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Samuel French Acting Edition

Long Way Go Down

by Zayd Dohrn

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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LONG WAY GO DOWN was first produced by Kitchen Dog Theater in Dallas, Texas in 2010. The performance was directed by Chris Carlos, with sets by Bryan Wofford, costumes by Tina Parker, lights by Linda Blase, music and sound by John M. Flores, and fight choreography by Bill Lengfelder and Cameron Cobb. The cast was as follows:

BILLY.....Bruce DuBose
CHRIS.....Drew Wall
NINI.....Ivan Jasso
VIOLETTA.....Ani Celise Vera

CHARACTERS

BILLY – forties, an American trucker

CHRIS – twenties, his son

NINI & VIOLETTA – twenties, two undocumented immigrants

The **TIRED VOICE** of an older woman

SETTING

An apartment building; a public phone; a safe house outside of
Phoenix; the cab of a semi truck; the desert

TIME

Present

Scene One

(A safe house, doubling as a truck dispatch office, near the Mexican/American border. The walls are falling apart, and half of the area is sectioned off with clear plastic sheets hung from the ceiling.)

(The small space left over contains a desk, two chairs, a promotional calendar, and an old CB radio.)

(CHRIS, twenties, stands on tiptoe on the desk, hanging a piece of plastic with a staple gun.)

(His father, BILLY, forties, helps him.)

(VIOLETTA, twenties, sits off to the side, wearing a floral-print dress and cheap high-heels, watching them.)

BILLY. So, spring break...

CHRIS. Right?

BILLY. College white boys. *Girls Gone Wild.*

CHRIS. *Nice.* With the cameras, Pop?

BILLY. Cameras are there. Bunch of coeds, down from campus. UCSC. Santa Cruz. All dolled up, y'know –

(Showing his nipples.)

“TJ! Yaaaahhh!”

CHRIS. *(Laughs.)* Yeah.

BILLY. Having a wild time. Jell-O shots are there. Mud wrestling is there.

CHRIS. Awesome.

BILLY. And all the locals are watching – “This how gringos behave? Amazing!”

CHRIS. Happy to see that cash though.

BILLY. To a point, maybe, but – Anyway, this one guy, Mickey, I was telling you about? My partner there? He's out walking his family one evening. And this frat boy from Texas is sitting on the curb. Baseball cap. Board shorts. Lost his friends, got kicked out of a club, whatever. And he says something to Mickey's wife.

CHRIS. What's he say?

BILLY. Something, I don't know.

CHRIS. Something bad?

BILLY. Whatever people say, Chris, you know. I wasn't there. He speaks to her. Makes a gesture.

CHRIS. In front of her husband?

BILLY. Well...Mickey's like four-foot-nine, ten, right? Tiny little man. This kid's a linebacker from UT or something.

CHRIS. Okay.

BILLY. So Mickey smiles, like – “Gracias, Amigo... No comprende inglés... No comprende... U.S.A... Walt Disney World!” Takes his wife and kid home, goes into his shed, takes out his ball-peen hammer –

CHRIS. Uh-oh.

BILLY. – And heads back into town, right. Finds the kid passed out on the sidewalk. Big fat smile on his face, hugging a beef burrito to his chest like it's a teddy bear. So Mickey grabs his hair –

(He demonstrates on CHRIS.)

Pulls his head back, opens his mouth, takes the hammer, and WHAM!

CHRIS. Get off me, man –

BILLY. – Breaks off his front teeth. Kid wakes up, eyes bugging out, teeth in the back of his throat, tries to stand. But Mickey's got a boot on his neck now. Holds his mouth open, and smashes the bottom teeth. And the guy starts bawling –

(He imitates the guy crying with no teeth.)

