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Samuel French Acting Edition

Mala Hierba

by Tanya Saracho

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MALA HIERBA premiered at Second Stage Uptown at the McGinn/Cazale Theatre in New York City on July 28, 2014. The performance was directed by Jerry Ruiz, with sets by Raul Abrego, costumes by Carisa Kelly, lights by Jennifer Schiever, and sound by Jill BC Du Boff. The cast was as follows:

- LILIANA** Marta Milans
- MARITZA** Roberta Colindrez
- YUYA** Sandra Marquez
- FABIOLA** Ana Nogueira

CHARACTERS

LILIANA – Late twenties/early thirties. Wife of border magnate. Always decked out; always impeccable. This is the trophy wife of “trophy wives.” Lili’s got that kind of charm that can’t be taught. She was born in Mexico to a proper Mexican family.

MARITZA – Same age as Liliana. Mari is a visual artist based in Chicago, with South Texas roots. Her friends in the lesbian community might call her a “boi” or a “stud,” and she wouldn’t mind it. She has a few tattoos she loves, some she regrets. She loves fiercely and is fiercely loyal.

YUYA – Older than Liliana by at least twelve or fifteen years, but perhaps older. Yuya raised Liliana and her siblings, and served that household until she imported herself to Liliana’s new household when she married. Yuya is usually smarter than anyone in the room, but she hides her resentment well. Hey, she knows her place.

FABIOLA – The very entitled twenty-five-year-old fresa daughter of Liliana’s husband. This girl has always had everything and has seldom been told “no.”

SETTING

Sharyland, Texas in the Rio Grande Valley

TIME

The span of one week, late this spring

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Overlapping is very important – these women talk like people talk: over one another. Every “/” cues the following line of dialogue. Please adhere to this.

Also: [This denotes the translated Spanish.] Not meant to be spoken.

Scene One

(Thursday Morning: The Cantu's master bedroom. This is a decadent room, with a big wooden bed and matching bedroom furniture. One-thousand-thread-count sheets, that sort of thing. The best that money can buy and also the tackiest money can buy. Alright, not tacky, but these people had Versace furniture back when it was in style, knowwhatImean? It's just too much, too fabulous. This house could definitely be on MTV's Cribs. Lots of creme colors and lots of wood. Gilded things.)

(The bed is unmade, and it's seen some major action: the sheets are all rumpled and disheveled, and there are belts everywhere. Like, seven of them, strewn across the floor and the bed. Two are fastened to the bed posts as restraints. LILIANA is getting dressed as YUYA enters.)

YUYA. A mira pues, I thought you were still in there showering.

LILIANA. Come help me with this.

(YUYA helps zip her up.)

YUYA. Qué purty, this color. Is this from the big box that came yesterday?

LILIANA. Yes. All the other dresses are disgusting, though. Will you send them all back?

YUYA. Tú y tus Internet addictions. Yeah, I'll send them back. No pero, it does look purty on you, this color.

(LILIANA goes to sit by the vanity and absent-mindedly picks up a belt from the bench and hands it to YUYA. The belt is nothing, just a belt. YUYA

picks up and puts away belts during the next exchange.)

LILIANA. I also got it in rosita and lilac but both made me look too...Texan.

YUYA. Oooh, lilac would look purty with your green eyes.

LILIANA. Maybe I'll keep that one.

(A crash is heard in the garden. Your general metal-chairs-on-table crash.)

¡Put a madre, Yuya! All morning these men have been / with the banging and the –

YUYA. They're just unloading the chairs and the tables. I just went to supervise. It's fine. / Qué quieres que te diga, it's going to be noisy like that.

LILIANA. Pero qué relajo se traen!

YUYA. It's looking real good down there though. You'll see right now when you go down.

LILIANA. It better look amazing. It better look like a pinche editorial in a pinche magazine with all the money I'm spending.

YUYA. It will, todo mundo will be talking about it. You'll see.

LILIANA. Oh, God I hope so.

YUYA. This room es todo un desmother. I'm going to change these sheets, okay ei? Should I put on the satin ones that he likes?

LILIANA. Ay, no Yuya. Those make me feel so *Scarface*.

YUYA. The peach ones then.

LILIANA. Which peach? Oh, the creme? Sí, pon esas Yuya.
[Yes, put those on, Yuya.]

(YUYA goes about redressing the bed.)

YUYA. Adivina *[Guess]* who came last night?

LILIANA. Por favor, ¿crees que no me di cuenta? *[Please, you think I didn't notice?]* The whole neighborhood heard her come in in the middle of the night. Driving in like a maniac, stomping around like a pinche elephant.

