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SF PERUSALS

My Mañana Comes

Elizabeth Irwin

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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www.SamuelFrench.com
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FOR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA
Info@SamuelFrench.com
1-866-598-8449

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MY MAÑANA COMES was first produced by the Playwrights Realm at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater in New York City on August 26, 2014. The performance was directed by Chay Yew, with sets by Wilson Chin, costumes by Moria Sine Clinton, lights by Nicole Pearce, sound and composition by Mikhail Fiksel, production supervision by Production Core, and props by Anna Demenkoff. The Production Stage Manager was Winnie Y. Lok and the Assistant Stage Manager was Katie Stevens. The cast was as follows:

PETER . . . . . Jason Bowen
JORGE . . . . . José Joaquin Pérez
PEPE . . . . . Brian Quijada
WHALID . . . . . Reza Salazar

CHARACTERS

PETER – (late 20s), male, black American busser/runner, easily the best at his job, a born New Yorker, lives uptown in West Harlem with his long-term girlfriend and daughter, four year veteran of the restaurant; his casually gruff fallback demeanor belies his deep moral convictions. He is rarely effusive and with the exception of his outbursts near the end of the play, he is detached, cool, emotions always in check. Seemingly unshakeable.

JORGE – (late 20s), male, Mexican busser/runner, emigrated from Puebla almost four years ago, lives in Corona. Short but maybe slightly taller than Pepe, indigenous features, reserved, a quiet maturity and deliberateness in his manner. A significant level of comfort/familiarity with the U.S. culture/people. A quiet sense of judgment comes from him at times; he is not so harmless as he may initially appear. Has been faithfully sending money home to his wife and children for the past four years.

PEPE – (early 20s), male, Mexican busser/runner, emigrated from Juarez three months ago, lives in Corona as well but in a different building. Short with indigenous features, eager, restless, lacking a poker face in all ways. He is excited and excitable in this new life in New York. His youth is apparent in his weakness for instant gratification and the shiny, the new, the cool, be it an object or relationship.

WHALID – (mid to late 20s), male, busser/runner, has worked at the restaurant a few weeks, third generation Mexican-American, grandparents from Oaxaca, grew up in Coney Island with the only Mexicans around him his immediate family/grandparents. Still lives with his parents but he certainly does not advertise it. Carries a sense of knowing on any given topic, quick-tongued, above average height, handsome, very Brooklyn, seems more Puerto Rican/Italian than Mexican.

SETTING

The play takes places over the course of a few weeks in a restaurant on 66th Street and Madison Ave on a particularly tony block, flanked by luxury boutiques and white-gloved doormen buildings. The restaurant is managed by an unseen staff: Laurent, the floor manager, a French-Algerian immigrant, and Fabryce, the general manager, a Parisian immigrant. There are two separate areas in the back of house: the expediting station where prepared food waits for delivery (often referred to as "upstairs" in the script) and the supply area where stock is kept (often referred to as "downstairs" in the script), which houses lockers, a no-frills management office (the door of which is never seen open) and a stockroom. The front of house is not seen but there is a door (ideally a swinging one) through which it is accessed.

The play begins the week after Memorial Day weekend and it is already summer hot. The nearest train is the N/R at 59th and 5th or the 6 at 68th and Lex. It does not rain in this time except for once, a brief downpour to which the back of house staff is oblivious.

In the kitchen there is fluorescent overhead lighting that is always on when the restaurant is open, and a chef's radio which plays continuously at a low level, usually Spanish love songs or salsa, often 93.1 L'Amor. The back-of-house staff wear uniform Nehru-style jackets and matching pants with black kitchen shoes. They move between the front and back of house delivering food, collecting dirty dishes, refilling water and bread baskets, delivering clean glasses to the bar and removing dirty ones. They work as they speak; the tasks are both rote and challenging as they must be done with precision and in prioritized order. Motion is constant, of bodies and objects. It is almost a dance, to keep all cogs moving without crashing, everything close but not touching. It is so often bright, so rarely still, even more rarely quiet, that when it is, it is jarring.