“Luhh... Luhh...” And Mickey's trying to get the side teeth out too, like “Wham! Wham! Wham!” But

it's hard, apparently, to get those side teeth out with a hammer, right? He keeps hitting the kid's cheeks by accident. And a crowd starts to gather, but nobody's helping. TJ police just stand there, half-asleep, "nother fucking Yankee getting his face worked on. Pobrecito. What else is new?" And the guy is puking day-glo blue from all the "Hpnotiq" liquor they have in the clubs there. Pieces of his teeth sticking through his lips like onion in a hamburger. And finally Mickey pockets the hammer, unzips his pants, and goes "¡Quién es el mamá huevos ahora, pinche gringo!"

(**BILLY** *laughs.*)

(**VIOLETTA** *coughs, and CHRIS glances over at her.*)

(*Beat.*)

CHRIS. What's that mean?

BILLY. What?

CHRIS. (*Butchering the accent.*) "Kien essel mama wavos"?

BILLY. "Huevos."

CHRIS. Yeah.

BILLY. "Eggs," you know.

CHRIS. Like huevos rancheros?

BILLY. Yeah. Like huevos rancheros.

CHRIS. Why's he talking about eggs?

BILLY. (*Gesturing.*) EGGS.

CHRIS. Oh. I get it.

BILLY. Christ. Your español is really for shit these days, huh? Shoulda started bringing you down there with me, years ago...

(**VIOLETTA** *coughs again.*)

(**CHRIS** *glances over at her.*)

(*She looks at the floor.*)

(*Blackout.*)

Scene Two

(The dimly-lit, filthy hallway of a tenement building in Phoenix. NINI, twenty-six, pounds on an apartment door.)

(There is no answer. He knocks again, louder.)

(A baby inside the apartment starts to scream.)

NINI. Hello? Hey, hello?

(He pounds on the door.)

¿Abuela? It's me. Answer the door!

(There is the sound of footsteps padding down a hallway inside the apartment, and then a TIRED WOMAN's voice.)

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* Yes? ¿Sí?

NINI. Abuela. Abre la puerta.

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* ¿Quién es?

NINI. Ninito – abre!

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* Who you looking for?

NINI. Ay, lo siento... Rosa Marrón?

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* No here.

NINI. Oh... You know when she come home?

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* What time is it?

NINI. Sorry. Es muy tarde.

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* She don't live here no more, okay? She gone.

NINI. Gone? Where she go?

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* Desaparecida.

NINI. She leave something for me? A letter, or...

(No answer. NINI pounds on the door.)

Excuse me? Hello? Hey – Por fa'...Come back. This her grandson, Nini. She told me, come to this address. She must have leaved something...

(The door opens a crack. It is chained from the inside.)

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* There's nothing, joven. Adios.

(She starts to shut the door, but NINI jams his fingers in the crack to keep it from closing.)

NINI. Wait. Please –

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.)* ¿Qué haces? Suéltala –

NINI. Please, she would have leaved something – I need it!

TIRED WOMAN. *(Offstage.) (Shouting.)* Carlos – Hey, Carlos!
Help – ¡Hay un loco en la puerta! Carlos!

(NINI steps back and she slams the door, bolts it.)

(NINI stands there, panting, listening to the baby scream. He rests his forehead against the metal door.)

Scene Three

(The truck dispatch office. Later. A patter of rain on the plastic sheets.)

(VIOLETTA is still in the chair.)

(BILLY and CHRIS sit on the couch now, drinking beers, nudging pots and Tupperware containers around with their feet to catch the leaks.)

BILLY. ...Went to see your mother, on my way back.

CHRIS. Oh yeah?

BILLY. You oughta, y'know – At some point.

CHRIS. I will.

BILLY. Soon. She'd like a visit. Surprise her. Will you?

CHRIS. All right.

BILLY. She's dropped some weight, you know. Ten, twenty pounds. New system they got there. Fruit diet.

CHRIS. Food's probably for shit.

BILLY. Looks good on her though. You should see. A different person.

CHRIS. Yeah.

BILLY. She could always stand to lose a few. But she's got a great figure.

CHRIS. I don't want to talk about her figure, Pop, all right? If you don't mind?

BILLY. No.

(CHRIS shoots his empty at the trash can like it's a basketball hoop. He probably misses.)

CHRIS. So what's she doing now?

BILLY. You know, Bingo, Checkers... What have you.

