what, look after your brother, look after him real good. Never ever leave him alone somewhere's. Where you go he goes, always watch his back, me entiendez?

(GIBBY *nods yes.*)

FATHER. Now repeat what I just said, cabron.

GIBBY. Okay. Repeat what I just said, cabron.

(*That garners a slap upside the head.*)

GIBBY. Ouchie, why do I always have to do the work?

FATHER. Because you were born first, mijo.

GIBBY. I know, I know. 8 minutes and 59 seconds.

FATHER. And there was lightening mijo...

(GIBBY *makes lightening sounds.*)

FATHER. ...and there was Thunder...

(GIBBY *makes big thunder sounds.*)

FATHER. And my little vatos were born between the...

FATHER/GIBBY. ...the lightening and thunder!

GIBBY. Wait a minute. Dad?

FATHER. Si?

GIBBY. Am I supposed to look after Gabby or beat him up?

FATHER. Both.

GIBBY. At the same time?

FATHER. Shut up mijo. Lookie, here's the plan: You and I will secretly tuff'n him up. And before you know it, he'll clobber your cabeza like Archie Moore and you won't even know what hit you. Just like the Mongoose!

(**GIBBY** and **DAD** "slow motion boxers" with the Mongoose punch.)

And you will pick yourself up off that canvas and look at your brother in the eyes and you will have new respect for him! Vale la pena! And then my boys will be the Twin Mirrors of Eastside Toughness. And people will have to respect you or else.

GIBBY. Why do they have to respect us Dad? We're not rich, we're nobodies.

FATHER. Let me tell you something about respect, mijo. You know the little old white lady on the corner? The one that goes to shursh every day?

GIBBY. Church?

FATHER. Si, shursh. See, I know sometimes she doesn't have enough to eat but you know what? She carries herself a si, con mucho dignidad. Always dressed to he nines. Everything in its place. Self respect, mijo. She has it.. Respect yourself Gilbert. Always.

GIBBY. Okay Dad.

(If **DAD** crouches down **GIBBY** should mimic him)

FATHER. And one day, when you and your brother are all grown up, you can help that old lady.

GIBBY. How old is she?

FATHER. I don't know, como seventy five or so.

GIBBY. Well, when we're grown up, won't she be dead already?

FATHER. You think you're so smart Carbon.

GIBBY. You just said I was smart Dad.

FATHER. Pinche morro...

GIBBY. Ooh, you said a bad word Dad.

(**DAD** mumbles to himself. **GIBBY** exits.)

GIBBY. Oh brother, now I'm confused and full of rage.

Scene Three

(Back at the Motel Paradise. WATER is seated at the end of the bed with his head buried in his hands. POWER stands, very still, smoking.)

POWER. After I got off my shift, I “borrowed” an unmarked cruiser from Parker Center Garage, I had put Dad’s old D.W.P. overalls in the trunk the day before, waved at the City parking guy as I pulled out of the garage, changed clothes under the 4th street bridge, I was methodical bro, covered my tracks, I rolled back to the neighborhood, close to where we used to live, must have been about 7, quarter past. My Monster, Mr. Pelican Bay released from prison early this morning, goes to his mom’s house to have supper in East LA, I know it will be like his first or second stop, I waited for him across the street in the unmarked car, just a few houses down from Dad’s old house.

WATER. Oh Jesus...

(WATER crosses down and sits at the chair.)

POWER. Not much street traffic.

(We see a MEXICAN MAN/VENDOR carrying a water bottle on his shoulder as he crosses upstage or the shadows of the round.)

VENDOR. *(distant)* Agua...agua...agua...

POWER. I wait. I luck out big time because the guy goes to see his *jefita* alone. A few more minutes, let him get settled in with Mom’s, I’m in the house like in nothing flat, this house, it’s dark inside, just one light on like the house where the *Tecatos* go to O.D.