YUYA. Es una malcriada. [*She is a brat.*]

LILIANA. I don't want to say anything because you know, because I feel bad for her, raised by mother after mother.

YUYA. Please. I have kids okay ei? And they only turned out to be good kids because I gave them sus buenos guamazos [*beat them upside the head*] if they ever got sassy with me. Which is exactly what this girl was missing. With kids you can't be afraid to make a fist.

LILIANA. No, if I ever have kids, I'm never going to hit them. If I ever have kids voy a razonar con ellos. [*I am going to reason with them.*]

YUYA. Yeah, razonar like this with them.

(*Makes a bitch slap movement.*)

No te digo, [*I'm telling you,*] that's the only way. If not you'll turn out big brats like this one.

LILIANA. Me da lastima. [*I feel bad for her.*]

YUYA. You feel bad for that brat?

LILIANA. A little.

(*YUYA continues making the bed.*)

YUYA. She didn't never go to sleep. Se fue [*She went*] straight to the study to the computer, she was still up when I get up this morning y viene y me dice en la [*and she comes and tells me in the*] kitchen "I want Eggs Benedict. But with fresh mozzarella instead of ham. Make it." Asi nomas, [*Just like that,*] "Make it." And she never says my name neither, siempre se le olvida. [*she always forgets it*] How long have I worked here and she don't remember my name? Every dog's name she remembers, pero el mío ni maiz paloma. [*but mine, she doesn't remember*]

LILIANA. You know what a big fuss they made when I brought you así que dale las gracias [*so just be grateful*] that she even talks to you. Just don't...

YUYA. Oh, I know. I know. Please, you know that I know how to act. Twelve years working for your family, I know how to act.

LILIANA. I know, just...please, porque va con el cuento con Alberto. [*because she'll go tattletale to Alberto*]

YUYA. (*To herself.*) "Eggs Benedict"...Pinche huerca.

LILIANA. (*About earrings.*) The gold or the silver?

YUYA. Gold. Aunque the silver looks good too.

LILIANA. I have a million things to do before tomorrow. We have to call the bakery and order a whole new cake. Alberto changed his mind about the red velvet, now he wants tres leches for the party cake. But he still wants it to be five tiers. I can't tell him tres leches doesn't hold up in tiers. It would be mush.

YUYA. Just get him a tres leches para él solito y dale a [*just for him and give*] everybody else red velvet.

LILIANA. Oh, because it's as simple as that, ¿verdad? You know how he is. He'll check and then, well, we don't want him to get how he gets at his own birthday party. The bakery is going to have to work it out. And I'm sorry that they have a day to make a whole new cake. Pero a ver como le hacen. That is not my problem. Por eso se les paga lo que se les paga, ¿verdad? [*That's why we pay them what we pay them, right?*]

(*Beat.*)

Santo Dios, que desmadre. [*Dear God, what a mess.*] If his fifty-fifth birthday is this much trouble I don't want to know what will happen when he turns sixty. Me va a dar un infarto. [*I'm going to have a heart attack.*]

YUYA. We'll see if you're around for that.

(*A dirty look from LILIANA.*)

Digo, si Dios nos da vida. [*I mean, God willing.*] You never know what will happen.

LILIANA. No te pases conmigo, cabrona. [*Don't be disrespectful with me.*] You think I don't know what you mean? What people say? I know I'm married to Henry VIII.

(*She throws a brush at YUYA.*)

¿CÓMO ME VAS A DECIR ESO? [*How are you going to say something like that to me?*]

(Consciously quieting down.)

I don't need this shit from you, Yuya! Five years I've lived tiptoeing around this pinche family and I don't need you for eggshells right now. Not you too, pinche cabrona. *[bitch]*

YUYA. I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that –

LILIANA. Claro que *[Of course]* you meant it like that. Vibora. *[Viper.]*

YUYA. Discúlpame. *[Forgive me.]* I wasn't –

LILIANA. *(Throwing another brush at her.)* ¡Con esa pinche lengua de vibora! *[With that fucking viper tongue!]* You viper!

(FABIOLA enters without knocking.)

FABIOLA. Anybody know if there's an art supply store in this hicksville? I want to paint.

LILIANA. Fabi! ¡Hola muñeca! ¿Llegaste bien? *[Hi. Did you get here okay?]*

(The two kiss on the cheek and FABIOLA throws herself on the freshly made bed.)