NOTE ON THE SET

It is not essential that the set has an actual downstairs and upstairs but instead that there is kitchen area directly off the front of house where the food is prepared and the runner/bussers must be ready at any time to attend to customer needs and then a more isolated storage-type area in which the runner/bussers work but are allowed a greater degree of quiet and can expect to be interrupted only if there is a pressing need from the "upstairs"/front of house.

NOTE FOR PRODUCTION

Throughout this play kitchen business is described (i.e. folding linens, bringing in racks of glasses, etc) but unless specifically referenced, other back of house kitchen tasks can be substituted as meets the needs of the production. The existence, however, of the business of the back of house must not be eliminated – these men are moving and working and the play takes place in and around this work. It is essential that it does not supersede it. For authenticity, it is helpful to have a director or other cast/production team member who has spent significant time working in restaurants and can provide realistic suggestions when substitutions are needed/desired.

The play should be performed without intermission.

NOTE ON TEXT

Dialogue in brackets is not to be spoken.

Scene One

(Lights are up onstage.)

(Blackout, simultaneously we hear the beginning bars of Jean Grae's "My Crew," stopping right before Verse 1 begins.)*

(Lights up.)

(Thursday 11:47 p.m. End of Shift)

*(***PETER** *and* **JORGE** *are standing at the prep table in the back of house counting their tip out from the waiters onto the stainless steel prep table.)*

PETER. *(pumped, riding the wave of a busy night)* Yo, Jorge, we was killin' it tonight, huh? Busboys of the year!

JORGE. *(smiling, but calmer, more focused on counting/ organizing his bills)* It was good.

PETER. No, *we* were good.

JORGE. *(allowing)* We were good.

PETER. Like lightning, right? *(picking up a bread basket from a stack and placing it down in front of* **JORGE** *as if he were a customer)* Zap! *(picking it up and placing it down again)* Zap! *(again)* Zap!…right?

JORGE. *(trying out the word)* Zap!

PETER. Yup!

JORGE. *(getting into it)* That was a little crazy…when the two parties of ten came in?

PETER. Two of ten, *plus* like a six, three deuces, a three-top, all within, what? Like fifteen minutes? And us? We were like boom! Not even a fork dropped on the

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* Please see Music Use Note on page 3

floor, all night! You want bread? *(mimes putting down bread)* Bread. Water? *(mimes pouring water)* Water. Fresh pepper? *(mimes grinding pepper)* Fresh pepper. New napkin? *(mimes whisking away a napkin and placing another down)* New napkin.

JORGE. *(laughing a little, getting in on it)* More butter? *(mimes placing a butter dish down)* Butter.

PETER. Exaaaactly. Some salt?

JORGE. *(miming)* Salt!

PETER. I need more ice!

JORGE. *(mimes scooping ice into a cup)* Ice! – *(miming holding a dish up)* This isn't hot –

PETER. *(mimes grabbing the dish, placing it on the service area for a reheat and grabbing it back a second later and putting it back in front of* **JORGE***)* You want hot? *(mimes same action again)* Hot!

JORGE. That one lady, she sent the soup back –

JORGE & PETER. Three times –

PETER. I know dogg, that shit was bananas –

JORGE. I think she wants to burn her mouth, no?

PETER. Did you see? After the third time then she let it sit there for like ten minutes and Julien asked her, like "Miss, is everything ok with your soup now?" and she's like "It just needs to *cool* a little" –

JORGE. *(laughing)* She said that?

PETER. *(laughing)* Yup. Julien was like tryna keep a straight face, man, but you know how he be – *(in a French accent)* "Zees stupid American sheets" –

> *(***JORGE** *is chuckling but back to counting his money.)*

"Een France, you do not send back zee soup, zee soup is how the zee chef has prepared eet – " I'm like "Yeah Julien, but what if the chef is an Ecuadorian line cook named Nacho and he's three Coronas in?"

JORGE. Nacho drank a lot tonight.

PETER. He was ripped by eleven o'clock.

*(***JORGE** *shakes his head in disapproval.)*

*(***WHALID** *enters from downstairs, passing through to the front of house with a clean rack of glasses.)*

A-yo, bro, do me a favor, see if Julien left our shift pay in the bucket?