TV is blasting, *novellas* and shit, Mexican radio from next door covers me, I mean it’s perfect bro. Beautiful, seems fake almost: the little dining room separated from the kitchen, I luck out again, Mom is back and forth with the tortillas and stuff, my guy hasn’t seen a “home cooked” in ten to fifteen. He greazes down like a hungry animal. I’m hanging back in the shadows.

(POWER nods. A long drag off the cig.)

POWER. I wait for just the right moment, Mom's fussing over some wedding and *quinciniera* pictures in the back room, my guy gets off his cell phone, kicks off his black shoes, television, radio, perfect level, I tip toe right behind the guy, I can smell the three flowers in his hair, I'm like this close. He's got a small four leaf clover tattooed on the side of his neck, must be new, wasn't in his file jacket...

(POWER moves in behind WATER at the chair. POWER is using WATER as a sort of prop as continues to explain the murder.)

Food smelled good, bro. Real good. His cell phone rings, shit, he looks at the number, does not take the call. I catch another break.

(POWER pulls out the weapon, a beautiful little killing machine, he does so with slow methodical arm movements.)

Silencer.

(He places a lovely silencer on the end of the firearm.)

I ask forgiveness for what I am about to do.

(POWER points the gun to the back of WATER's head.)

Everything stops, I can't hear the TV blasting anymore. My heart is pounding. Another shadow outside in the yard!

(The DEER DANCER crosses and is gone like a vapor.)

POWER. It passes. I gotta go now. Lift gun to back of head.

(POWER's arm slowly raises into position just behind WATER's head.)

POWER. *(softly)* Pow.

(We hear an echo of a gun blast in the distance. WATER moves his head in a fashion of a murder victim in super slow motion.)

POWER. *(softly)* Pow. Pow.

(Another echo for each gun blast in the distance. POWER looks right.)

POWER. I don't know how long his mother was standing there but she's watching from the kitchen door way.

WATER. *(quietly realizing)* God dammit, no...

POWER. Oh yes. She was probably there the whole damn time you know, at first I just shined her on, but she kept screaming for her baby. My Monster. She's screaming but nothing is coming out, or maybe I just can't hear her I dunno. She stares at me, Gilbert. Her son's brains splattered all over the JFK and Jesus velvet paintings. I lift my gun to her.

(POWER points his gun out.)

She looks at me, calm suddenly, not crying, not screaming, she makes the sign of the cross and then she does the same for me.

(POWER slowly makes the sign of the cross with the gun the way the Senora must have done for him: arm stretched out.)

Why would she do that Gibby? My gun just fell to my side, I backed out slowly, I left her there standing silent in her kitchen doorway.

She saw it Gilbert, she saw the whole thing. She looked deep into me, man, right through me. I've never seen that look before. She's gonna remember my face. She's gonna have me etched across her brain, like a laceration.

WATER. Oh, Gabby, Gabby, Gabby...

POWER. I dropped some stuff off at the Taylor Yards incinerator, threw dad's overalls, Monster's cell phone in the fire. And that's it.

WATER. That's it?

POWER. Well, no. I mean P.D. is gonna be looking for me, and *La EME*.

WATER. Well, opposites do attract, Gabriel.

POWER. Tonight they do. And they're gonna come hard.

WATER. Tell me, *why* did you clip the guy?

POWER. LA is not for everybody.

WATER. What the hell does that mean?

POWER. I had my reasons.

WATER. What possible reasons could you have to murder a man who had already served his time?

POWER. I did what I had to do. That's all I can say.

WATER. Oh God, you've been advising Homeland Security on LA Prison gangs.

POWER. Affirmative.

WATER. Well you'll need to say a whole lot more, lieutenant.

POWER. Negative. That's a no-go. I'm not talking about this with you.

WATER. I'm calling the LAPD negotiator right now.

POWER. The negotiator I know is also a sharpshooter. So that's not an option.

WATER. That's brilliant, Gabriel.

POWER. I'm serious as a heart attack bro. I know too much. Other cops will want me out of the picture.