FABIOLA. Yeah, sorry I didn't call you guys. I got here like at six actually, but I grabbed dinner with some friends. Did you know there's a P.F. Chang's here now? / Finally, something other than fucking taquerías and Whataburgers. And then we went to this wannabe beer garden place. I'm like, alright McAllen, don't try so hard. But then it was like two a.m. and I was like, fuck, I guess I better get home.

LILIANA. Yes, since last year...

Yuya, eso es todo. Gracias. *[Yuya, that is all. Thank you.]*

(YUYA exits.)

How was the drive?

FABIOLA. What do you mean how was the drive? It was a drive. What am I going to tell you? I drove, I stopped to pee, I ate Cheetos in the car.

(A beat.)

FABIOLA. Can we please talk about the fucking madness going on downstairs? All those men everywhere. I could barely come up the driveway.

LILIANA. They're setting up for your dad's party.

FABIOLA. Obviously. But do they have to be in everybody's way? / Hey, what are you wearing tomorrow. What are you wearing to Dad's thing?

LILIANA. I'm sorry about this Fabi.

(She takes a quick beat.)

Ah, I have a couple of options...

FABIOLA. Can I see?

LILIANA. I don't...do I have them all here? Let me see.

(Goes into the closet.)

FABIOLA. I didn't bring anything that I like and forget trying to find something here. Por favor. I'll end up with a cowboy hat or something...and ropers.

LILIANA. *(Emerging from the closet with two dress bags.)* I was thinking this red one, because it's going to be hot. I don't want to, you know, I don't want to sweat, so no sleeves. But really I think I'm going to wear this white one because I love the –

FABIOLA. Oh, my God. No, you're going to let me wear the white one. Where did you get this?!

LILIANA. I ordered it.

FABIOLA. Where from?

LILIANA. Online.

FABIOLA. From where? I love it!

(FABIOLA takes off her clothes to try it on. LILIANA gives a quick sigh. She obviously wanted to wear that one.)

LILIANA. I don't even remember. You know how you get to shopping online and you have like a thousand opened tabs and you just click buy and...yeah, I don't remember.

FABIOLA. Shuddup, this fits me like a glove. Look at this.
Do you have gold shoes?

LILIANA. Aaah, I think so.

FABIOLA. Oh, I really like how it looks. You don't mind do you?

LILIANA. No, como crees. [*No, of course not.*]

FABIOLA. You sure?

LILIANA. Please, no. I was going to wear this red one anyway.

FABIOLA. Okay, great so I got the dress, now for the shoes.

LILIANA. Yeah, let me show you what I got...

FABIOLA. Hey, so you got a new car, huh?

LILIANA. (*Slight "oh no" beat. She knows what's coming.*) ...
Yeah. You saw it?

FABIOLA. How can one miss it? It's like taking up two spaces in the garage.

LILIANA. Yeah, it's a little ridiculous, isn't it?

FABIOLA. I love it.

(*Pause.*)

LILIANA. Yeah, I love it too.

FABIOLA. Yeah.

(*Pause.*)

LILIANA. While you're down, if you want to you can drive it.

FABIOLA. Could I?

LILIANA. Of course. It's such a smooth ride.

FABIOLA. I know. I drove it out to get a shake last night.

LILIANA. You what?

FABIOLA. I was dying for a shake, like dying – I'm probably getting my period – and the keys were right there. So I was like, let me check it out. And you're so right, it's like butter. I feel so tall in it. I don't know how easy it can be to have something like that in Houston, like so big, you know? But it's like butter. The seats. Ah, so comfy. And I like all the stuff on the dash.

LILIANA. Yeah, it's like you're driving a spaceship, isn't it?

FABIOLA. I want it.

LILIANA. I have no doubt that – Alberto wouldn't even blink if you asked him for one. How long are you down for? We can go to the dealership together –

FABIOLA. I like that one.

(Pause.)

I like, totally fell in love with it. The color.

LILIANA. ...ah, my little truck...

FABIOLA. Not so little. Your little...big truck.

(Pause. LILIANA's trying to deal with the knot in her throat.)

LILIANA. *(Ah, man, this hurts.)* No.

(Beat.)

YOUR big truck.

FABIOLA. What? No way.

LILIANA. Yes, please. *Your* truck.

FABIOLA. Are you serious?

LILIANA. Fabiola. Of course. You're the one that's up there in Houston –

FABIOLA. Like for real, for real? You'll give me your car? Title transfer and everything?

LILIANA. Claro. No se diga más. I didn't buy it, right? / You're the one up there working so hard. And studying so hard, you know? Of course. Come on.

FABIOLA. Nope. But your good taste did choose it.