WHALID. In the tip bucket?

PETER. Yeah, sometimes he do.

*(***WHALID** *nods.)*

(to **JORGE***)*

Good night, huh?

JORGE. Yup.

PETER. 'Cause it's Thursday, though –

JORGE. Yeah –

PETER. Maybe Friday will still be good, too, though. Make enough to take my daughter back to Chuck E. Cheese Sunday after brunch. She love that. Took her and my girl last weekend?

*(***JORGE** *looks at him and gives a little smile.)*

(remembering, sweet)

It was nice. *(shrugs, a little embarrassed)* It was aight –

WHALID. *(calling from the front)* A-yo! Where am I looking, man? I don't see – *(voice fading out)*

PETER. *(shaking his head to* **JORGE***)* How many weeks he been here? *(***JORGE** *shrugs)* Too many to be pulling that new guy shit.

JORGE. Maybe Julien didn't leave it.

*(***PETER** *kind of rolls his eyes and heads through the doors to front of house.)*

(As he walks through his phone rings. He answers it while still standing in the doorway.)

PETER. What's up?… Yup, on my way out…baby's sleeping?… I know, but she's still *my* baby…you put the fan on for her? On medium, right – she like it on – ok, ok, I'm just checking…yeah, send in the registration – yeah, three days like we always do, your mother will watch her the other three – yeah, yeah…alright, let me finish up so I can get home…alright. *(quieter)* Love you too.

*(***PETER** *hangs up and passes through to front of house.)*

*(***PEPE** *enters with a large plastic container from downstairs.)*

(He wipes the sweat from his forehead with a rag.)

PEPE. Almost done.

*(***JORGE** *nods.)*

You are taking home the train seven?

*(***JORGE** *nods.)*

Tonight you can wait for me?

*(***JORGE** *regards him for a moment but then nods okay.)*

Bueno… *(pause, awkward)* It's getting hotter, yes?

*(***JORGE** *shrugs – "Of course.")*

No more e'snow. Remember when I first come? *(no response)* So funny when I first come to see e'snow. *(remembering his reaction)* A la madre, ¿qué es –

JORGE. Snow.

*(***PEPE** *looks at him with a question in his eyes.)*

JORGE. *Snow.* No es e'snow.

PEPE. *(to himself)* Snow…snow.

(beat)

*(***PEPE** *sees* **JORGE** *folding his tips and putting them meticulously in his pocket.* **JORGE** *types something into his cellphone.)*

PEPE. *(cont.)* You have minutes?

*(***JORGE** *shakes his head no.)*

I need to get minutes.

JORGE. Mmm.

*(***JORGE** *puts his phone away but then stops, like he has forgotten something. He pulls out the neatly folded cash again and looks at the top few bills. He nods to himself and then types something else into his phone.)*

PEPE. *(observing)* You are writing your tips, always, at night.

*(***JORGE** *nods curtly.)*

That is good.

*(***JORGE** *shrugs.)*

Then you know how much you have, ¿no?… *(almost to himself)* Organizado.

JORGE. *(packing up his things, deliberately)* Sí.

PEPE. How much you have saved?

*(***JORGE** *shrugs.* **WHALID** *enters with a rack of clean espresso cups and saucers, putting them on the table to unload them behind the espresso machine.* **PETER** *enters behind him, carrying an inventory list which he is examining, He has two bottles of wine under his arm which he places on the prep table.)*

WHALID. You wanna know how big's his purse?

PEPE. His purse?

WHALID. How many pesitos homeboy saved since running over the border.

JORGE. Chale…

WHALID. Oh sorry, did you stroll?

PEPE. Stroll?

PETER. *(to* **WHALID***, but not so serious)* Hey man, don't bust on Senior Taco, he probably did stroll, all gangster and shit *(he imitates* **JORGE** *pimp walking over the border and*

then in a Mexican accent, very calm, like a CEO speaking) – 'Jes, I am here, where are the deeshes?'

(**JORGE** *smiles and shakes his head,* **WHALID** *laughs.)*

(nodding to **PEPE***)*

PETER. This taquito, though, yeah, he definitely scampered through, like a little bunny rabbit – "¡Ándale! ¡Ándale! Plees! Don't shoot!"