WATER. Goddamn it, I knew it. Something was coming.

POWER. What?

WATER. Something would hit me here, hard. I would take some sort of blow, in the solar plexus. You used to knock the wind out of me. Just like that. I felt it earlier today, I swear to God I did. I did not know what to expect when I showed up here, but not this, not what I see now.

POWER. Gee, sorry bro. Hey, I need to re-up. Where's my guy?

(NORTE/SUR bursts through the door. Thunder. Lights flicker. POWER draws his weapon, a split second of silence then recognition.)

NORTE/SUR. Ese Power, Pelican Bay is all over the house. Word got out quick ese.

POWER. Which house?

NORTE/SUR. Your house, your father's old house. There's a shot-caller convention on the Eastside, aye.

POWER. Anybody follow you here?

NORTE/SUR. Yeah, three paisas and a border brother but they're cool.

POWER. Don't fuck around. Who's at my house exactly?

NORTE/SUR. Real shooters, no spray and pray guys.

POWER. (*more amazed and excited than angry*) You hear that, bro?

NORTE/SUR. And there's two Monterey Park dudes at the 7-11 by the crib.

POWER. *Vatos* from Monterey Park?

NORTE/SUR. No. Chinos, Asian cats. Fast and Furious *vatos*. Good cutters, expert knife guys.

POWER. (*This is big.*) They're going multi-cultural on my ass, huh?

WATER. (*cynical*) Coalition building...

POWER. (*hope*) Like Obama.

NORTE/SUR. Haters front to back. La Eme galore, 10%'ers, they got it wired tight this time. And cops I ain't never seen before creepy crawling all over the ghetto. Bookoo *jura*. The barrio is going berserk tonight.

(NORTE/SUR *looks to* WATER.)

NORTE/SUR. What's up?

(WATER *nods.*)

POWER. What did Chunky say?

NORTE/SUR. Couldn't get a hold of him at first.

POWER. Did you try his Blackberry.

NORTE/SUR. *Chale*, all the homey's have switched to Trio's. Some sort of wireless promotion sweeping the hood. Luckily, Chunky still keeps an old school pager.

POWER. Fascinating! And?

NORTE/SUR. He say's no "get out of jail cards," "get out of morgue cards" maybe.

POWER. That's kinda funny. Was he trying to be funny?

NORTE/SUR. Laughed *my* ass off.

WATER. And you are?

NORTE/SUR. *Despensa* homes. Mister Norte/Sur.

WATER. Mister what?

NORTE/SUR. *Norte/Sur.* I'm the one who texted you.

WATER. How the fuck did you get my number?

NORTE/SUR. I googled you. I put in Facebook friend request but you haven't responded. I been on pins and needles for weeks.

POWER. Why the fuck did you contact my brother?

NORTE/SUR. I had my reasons. Yeah, I see your pictures in the paper all the time, you're skinny homes.

POWER. This is my guy, bro.

WATER. This is your back up?

POWER. Shake his hand.

(NORTE/SUR tries again with the shake. WATER does not offer his hand.)

NORTE/SUR. I ain't trippen aye.

(NORTE/SUR notices something.)

NORTE/SUR. Hey man, who put the hat on the bed? It's bad luck aye.

(NORTE/SUR flings the hat off the dresser. WATER retrieves it.)

NORTE/SUR. Ese Power, this whole *chingadrea* is much more serious than I thought. Worser even than when that Latino CHP cop *vato* got wasted.

WATER. Oh God.

NORTE/SUR. The *vato* you off'd was no soldier Gabe, he was way up the food chain, you know.

POWER. Okay! This is what I need, first, go the last Picnic Table on the northwest corner of Elysian Park, under that table is a brown bag, get it.

NORTE/SUR. *Simon.*

POWER. Then release the pigeons on top of the roof at the Sir Palmer apartments.

NORTE/SUR. On Echo Park Avenue?

POWER. *Simon.* Then cross the street put the bag under the boardwalk next to paddle boat number six.