Why are you the best? You are my favorite of my dad's wives, you know that? Totally mean it.

LILIANA. Oh, that means so much to me, Fabi. De verdad. *[For real.]*

FABIOLA. I'm super serious. You know I didn't get along with that gringa he fucking brought back from Arizona. / Ugh. Arizona is the new Alabama, it's a fucking toothless hicksville.

LILIANA. Oh, I know. No, yeah, I know.

FABIOLA. Nasty fucking gringa with no class.

LILIANA. I know.

FABIOLA. I mean it. You're like...you're almost like a sister to me, but like not.

(She pulls out the keys from the pocket of her sweatpants on the bed.)

So, all mine?

LILIANA. Well, we just have to run it by Alberto.

FABIOLA. Oh, I know you'll convince him. You're the best!

(Big hug.)

Oh, and the best taste in clothes. Hands down.

(About the dress.)

Thank you, Lil! It looks good, no?

LILIANA. Way better than it would've looked on me.

FABIOLA. Shuddup, don't say that. I'll give it back to you tomorrow. Okay, I'm going to go get a raspa. That's the one thing I crave from here. In Houston the closest thing we get to it is a slushy but I tell people, I don't want a fucking neon red slushy that tastes like sugary ass, I want a fucking raspa like with the shaved fucking ice from the valley. That's what I want. If I could learn to shave ice myself, I'd totally eat that for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

(Beat.)

Oh, guess who I ran into this morning? Same bright idea, I guess, we were both getting a shake. Maritza Perez. Do you remember her?

LILIANA. Mari Perez?

FABIOLA. Yes! Oh, my God she looks amazing. She was a sore thumb standing there with all her like...I don't know. Gear. She's like all emo or something. Anyway, apparently she was living in Detroit.

LILIANA. Chicago.

FABIOLA. Yeah. Chicago and she's visiting because, actually, I don't know. She told me but I wasn't paying too much attention. Anyway, she's here for a little while. So I invited her to Dad's thing tomorrow.

LILIANA. You what?!

FABIOLA. She's your friend, right?

LILIANA. I haven't talked to her in like decades.

FABIOLA. Oh, she told me she saw you at some wedding? Or a funeral?

LILIANA. I mean, sure. She, she knew my brother and she came down for the memorial but I'm sorry I didn't really talk to her, I literally passed her in the hallway... I didn't really talk to her...

FABIOLA. Well, now you get a chance to catch up.

(About the dress.)

Hey, thanks again. It fits like a glove.

(Exiting.)

You know what? I'm going to do something nice for you cuz you've been so badass with me. What flavor raspa do you want?

LILIANA. I don't really...

FABIOLA. Vanilla! I'm going to get you vanilla. So I can have a taste. *(Exits.)*

(LILIANA sits down on the bed. The air has been popped out of her chest. Lights go down.)

End of Scene

Scene Two

(Friday Night: The master bedroom. We hear the dull sound of a party down below. Clinking and music and the occasional cackle, etc. You know, party shit. LILIANA enters in her red dress. She looks amazing in it; she's a little sweaty, though. She digs in a vanity drawer for a packet [not bottle] of pills from Mexico. Tafil to be exact. She pops one in her mouth and chases it with the glass of Malbec she's brought with her. A little while before YUYA enters with a similar pack.)

YUYA. I couldn't find / your purse.

LILIANA. I found some.

YUYA. Me encontré este paquete [*I found this package*] in the kitchen. You had another stash behind the diet pills.

LILIANA. Ah, thank God I have foresight. Should I take two? No porque luego [*No because then*] I'll fall asleep or something. I don't know what to do? I want to take the whole freaking box. He hates the band. He hates it.

YUYA. He's over that. He forgot about it as soon as he yelled at you.

LILIANA. I hope so. I hope he forgot. Osea ojalá because during the toast all I kept thinking is, chingada madre [*fucking shit*] he's going to start yelling as soon as he sees we couldn't make a five tier tres leches.

YUYA. It's just cake.

LILIANA. Como que [*What do you mean*] it's just cake? It's not just cake.

YUYA. The governor loved the red velvet. Les dimos tres pieces. [*We gave him three pieces.*]

LILIANA. I know. It's the only thing that saved me. Did you see his son? He looks like a movie star now. There was a time, long time ago, there was a time I thought we'd end up married.

YUYA. Nombre, [*No way,*] you don't want to move back to Mexico and be a governor's wife. They're killing governors right now. La mafia is making a video game of beheading them for points.