(**WHALID** *and* **JORGE** *laugh.)*

PEPE. What? No!

WHALID. *(to* **PETER***)* They talkin' about how many pesitos Jorge got jammed in his shoe box under the bed –

JORGE. *(dismissive)* Under the bed.

WHALID. Won't fit, right? I know how you dudes do, probably you got enough to buy a house –

PETER. *(distractedly, marking his invoice sheet)* Yeah Jorge? You gonna build una casa mexicana?

(**JORGE** *reacts as he would – a look/a word, etc.)*

WHALID. Yeah, see, I knew it.*(looking over to* **PETER***)* And then I bet one day he just gonna gather them bills all up into a sack, throw them on a donkey, come tell Fabryce "I'm out" and ride on down to a big old castle in Puebla. *(to* **JORGE***)* Ain't you?

PETER. Yo, that would be some shit to see. Jorge all "I'm out!"

PEPE. How you know he's from Puebla? You been to Puebla?

WHALID. You're all from Puebla. Don't ask me the hell why, I'm not from there.

PEPE. I'm from Juarez, man.

WHALID. And you still got your nuts? Felicidades.

PEPE. Where you from?

WHALID. I'm from Brooklyn, papa.

PEPE. But your parents are from Mexico –

WHALID. My *grandparents*, and not from pinche Puebla.

PETER. You're Mexican? I thought you was Puerto Rican.

WHALID. Bro, *I* thought I was Puerto Rican 'til I was like *eight* and my grandpa's like why you sitting under that Puerto Rican flag on the beach, that's not your country.

PETER. Where you grew up?

WHALID. Coney Island, man, BK *deep*.

PETER. *(nodding toward* **JORGE** *and* **PEPE***)* Well, you wit your people now.

WHALID. My people. I never even seen a Mexican outside my family 'til after high school.

JORGE. *(to* **PEPE***)* ¿Listo?

WHALID. Come on, let's go little man, Jorge gotta get home and count his pesos, hide them under the mattress you all share with eight other dudes –

PETER. Jorge don't do that. *(turning and looking at him)* Do you, Jorge? Nah, nah –

WHALID. Yup –

*(***JORGE** *shakes his head but it is not a "no" to the question.)*

PETER. Really Jorge? I thought you was playing when you said –

PEPE. Not with eight.

PETER. Oh well, as long as it's only seven.

PEPE. It's not like that –

PETER. But you all sleep with other dudes?

WHALID. You all live in the same apartment?

JORGE. No.

PEPE. I am on one oh third [street].

WHALID. You?

*(***WHALID** *looks at* **JORGE** *expectantly.)*

JORGE. *("mind your own business")* Not one oh third.

WHALID. Relax man, I ain't comin over for no sardine sleepover.

*(***JORGE** *just shakes his head at* **WHALID**.*)*

WHALID. *(to* **JORGE***)* I bet you saved thirty grand. You been here a minute, right?

PEPE. Thirty grand? I'm gonna do that –

PETER. *(kindly)* Suck my huevos, Jorge. In the four years you been here you saved thirty grand? With these peanuts?

WHALID. *(doing the math)* How much your slice of mattress cost, Jorge?

*(***JORGE***'s back is to the others, packing his bag at his locker, he is listening but not engaging.)*

PEPE. I could do it, I swear I could –

PETER. Thirty grand?

WHALID. All you gotta do is be a mattress-sharing faggot for four years.

JORGE. *(turning)* I am not a faggot.

WHALID. Oh and then you gotta go live in Mexico. *(to* **PETER***)* New York rent be mad high. Why don't you do that? How's your Spanish? You and Jorge could be neighbors.

PETER. *(pauses as if considering it)* Sorry, Jorge, you my homey but I'm not riding no donkey to the store.

PEPE. We do not ride –

PETER. Cállate new guy –

PEPE. I've been here three months, *(nodding to* **WHALID***) he* is the new guy –

WHALID. *(pretending to jockey a donkey as* **PETER***)* Giddyup burro! Giddyup!

JORGE. *(grabbing his things to walk out but pausing to say this)* You wish you could come live how I'll live when I get home.