CHRIS. They got Bingo there?

BILLY. Oh yeah. Lawn bowling. Swimming pool. Didn't see it all myself, but apparently –

CHRIS. So she's all right then.

BILLY. Seems fine, I guess. Doesn't much like being there...
Cried when I left, y'know. Wanted to come home today.
Says she feels much better. Don't know why they're
keeping her. But as I'm leaving, she makes a move for
my belt, so –

(CHRIS makes a noise.)

Anyways, she sends her love.

CHRIS. Humping your leg, right?

BILLY. What?

CHRIS. "Move for your belt –" Ha.

BILLY. It's an illness. That's your mother you're talking
about –

*(Suddenly, VIOLETTA, who has been looking
increasingly ill, throws up against the wall.)*

CHRIS. Jesus!

(They watch her gag, dry-heave.)

What's wrong with her?

BILLY. Probably the truck.

CHRIS. Uh. Stinks.

(Beat.)

I'm not cleaning it up, either, Pop. If that's what you
think. You brought her here. You do it.

(To VIOLETTA.)

Hey – You sick? What do you have? Hey – Sick or what?
Uh...

BILLY. Enfermo.

CHRIS. Enfermo?

(She nods. They both look at her.)

We should check if she's got a temperature.

BILLY. What are you, a fucking doctor now?

CHRIS. She could be really sick. I don't know. Maybe she
needs some medicine, or –

BILLY. Well, you be my guest...

(CHRIS approaches VIOLETTA. He reaches out a hand to touch her.)

(She shrinks away.)

CHRIS. Trying to help –

(A knock at the door.)

BILLY. Finally... Go get that piece of shit.

(Another knock.)

(CHRIS crosses the room and opens the door.)

(NINI enters, carrying a soggy bag of fast food and a package wrapped in shiny red foil.)

(He goes straight to VIOLETTA with the bag, takes out a burger, unwraps it, and offers it to her. She pushes it away.)

(He sees the vomit on the wall.)

NINI. Mierda... ¿Estás bien?

VIOLETTA. No aguantaba más.

NINI. ¿Tienes hambre? ¿Puedes comer algo?

(She nods. NINI unwraps the package, takes out a little souvenir snow globe. He shows it to her.)

“Phoenix,” eh?

BILLY. You got something for me, too?

(NINI squeezes VIOLETTA’s hand. He gives her the globe.)

NINI. Hey, Billy – Listen, amigo. There was a little mixed-up. Um...

BILLY. You’re late.

NINI. I know. Just temporary, see...

(Forces a laugh.)

I couldn’t get the rest of the fees yet, man. Bad communications, you know? Nobody home.

(Beat.)

You know what I think happen, Billy? Mi abuela probably come looking for me, to give the money. But she don't know where to go, right? She a old lady. You know how they be. She probably, right now, by the station. Looking at all the people coming out, like – “¿Señor, usted ha visto mi nieto, Nini?” And thinks I'm gonna come off the bus with a suitcase and flowers. Fresh from Mexico, you know? Probably waiting on her flowers...

BILLY. What's that got to do with me?

NINI. Tomorrow, Billy, I find her. Go to her workplace. It's all right. Just bad luck, tonight, is all.

BILLY. Maybe they already got her. You think of that? La Migra? Maybe she's gone.

NINI. No no no, I talk to her, two days past, Billy. She's here. I swear.

BILLY. (*Shoots CHRIS a look.*) What about your friends? Your homeboys? You've done favors for people, haven't you?

NINI. Yeah sure, but they don't have this kind of – plata though.

BILLY. No?

NINI. Not my friends.

BILLY. You'd be surprised... What people have. Stashed away someplace.

NINI. I already ask, Billy. Before I leave. I ask every person I know, just to get half we pay.

BILLY. That's not my problem though, is it?

NINI. No. You right. Tomorrow, Billy. I swear...

(*Beat.*)

BILLY. I got another run to do. Tonight.

NINI. Sí.

BILLY. Picking up some people down Nuevo Laredo way. Be back in a day or two. Once I drop 'em off.