LILIANA. Ay, Yuya! ¿Por qué me traumas? [*Oh, Yuya! Why do you traumatize me?*]

YUYA. Me? The news trauma! They traumatize you every day at six o'clock. People don't even know if what they're watching is the news or some video game con good graphics. Blood everywhere.

(*Beat.*)

He did get so handsome though. He got tall. Maybe he won't go into politics like his dad.

LILIANA. Please, they're all politicians. His entire family. There's no way. Let's stop talking about him. If Alberto notices the little looks he's been giving me, no para que quierres... Do I look okay ay?

YUYA. He was watching you like this.

(*YUYA bugs out her eyes.*)

LILIANA. He was, wasn't he? I'm not just imagining. Good. Oh, but his wife es una mustia. [*is a mousy little thing*] Did you see her? No hips. No boobs. Dark. Ugh. ¿De dónde sacó a esa indita? [*Where did he find that little Indian?*]

YUYA. I didn't believe it was his wife at first.

LILIANA. I know! Yo aquí como que "Hola! Mucho gusto." Guácala. [*Me right here like, "Nice to meet you. Hi." Gross.*]

YUYA. At least the one thing you can say is that you're always the prettiest one everywhere you go.

LILIANA. (*Still messing with her hair.*) At least we can say that.

(*Beat.*)

You like my hair like this? Should I wear it down?

YUYA. No, he told you to wear it up. Luego se enoja. [*Then he'll get mad.*]

LILIANA. That's true. But I always feel so old with it up.

YUYA. You don't look old. Se te ve bien. [*It looks good on you.*]

LILIANA. I know, but it makes me feel like I'm thirty-eight or something. Over the hill.

(*A knock on the door.*)

¿Sí? Adelante. [*Yes? Come in.*]

(*MARITZA enters the threshold, not the bedroom yet, but her presence is like hot vapor in the room.*)

LILIANA jolts up.)

Yuya, ve a ver si se ofrece algo abajo. Ándale ve. [*Yuya, go see if someone needs something downstairs. Go.*]

(*Pause.*)

MARITZA. Hey, Yuya. How you been?

YUYA. (*Ignoring MARITZA, to LILIANA.*) I think maybe you should go downstairs and see if Alberto wants to dance now. Andaba diciendo before that he wanted to dance.

LILIANA. Yuya, go downstairs, I said.

YUYA. I think maybe you should come too.

LILIANA. No te lo vuelvo a repetir! [*I'm not going to say it again!*] Go check on the guests! Go!

(*YUYA exits, glaring at MARITZA.*)

MARITZA. Bye, Yuya. Nice seeing you too.

(*Very pregnant pause. Like, nine months pregnant.*)

LILIANA. Hi.

MARITZA. Hi.

(*Pause.*)

Great party.

LILIANA. Thank you. Been planning it half the year. Did you see who we got to play?

MARITZA. I know. Fancy.

LILIANA. Alberto hated them in person. They sound different in person.

MARITZA. I thought they sounded good. Speakers were a little loud though.

LILIANA. I don't think anyone noticed that. I mean, you know about that sort of thing, but I don't think... people seemed to be enjoying themselves.

MARITZA. They always do at these things, no? All the decadent food and endless drinks.

LILIANA. Let's hope so.

(Pause.)

MARITZA. You look amazing

LILIANA. Thank you. Thanks.

MARITZA. You really do.

LILIANA. Thanks. You look... I like your blazer. It's like eighties, right?

MARITZA. I guess.

LILIANA. Aren't you hot in that? It's too hot for a blazer.
¿No te estás asando? [Aren't you melting/cooking in it?]

MARITZA. Alberto's wearing a blazer.

LILIANA. I'm sure he's cooking in it. I'm sure all the men are cooking in their blazers. That's why it's good to be a woman in weather like this, because we can wear things like this and not cook in blazers.

MARITZA. Well, if he can cook in his blazer; I'll cook in my blazer.

LILIANA. I should have gotten giant fans to put everywhere, or cooling stations. (A pivot.)

MARITZA. I've been here a week.

LILIANA. Maybe we should go downstairs. Everyone will wonder where I went.

MARITZA. A week, Liliana.

LILIANA. Want to try a fun drink? They designed it just for the party. It's like a mai-tai but better.

MARITZA. I've been sitting on my ass for a whole fucking week asking myself, "Did that phone call really happen?"

LILIANA. I want to go downstairs.

MARITZA. Sitting there at my cousin's, who is too polite to ask, "What the fuck are you doing down here?" And me sitting there wondering the same fucking thing.

LILIANA. Qué malhablada eres, eh. [*What a potty mouth you have, eh.*]

MARITZA. (*Quickly.*) What? See, don't start doing that.