(There is a moment. **PETER** *gets a kind of look on his face like "Excuse me?"* **JORGE** *doesn't notice but* **WHALID** *does.)*

*(***JORGE** *and* **PEPE** *exit.)*

(There is a pause in conversation as **PETER** *and* **WHALID** *continue their end of night tasks.)*

PETER. *(turning back to* **WHALID***)* You think he really got thirty grand?

WHALID. Been here four years? Living like that all squish squash in Corona for fifty bucks a week? *(pauses)* Yeah… probably.

PETER. Shit.

WHALID. Yup. *(shaking his head)* Yup.

*(***JORGE** *re-enters and grabs a Styrofoam container, the leftover share of family meal he packed up earlier to take home.)*

PETER. Dag, Jorge, that's this morning's family meal? Shit's mad cold by now. Those rolls all hard and shit. You always doin' that. Why you always doin' that?

WHALID. I bet that's breakfast. Man's gotta get his breakfast if he's gonna save his bills, right, chaparro?

*(***JORGE** *shakes his head.)*

JORGE. ¿Por qué te importa?

WHALID. No me importa, amor, I'ma be eating my hot McGriddles in the morning, you gonna be lovin' up on your rock o' Gibraltar rolls and your crack a tooth mac 'n' cheese, it's all good baby!

PETER. Crack a tooth! – That's nasty, though, Jorge, qué pasa with that shit? You makin' me sad.

WHALID. Makin' me gag.

PETER. *(nodding at* **WHALID** *– "Don't dog* **JORGE***")* Ahhh…

JORGE. *(shaking his head, about to grab the sweatshirt he has put down, halfway amused, halfway annoyed)* Cabrones.

PETER. *(nodding toward* **JORGE***'s styrofoam container)* You really eat this shit for breakfast every time you work the night before? Always? I thought you only did that when it was good. Like waffle day.

JORGE. *(shaking his head and moving toward the exit)* Ciao. *(to* **PEPE***)* Vámonos.

WHALID. See, he ain't say no!

(**JORGE** *exits.*)

PETER. That shit's hardly good enough hot.

Scene Two

(Friday 11:52 a.m. Top of Lunch Shift)

*(***WHALID** *has an EMT guidebook out on the prep table.* **JORGE** *is chopping fruit.* **PEPE** *is having seconds of family meal.)*

WHALID. *(scanning the text book, to* **PEPE***)* Oye, li'l man, help me out with something.

PEPE. *(eager)* Help?

WHALID. Yeah. Be my dummy.

PEPE. Dummy? Como…¿estúpido?

WHALID. Nah, man, like an important dummy. Come on, help a friend out, help an amigo.

PEPE. What do I do?

WHALID. Here, *(fishing a used but not too dirty linen tablecloth out of the bin and billowing it out onto the floor)* lay down.

*(***JORGE** *looks over and kind of shakes his head a little.)*

PEPE. *(to* **JORGE***)* Es temprano. No hay nadie.

WHALID. Cálmate Jorge, lunch service ain't even started yet.

(directing **PEPE***)* On your back. Okay. *(taking his pulse)* Sixteen. Times four. *(thinks)* Sixty-four. That's too low. Wait no – it's seventy to one hundred or sixty to one hundred? Sixty…yup, that's normal adult. Sixty to one hundred.

PEPE. *(eyes shut)* I think I am very healthy.

WHALID. Cállate man, if you were healthy, you wouldn't be havin' no EMT look at you.

PEPE. What's EMT stand for –

WHALID. Pepe! You unconscious! Shut it!

PEPE. Ay, perdón.

WHALID. Yo Jorge, *(points to a full-size flashlight near the chef's area)* gimme that flashlight.

*(***JORGE** *kind of rolls his eyes at being interrupted but hands him the flashlight.* **WHALID** *pulls up* **PEPE***'s eyelids and shines the light on* **PEPE***'s pupils.)*

WHALID. Oh shit. I was wrong.

*(***PEPE** *cracks open one eye, unsure if he can be "alive.")*

Shit. Shit!

*(***JORGE** *looks over.)*

JORGE. ¿Qué pasó?