NINI. Yes, okay...

BILLY. And the girl stays here, with Chris. Collateral. You know what that means?

(NINI shakes his head.)

(CHRIS glances at VIOLETTA. She's looking down at the floor.)

BILLY. It means you bring the money back, amigo, or we're keeping her. ¿Comprende? Is that clear enough for you?

NINI. Sí. I understand this. Thank you very much, Bill.

BILLY. Call your friends, Ninito. Call your fucking primos. Tell them – your mother's dying. Tell them she got the cancer. Tell them the truth: you don't come up with a thousand dollars by Monday morning, an American coyote's gonna sell your lady friend to the whorehouse behind the taquería. You tell them that. Whole village'll be lined up at Western Union by morning, wiring pesos, right? You'll be the Mexican George Bailey, kid. You don't know how loved you really are!

Scene Four

(Later.)

(BILLY and NINI are gone.)

(VIOLETTA sits in the same position as before.)

(CHRIS is at the desk, pretending to read the paper, but sneaking furtive glances at her around the headlines.)

(A foot-long sledgehammer sits on the desk next to him, within easy reach.)

VIOLETTA. Perdón, Señor –

CHRIS. Hm?

VIOLETTA. Disculpa –

CHRIS. What's that?

VIOLETTA. Disculpa, Señor...¿necesito usar el baño?

(Beat.)

CHRIS. I – Uh... No español. Sorry.

VIOLETTA. ¿Baño? Necesito usar el –

CHRIS. Wanted to learn, you know? In high school?
Dropped out. No español on the GED.

(He laughs.)

So... I can just say like – buenos días. That's about it.
“Buenos días, Señorita.”

VIOLETTA. Buenas tardes.

CHRIS. Whatever.

(Beat.)

Hey – You're fucking beautiful, know that?

VIOLETTA. Necesito usar el baño... Es urgente, por fa'?

CHRIS. Maybe your boyfriend can translate. When he comes back, you know? *If* he comes back... We could talk. Like with the subtitles –

(Gibberish.)

Onda locka chicka poco toco myoko.

(Pretending to read words in the air.)

CHRIS. I'm a hot Mexican chick and I think you're super-cool.

VIOLETTA. *(Frustrated.)* Señor?

CHRIS. Hey – Is he your boyfriend? Cousin? You two related or what?

(Laughs.)

Probably not, right? I ain't that lucky. Gotta catch the good ones between guys, or you got no shot...

VIOLETTA. Please, the bathroom? Okay?

(Beat.)

(CHRIS looks at her.)

CHRIS. Bathroom?

VIOLETTA. Sí. Baño?

CHRIS. Wait – You speak English?

VIOLETTA. ¿Baño? Por favor, ¿Señor? Por fa–

CHRIS. No, come on. Don't. Don't do that. Don't go back to – Am I hearing things? Didn't you just say "bathroom?"

VIOLETTA. No hablo – Necesito usar el baño.

CHRIS. You speak. Am I crazy? I heard you. Hey – We could talk. Have a conversation. We could speak some, if you understand...

(Long pause.)

VIOLETTA. Sí. A little bit. Okay.

CHRIS. Holy shit! "A little bit." Why didn't you say so? I'm talking to myself like a fucking asshole over here, and you're all –

VIOLETTA. No, you are not –

CHRIS. What?

VIOLETTA. Not a –

CHRIS. What, "asshole"?

VIOLETTA. Ah.

CHRIS. You know that word?

(Beat.)

VIOLETTA. Sí.

CHRIS. Oh my God! You're like, completely fluent, and I'm up here like –

VIOLETTA. No no, just a little. I don't –

CHRIS. Hey – What's your name? Tell me that? At least. Tu namo es...?

VIOLETTA. Violetta.

CHRIS. Violetta. That's nice. Damn. That's a really nice name, you know?

VIOLETTA. Gracias.

CHRIS. No, speak English, come on. Just say "thank you" like a normal person, okay? I'm Chris, right? Chris? Can you say that?