LILIANA. Shut up, I hate it when you act like you don't understand. You speak Spanish.

MARITZA. Since when do I speak Spanish? You won't ever fucking believe that I don't.

LILIANA. Well, why don't you? It's never made sense to me. Your last name is, what it is. Your parents speak it. You look like you do. I mean, it just makes no sense to me.

(*Quick beat.*)

Can we please go downstairs?

MARITZA. What am I doing here, Liliana?

LILIANA. I don't know, to be honest. I didn't invite you, not to be rude, but I didn't invite you. So...I don't really know what you're doing here.

MARITZA. Oh, really? You didn't invite me?

LILIANA. Not to the party. No.

MARITZA. Shut the fuck up! What am I doing in Texas?

LILIANA. Could we talk tomorrow? Wait, no because... Could we talk on Monday? I'll meet you at your cousin's on Monday.

MARITZA. You want to wait to fucking talk until Monday?! / I'm supposed to just sit on my ass waiting for you until Monday, when I've been down here for a fucking week with you avoiding my phone calls, just sitting on my ass –

LILIANA. Sssshhhh...sssshhh...calmaditacalmadita...please, Mari. Please.

(*She goes to lock the door.*)

Sssshhhh.

MARITZA. I'm not your fucking puppet Liliana.

LILIANA. Por favor no levantes la voz. [*Please don't raise your voice.*] Someone will hear you. This is not how I wanted this to go. / I promise you this is not how I wanted this to go.

MARITZA. And how exactly did you want this to go when I get a phone call in the middle of the night where you sound as if the sky is fucking falling...

LILIANA. No seas exagerada. You take everything so seriously. Sometimes I take an Ambien / and I just get –

MARITZA. Jesus fucking Christ. Are you serious right now?

LILIANA. Listen. Let's go downstairs. Let's just make the best of it and enjoy the party, vale?

MARITZA. This is you on the phone, "Please come down, Mari. You're the only person I can turn to, Mari. Please, please, Mari." You said that – among other things. So my stupid ass gets on the first plane, which is not cheap, Liliana. I get on the first plane because I think, "Fuck, Liliana's about to die or something," and here I am – almost a fucking week because for whatever reason you're now avoiding me and have locked yourself up in your fucking, in your fucking narco compound – do you know how enraging that is? / You ignoring my texts and my Facebooks and my fucking emails?!

LILIANA. Please please keep your voice down.

I'm sorry. You're right. I shouldn't have called you like that in the middle of the... I'm sorry. I promise you, everything is fine. I don't know what I was talking about. Just, just ignore everything I said, okay ay?

(A knock at the door.)

Oh, fuck me. ¿Quién? [*Who is it?*]

FABIOLA. (*Offstage.*) Lili, these shoes suck. I need to look for new ones.

LILIANA. What? Ah, yeah, hold on. (*To MARITZA.*) Just... please. Yes, you're right, I owe you an explanation. Tomorrow. Or ah, Monday. I promise.

MARITZA. Fucking puppetmaster.

(*LILIANA unlocks the door and opens it. FABIOLA is a little drunk.*)

FABIOLA. Where the hell did you get these shoes from? They are cheap as hell. The strap is slicing my heel. Only cheap shoes do that. Oh, hey. What are you guys doing in here? What you don't want to be downstairs / dancing to that gadawful...

LILIANA. I was looking for a headache...for an aspirin for Mari, only stronger and we were, you know, catching up.

FABIOLA. Were you?

(*Taking out some coke.*)

That's nice. It's good to catch up with friends.

(*To MARITZA.*)

You want a bump?

(*Pause.*)

MARITZA. Sure.

LILIANA. What? Mari, don't. Oh, God.

(*Goes into the closet.*)

I'll look for some shoes for you. I'll see if I have some shoes.

FABIOLA. Nice hair on her, huh? Hello, prom 1997. Why does she do her hair like that? She tries to so hard. Poor thing.

(*Bump.*)

Oh, my God. It's so fucking hot out there.

(*Bump.*)

Let me see your ink.

(**MARITZA** shows **FABIOLA** her tattoo. **MARITZA** bumps.)

FABIOLA. I like that. I like the style cuz it's not too obvious, you know? But it's still a flower. What kind of flower is that?

MARITZA. It's a lily.

FABIOLA. Right. I want like a big arm sleeve tattoo one day. Like from here to here.

MARITZA. Really?

FABIOLA. Not really. But wouldn't that be cool?

MARITZA. Are you the tattoo kind?