WHALID. Qué lástima, this nigga's dead.

PEPE. ¿Qué? I'm not dead! You killed me!

WHALID. *(cracking up)* If only it were that easy. Lay back down güey. I still gotta revive you.

(He puts his ear to **PEPE***'s mouth first.)*

Checking for breath. Uh oh, no breath.

JORGE. *(absently)* Uh oh.

WHALID. *(he places the heel of his hand on* **PEPE***'s chest in proper CPR placement)* Right between the nips.

*(***WHALID** *starts pumping* **PEPE***'s chest.)*

JORGE. You are supposed to do it that hard?

*(***PETER** *enters with an armful of linens from downstairs and rests them on the prep table for a moment.)*

WHALID. Yo man, I'm the one who's studying for the EMT test, not your Mexican busboy ass.

JORGE. *(unbothered)* And you are not a busboy?

PETER. *(to* **WHALID***, in the same cadence as* **JORGE** *but not mocking)* And you are not a Mexican?

JORGE. *(a fact)* He is not a Mexican.

WHALID. Gracias a Dios.

PETER. *(to* **WHALID** *and* **PEPE***)* Y'alls sidework better be done, man, we could get early sat, yesterday's lunch we had six deuces by 12:15.

WHALID. We good, bro, no worries, look – *(gesturing to the prepared bread baskets on the prep table)*

*(***PETER** *looks and nods. He opens the silverware drawer.)*

PETER. You got bread but no silverware. People gonna spread butter with they fingers?

WHALID. *(to* **PETER***)* My bad, man, you right, just give me two minutes… I'll do your ice, too.

PETER. *(considering)* Two buckets?

WHALID. Yeah, man, I got you.

PETER. Alright.

WHALID. Two minutes, two minutes. *(to* **PETER***, putting his ear down on* **PEPE***'s mouth to listen for his breath)* Yo, I think Pepe's boobies getting bigger. You think Jorge been letting him eat all that Mickey D's, Popeye's American not so lean cuisine?

PETER. Uh oh, have you, Jorge?

JORGE. I do not know what that gordito eats.

PEPE. *(opening his eyes and standing)* Gordito? *(tries to show his muscles)*

WHALID. Unconscious, güey! Shhhhh!!! Sleepytime!

*(***PETER** *grabs a spoon and holds it in the air, playfully making toward* **PEPE***'s eye.)*

PEPE. Ahh! ¿Qué haces –

PETER. *(hand holding* **PEPE***'s shoulder, mimes grabbing* **PEPE***'s license from his pocket and pretending to examine it)* Uh oh, looks like you stole the wrong American's license – you an organ donor man!

PEPE. Organ donut?

PETER. Organ donor! *(pretends to be holding a license)* It says so right here! Hold still, I gotta get your eyes while they're still good!

*(***PEPE** *wrangles away from him.)*

WHALID. *(laughing)* Aw, man, you scared my dummy! I'm not done reviving him!

PEPE. I'm not a dummy –

PETER. Jorge, you see? Pepe was scared. He felt like he was back at home in Mexico, gonna get his body parts sold on the black market–

JORGE. *(straight-faced)* You have a market in Mexico?

PETER. I have a – what? No man, the black market, Jorge, like –

*(***JORGE** *has starting smiling, giving a tiny laugh.)*

(realizing)

Oh shit, my Mexican nigga makin' black jokes. *(laughing, surprised, also proud)* Ah man, Jorge, ah man. You really been here too long. I remember when you were just a innocent little – *(peering through the door to the front, cuts off his reminisce)*

Oh shit, we getting sat. Nice, nice. Let's do this. *(turning back to* **JORGE** *for a second, shaking his head, kindly)* "You have a market in Mexico"?

JORGE. *(smiling, very proud but knowing not to ruin the moment)* Whose section?

WHALID. Me?

PETER. Jorge. *(to* **PEPE***)* Yo man, you remember to fill the pitchers today? Or you forget again?