VIOLETTA. Chris.

CHRIS. Good to meet you, Violetta.

VIOLETTA. Good to meet you also.

CHRIS. So, tell me like – where you're from, and – What kind of shit you like to do. I mean... Damn! What a relief finally to meet somebody who can communicate a little –

VIOLETTA. I can no. Sorry.

CHRIS. Can no? How come?

VIOLETTA. No allowed.

CHRIS. What? Who says?

(Beat.)

VIOLETTA. Nini. Tell me you are danger to me. "No hables con los coyotes. Te abusan. Tal vez te violan."

CHRIS. Me? I am?

(He laughs.)

Come on. Do I look dangerous to you?

VIOLETTA. *(Correcting herself.)* "Dangerous," sí...

CHRIS. Come on. You want some coffee? Uh... "cafe"?

(He gets up and takes a thermos from the desk.)

CHRIS. I'm gonna have some. We can talk. You want some?
Have some, all right?

VIOLETTA. Thank you.

CHRIS. You're welc— Uh, de nada.

VIOLETTA. Ah.

CHRIS. What?

VIOLETTA. ¿Hablas español?

CHRIS. Come on. You making fun of me?

VIOLETTA. No. "De nada" you say...

CHRIS. Yeah, I'm like — half retarded. Pick up a few words at the taco stand. Don't even know the word for "bathroom." And you're all "Yes, monsieur, indeed I am familiar with the term asshole."

VIOLETTA. Hey — In Tijuana? This is very important word.

(Beat.)

(He laughs.)

CHRIS. Yeah... I can see that... I get it. Hey, you got a good sense of humor, you know that? How'd you learn to talk English? Most Mexicans I meet, they just look at you like —

(He imitates them.)

— Juan Valdez, dumbshit farmers, you know? Don't speak. Don't blink. Just stare —

VIOLETTA. I grow up on border. Everybody they speak a little.

CHRIS. Oh, no shit, yeah. TJ. What do you do there?

VIOLETTA. Me? I work.

CHRIS. Doing what?

VIOLETTA. At a club.

CHRIS. Cool. Like a waitress or something?

(He gives her the coffee.)

There you go.

VIOLETTA. Thank you.

CHRIS. De nada...

(He laughs, sits down.)

CHRIS. So damn – It's good to have somebody to talk to! You know, Pop's always taking these trips down over the line. Leaves me here, gotta sit with the mojos in transit. No TV. No PlayStation. Stare at the wall all day. Start to go mentally ill in Amityville, know what I mean? I'm just so relieved you're actually like –

VIOLETTA. Hey – Mister Chris?

CHRIS. Hm?

VIOLETTA. ...Sorry, I interrupt?

CHRIS. No, no, it's okay. I want you to talk. I like it. What?

VIOLETTA. Um... Okay I use bathroom now, or –

(CHRIS jumps out of his chair, embarrassed.)

CHRIS. Yeah yeah, sorry... I completely forget. I forgot. So excited, just... Right through there – Here. Through that door.

(She nods.)

You gotta jiggle the flush a little bit.

(He demonstrates.)

Jiggle? Y'know?

VIOLETTA. Okay. Gracias.

(She goes in the bathroom, starts to shut the door.)

CHRIS. Hey, Violetta –

VIOLETTA. ¿Sí?

CHRIS. Not "Mister," okay? Just Chris.

VIOLETTA. Just Chris.

CHRIS. A'ight?

(She nods, goes into the bathroom, and shuts the door.)

(CHRIS pushes the chairs together, arranging a little sitting area. He tries to tidy the desk, gathers the empty beer cans and tosses them in the trash.)

(He cups his hands over his mouth and smells his breath.)

(Not good enough.)

(He rummages in the desk and finds a bottle of blue Listerine.)

(He takes a swig, swishes it around in his mouth, looks for a place to spit.)

(The sound of the flush from the bathroom.)

(VIOLETTA enters.)

(CHRIS swallows the Listerine.)

VIOLETTA. Gracias.

CHRIS. Uch.