FABIOLA. Are you kidding? Look at this.

(*She lifts her dress and pulls down her panties.*)

It means "bullshit" in Chinese. Or like the equivalent.

MARITZA. Nice.

(*LILIANA enters to FABIOLA pulling down her panties. She enters with tons of shoes. She spills them on the table.*)

LILIANA. Fabiola, ¿qué haces?

MARITZA. She's showing me her bullshit. Or the equivalent.

(*FABIOLA's delighted with MARITZA.*)

LILIANA. I brought everything out, everything I think that goes with that dress. I mean, you could do color if you wanted because it's white.

FABIOLA. Maybe I'll just go barefoot. What do you think?

MARITZA. Do it.

FABIOLA. I need a fucking pedicure, though.

MARITZA. Nah.

FABIOLA. Yeah? Barefoot?

(*Bump.*)

So where did you find that design?

MARITZA. (*Re: tattoo.*) What? This?

FABIOLA. Yeah, who drew it? I might want a flower like that.
Like right here.

MARITZA. I drew it.

FABIOLA. You drew that? That's like really good.

MARITZA. Well, thank you.

LILIANA. Maritza is actually an amazing artist, I mean, do
you still do your art thing?

MARITZA. Unfortunately. Yeah. I never learned to do
something respectable with my life.

LILIANA. She's being modest but she's actually kind of
famous, right?

MARITZA. I wouldn't use the term famous.

FABIOLA. Shuddup, are you serious?

MARITZA. Your *stepmother* here is being kind. I have a gallery.
And yeah, some people like my work. But I wouldn't
say that makes me famous.

FABIOLA. Shuddup, that's amazing. Dude, I paint. I do.

MARITZA. Oh, yeah?

LILIANA. She makes these like, huge canvas things with –

FABIOLA. Shuddup. I love it. Okay, you have to take a look
at my stuff.

MARITZA. Sure.

FABIOLA. Lili, who knew that you had cool friends! Like,
who knew.

(Offering coke.)

Lili?

LILIANA. I don't...no thanks.

FABIOLA. Oh, right. Pills are your thing.

LILIANA. ¿De qué hablas? [*What are you talking about?*]

FABIOLA. I don't blame you, to deal with my dad you need
like an IV of Xanax to like drag around with you.
My dad, as soon as you start to be emotional about
anything – shit you could be watching *Oprah* or like a
Disney movie with puppies and who doesn't cry at that,
you know? But you start crying and it annoys my dad

so much that he'll literally pop a pill in your mouth. I mean, like he'll take out a pill, pull down your jaw and pop the fucking Tafil in your mouth. All those pills right there? Reynosa. They're all from Mex. He doesn't need a prescription. He's got everyone sedated with those fucking pills, right Lili?

LILIANA. Everybody takes those. I only take it here and there when I'm stressed. Tafil is for children anyway, I just take the child dose

FABIOLA. Pop two in your mouth: grown up dose. Pop three:

(Snores.)

This party sucks. The music is atrocious. I told my dad that that band was shit.

LILIANA. Did you?

FABIOLA. It's shit. Mari, let's go do something. You seem like a fun girl. Let's go look for trouble in this shithole of a town. What do you think?

MARITZA. *(Pause.)* Okay. I'm down.

FABIOLA. Awesome.

LILIANA. I don't know if you should... Mari and I were catching up since...she's leaving tomorrow.

FABIOLA. Are you leaving tomorrow?

MARITZA. Maybe.

FABIOLA. Ah, well if you're leaving then we should definitely go party, you know?

MARITZA. Like I said...I'm down.

LILIANA. But we didn't get to catch up. We were...we didn't get to catch up and I haven't talked to you in so long and we were catching up.

MARITZA. Maybe I'll stay till Monday then. We can catch up later.

LILIANA. Why don't we catch up now?

FABIOLA. *(Laughing.)* – Sounds like the two of you are saying you want some ketchup. Like for fries.

(Laughing.)

Come on, let's peace out. Liliana, tell Papi I had to go. That I just had to go because this music, it's making my ears bleed. Okay?

LILIANA. He's going to be angry.

FABIOLA. Well, make sure he's not. You're so good at calming him down.

(To MARITZA.)

I've never seen anyone calm him down the way she does. I don't know what she does. You got like fairy dust. Okay, let's go. Ciao ciao.

(FABIOLA exits. MARITZA lingers.)

Maritza!

MARITZA. Monday.

(LILIANA looks like a wet dog or something. No air in her chest again. A moment.)