VIOLETTA. Okay?

CHRIS. *(Hoarse.)* Fine, yeah. How you doing?

VIOLETTA. Me, I no feel so good.

CHRIS. No? Why?

VIOLETTA. Throw up again.

CHRIS. Now?

VIOLETTA. No, in – You don't hear?

CHRIS. No, I was – I wasn't listening. You want some mouthwash?

VIOLETTA. No. Thank you.

(He puts the Listerine away.)

Sorry...

CHRIS. No, it's –

VIOLETTA. I try to clean.

CHRIS. It's all right. Hey. Don't worry. Okay? I'll take care of it. We've had worse, believe me. In there. How you feel now? Better?

VIOLETTA. Little dizzy.

CHRIS. Can I –

(Feels her forehead.)

Shit, you're burning.

VIOLETTA. I am scared...

CHRIS. You're okay.

VIOLETTA. You call doctor? If I need?

CHRIS. You won't need. Why?

(She starts to cry. He looks at her.)

What? You're okay. Little fever's all. What do you need?

Hey – I'll get you something, all right? Make you feel better. Some medicine?

VIOLETTA. Medicina?

CHRIS. Sí. What kind?

VIOLETTA. I don't know in English...

CHRIS. No problem. Write it down.

(He gives her a pad of paper.)

Write in Spanish. Walmart down the road'll figure it out. Used to dealing with you uh –

VIOLETTA. Okay.

(She scribbles something on the pad.)

CHRIS. Yeah?

VIOLETTA. Sí. Gracias...

CHRIS. No doubt. Uh. I'm gonna have to tie you up though, all right? While I'm gone.

(Beat.)

VIOLETTA. What?

CHRIS. I have to tie you. To the chair, you know –

(He mimes tying her.)

VIOLETTA. I am sick.

CHRIS. Yeah, but... You know, if you leave while I'm gone, my pop would murder me.

VIOLETTA. I will no leave.

CHRIS. I know, but – Come on. That's a thousand bucks, Violetta, right? I can't just –

VIOLETTA. You no have to tie me, Chris. Don't have to do this. I stay. Wait here for you.

CHRIS. Yeah, but how do you expect me to – I mean, I trust you and all, but –

VIOLETTA. ¿Sí?

CHRIS. I can't. All right? I'm sorry, but – We just met. And I can't.

VIOLETTA. You tie me? Like a cow?

CHRIS. I mean – Come on.

VIOLETTA. It hurt my hands.

CHRIS. Look – Just a couple minutes, all right? I'll be right back. Ten minutes, okay?

VIOLETTA. What if I am sick again? What if I pee?

CHRIS. You serious?

VIOLETTA. Yes I am serious. What? Just sit here and – on myself?

(He shrugs helplessly.)

(Beat.)

(She sits down in the chair, offers her hands.)

(He starts to tie her hands with a length of electrical cord.)

CHRIS. I'm sorry... Y'know? I wish I could help more. I want to be nice to you and everything. You seem like a really nice person to me, but...

(He finishes tying her hands.)

VIOLETTA. Ay.

CHRIS. That hurt? Sorry. Shit.

(Pause.)

Don't go nowhere, all right? I'll be right back.

(He exits.)

(The sound of a car starting, with difficulty.)

(VIOLETTA pulls at the cord, trying to free her hands. No luck. She sighs.)

Scene Five

(A public phone in Phoenix.)

(NINI drops in some quarters, dials, waits.)

NINI. Hey carnal, it's Nini, man. ¿Qué onda? Tranquilo, I'm – How you doing?

(Pause.)

Listen, guey, I need to ask you something. All right? Big favor. But don't be pissed off at me or nothing, all right?

(Pause.)

I know, but – I need your help, 'mano. It's important. Sumamente. You know what I'm saying? I need help, just for –

(Pause.)

Twelve hundred.

(Pause.)

I know, 'mano! But you – Listen, you got your Volkswagen, right? You got that. Have to be worth at least like –

(Pause.)

I would pay you back, man! I pay. I buy you new car. Same kind. Be making ends now. In the States, like you. Just one thousand, okay? With interest.

(Pause.)

Carnal, listen – It's because my mama – She have the cáncer, guey...

(He pretends to cry.)

She have to go to the hospital and she – She ain't got no money, man. She need quimio and shit, and –

(Pause.)

Yeah, so I thought – You and me, right? My best friend in the whole fucking world, man, you know that. No,

you are. I look up to you, and – Like a older brother to me...

(Pause.)

NINI. I know you love that car, man. I know you do. Guey, I'm asking you, please... For me... Compadres, eh...?

(Pause.)

Well fuck you then, ¡hijo de puta! My mama dying, you won't even sell your rusty piece-of-shit Jetta? For my mama, guey? I can't believe you!

(Pause.)

I hope you die, 'mano... Hope you get in crash and rip your face open and stick that VW steering wheel up your *ass*, man! You like it so much – Fucking maricón!

(He slams the phone down.)

(Beat.)

(He starts to cry for real.)

Scene Six

(The safe house. VIOLETTA is tied to the chair.)

(CHRIS enters, carrying an armload of clothes and sundries. He sets them down on the desk.)

CHRIS. Violetta? I got it. They didn't ask to see no prescription or nothing...

(He unties her, avoiding her eyes. She rubs her wrists.)

Hey – you hungry? I could make us eggs. You like eggs? Uh... Huevos?

(VIOLETTA shakes her head.)

CHRIS. What do you want then? Cheese sandwich? Uh... Queso de...sandwich?

VIOLETTA. No.

CHRIS. I'm sorry, all right? It's not up to me. My dad could go to jail. Don't be mad.

VIOLETTA. I can no feel my hands.

(Beat.)

CHRIS. I brought you some things. Look. Shampoo and clothes. From my ma's closet. She got a hundred pounds on you, probably, but –

(He sorts through the clothes.)

Got some...jeans. Sweatshirt. Socks and...you know –

(Embarrassed, he quickly folds the underwear.)

I don't know if you want to change, but – I thought if you have to stay here a while... You know, might want to take a shower, or – Clean up a bit. Got you a razor, too. "Venus Divine." Huh? The one in the bathroom's like a butter knife. Two hundred Mexicans shaved their crossing beards with that rusty piece of shit. Cut you up ruthless if you try to do your legs, or...

(Pushes the pile toward her.)

CHRIS. For you. It's all for you. Understand?

(VIOLETTA nods.)

I think there's hot water now. In case you want to take a bath. It's fucking cold, right? Like a refrigerator. The desert. People think it's hot, because there's no rain or snow, but... Come on. You're not hungry? What do you want? Try to eat something. You'll feel better. Probably been like, days since you – I have um – M&M's. You want some? Chocolata? Have some, all right? We'll both have some.

(Beat.)

VIOLETTA. Okay.

CHRIS. Good. Okay.

(He gives her some M&M's. She eats. He watches her.)

Jesus, I was right, huh? You're starved.

VIOLETTA. *(Mouth full.)* Lo siento... Sorry. Have no manner.

CHRIS. No, it's fine. I'm glad. I'll get some more. Next time. They're like fifty cents at the Circle K. If I'da known you like 'em. Woulda got more. Check it: we got a hot plate too. I could make us some real food.

(Unloads the supplies on the desk.)

Got uh – Rice-A-Ronis. You like that?

VIOLETTA. "Ronis"? I don't know.

CHRIS. "Mexican-style." You'll like it, I bet. You want to try?

VIOLETTA. Okay.

CHRIS. Okay then.

(He opens the box, plugs in the hot plate.)

Must be tired, after that ride.

VIOLETTA. Sí...

CHRIS. That's a rough trip, I know. Under those bananas...

I been down there a couple times, helping Pop swab out the floor. Smell'll give you nightmares. We got a

mattress. You could lie down in back, if you want. After dinner?

(VIOLETTA *nods.*)

You can relax now. It's all right. I'll be right here. Don't worry. Nothing's gonna happen to you while I'm around...

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