End of Scene

Scene Three

(Friday into Saturday: The back deck of the Cantu's huge patio. There are beautiful equipales with the family crest and lots of fabulous patio décor. It's, like, tacky but fabulous, you know? Firstly with a touch of Northern Mexico, including some Tapatio pieces [like the equipales and some big talavera vases] but also with a little Southwest/American comfort thrown in there, like stuff from the Sharper Image. There's one of those electronic, self-contained fire pits, and the wavy light from the pool reflects onto the deck, giving it a sort of glow.

LILIANA is sitting in the dark, although it's not that dark since the pool is lit and the Texas moon is smiling. She's eating a bowl of Fritos with lime juice and salsa Tabasco. She licks her fingers every so often. Maybe she uses an exprimidor de limones to put more lime on the Fritos. She's got the cordless house phone and her cell phone, which she checks a couple of times. It's like three or four a.m. Dude, it's mad late. She should be in bed. YUYA enters after a while.)

YUYA. That's gonna put a big hole in your stomach.

LILIANA. This is my second bowl.

YUYA. Shoot, I'm going to have to roll you up the stairs.

LILIANA. Shut up Yuya. Fuck, why don't I smoke? If I smoked I'd be super skinny.

YUYA. Maybe you should take it up. No porque luego the man upstairs, he wouldn't like the smell.

LILIANA. ¿Verdad? My hair would reek. Okay, we need a better plan to make this little belly be flat again. It needs to go down like this, not stick out like that. Guácala, I'm so gross.

YUYA. I didn't want to say it, but you are getting a little wide right here in the middle.

LILIANA. Shut up, don't say that to me Yuya. Are you serious?

YUYA. Have I ever lied to you?

(Freaked-out pause.)

LILIANA. Oh, my God you're right. I think I'm growing some back fat. Do you see? I'm getting back fat and love handles. Qué trauma.

YUYA. The best was when you used to throw up, that's when you look the best.

LILIANA. Yeah, I looked so good then. You could see my bones right here. But my breath smelled so bad and you know... I kept getting dizzy everywhere.

YUYA. Plus your hair...

LILIANA. Oh, I know. I thought I was in that movie *The Craft* all of a sudden. Like that girl washing her hair in the school shower and she's like washing it and it's coming off all over her hands. Cállate, no me lo recuerdes. *[Shut up, don't remind me of it.]* Imagine if I lost my hair? I'd be so ugly.

(YUYA nods in agreement. A quick moment.)

Maybe we need to go back to Monterrey for those injections again because that totally worked. I was so skinny with the injections because I couldn't keep anything down. But we need to find a doctor who doesn't make me break out into hives. I don't know what was in that stuff, but the last time we went –

YUYA. Uy, you looked like the Swamp Thing.

LILIANA. I did. Shut up, Yuya. Stop stressing me out.

(Eats more Fritos.)

¿Ya ves cómo me tienes? *[You see how you have me?]* Here I am eating trash. But why does it have to be so fucking good?

YUYA. You gonna rot your guts.

LILIANA. Good, maybe I'll get an ulcer and not get hungry.

YUYA. Luego [*Then*] you're gonna be complaining in the morning que acid reflux this and que acid reflux that.

LILIANA. What are you talking about, it is morning. It's going to be light out in a couple of hours.

(*Beat.*)

Ah, I hate it when Fabiola's here. I fucking hate it when she comes down. Right when we got Alberto calm and...you know, appeased and mansito, aquí vienes esta pinche huerca... [*tame, here comes this fucking...*]

(*Beat.*)

I'm going to have to give her the car, you know? Hija de su puta madre. [*Motherfucker.*] I'm going to have to give her my fucking truck.

YUYA. I don't know. Her daddy no está muy happy with her. [*is not very happy with her*]

LILIANA. Oh, please. He always does whatever she wants in the end. Always gets her way. Nada más saca la mano. [*She just sticks out her hand.*]

(*Stretching out her hand.*)

"Please, Papi. Papito por favor." [*Daddy, please.*]

(*Beat.*)

Wait.

(*Goes to look through the glass door.*)

Imagínate si nos catcha Alberto. Por favor Diosito que no se despierte. [*Imagine if Alberto catches us. Please God don't let him wake up.*] We're all fucked if he wakes up and sees his Porsche missing. How did she find the keys? I don't even know where he keeps the fucking keys. Me lleva... [*Fuck me...*]

YUYA. ¿Para que te preocupas por ella? [*Why do you worry about her?*]

LILIANA. ¿Cómo qué por qué me preocupo? [*What do you mean why do I worry?*]

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