*(***JORGE** *exits to the front.)*

PEPE. *(guiltily)* I – *(can't think of an excuse fast enough)* …

*(***PETER** *shakes his head at him as* **PEPE** *dashes to the front.)*

*(***PETER** *and* **WHALID** *chill for the rare down moment in the kitchen, leaning against the prep table.* **PETER** *wipes something down.)*

PETER. *(to* **WHALID***)* So you doin' the EMT dream, huh?

WHALID. Yeah, man, yeah. I read like half the study book already. My cousin been doing it a few years, it's a real nice gig. I just gotta save some bills this summer to pay for the test course, pass the test and then the FDNY calls soon as they need the next class.

PETER. *(looking to the front)* Man, why they seating that party at twenty-two? That's a table for four and it's right next to the bathroom, they got eighteen open right next –

WHALID. Yo man, you the maitre'd or the bus boy?

*(***PETER** *gives him a look.)*

PETER. There's a right way to do shit.

*(***WHALID** *shrugs.)*

So, EMT, huh? Last week ain't I hear you talking about "Sanitation all the way"? You decided garbage ain't your for-te?

WHALID. Nah. This is the way to go, definitely. My cousin told me EMT's what's up. Steady, good money, everything organized.

PETER. Organized how?

WHALID. Like they give you your whole schedule for a *year* at a time.

PETER. Year?

WHALID. Yeah, man, organized like *organized*. Paid like a clock.

PETER. Paid like a – ? What does that even mean, man? How a clock –

WHALID. *(dismisses with a wave, but not rude)* Gonna be nice. Nicer than this "maybe tonight I make eighty bucks, maybe thirty, let's hope the manager don't call in a fifth busser, don't ever trip and fall anywhere cause you ain't got no insurance, can't call in when you dog-ass sick, ain't no paid time off" –

PETER. It's alright most times man. You can figure *about* whachu gonna make you been here long enough –

WHALID. Salary man, salary, bennies, personal days, sick days, *vacation* days. Plus, you know, you like saving people's lives and shit. Not just picking up the garbage. *(gesturing to the front of house)* Not just running out plates, bringing 'em back. That's pretty cool.

PETER. *(shrugs)* Ain't like you a doctor –

WHALID. Ain't no good to have a doctor if someone can't get you to see the doctor, do what you need on the way there –

PETER. Yeah, alright. But you ain't even took the course. You ain't even signed up, are you? Talk to me when –

WHALID. Soon, man, soon.

PETER. But you here right now. So get your bread ready for when you get sat. 'Cause everybody out there wants lunch, not their pulse taken, ok?

*(***WHALID** *sucks his teeth as he starts prepping some bread baskets.* **PETER** *is setting up the expediting station with masterful precision.)*

(A moment passes.)

WHALID. What else would you rather be doing 'stead uh this grind?

*(***PETER** *shrugs and shakes his head.)*

PETER. I'm good, man.

WHALID. Word? For real?

*(***PETER** *shrugs.* **WHALID** *looks at him for a moment, analyzing his sincerity.)*

PETER. Suits me, man… I ain't got no beef with this.

WHALID. You oughta check out this EMT thing with me, yo. No joke, this could get you outta here –

PETER. *(spelling it out) Man* – …this…shit…fine for me.

WHALID. *(finally listening, pauses)* Yeah. Ok. I see that.

PETER. Fabryce and I, we always been cool.

WHALID. Yeah, he seemed aight…but he ain't hardly here.

PETER. It's this new manager, Laurent? That dude useless. I don't like things disorganized…but Fabryce'll come back around, after he opens the Hamptons joint. Get it all right again. I'll be good.

WHALID. *(nodding)* Okay…okay.

(beat)

PETER. I mean, come on. I *run* this place.

WHALID. *(considering)* Yeah, alright. [If] You say so.

PETER. Listen, man, you think this job easy to do right?

*(***WHALID** *kind of shrugs.)*

How many lime garnishes you threw out last night end of shift?

WHALID. *(defensive)* I didn't throw nothing out, man, there wasn't any left –

PETER. Exactly.

WHALID. Huh?

PETER. Even though we cut a couple quarts extra, right?

WHALID. *("So?")* Yeah, for that shrimp dish or whatever –

PETER. Firecracker shrimp app. Two lime garnishes each. One and a half quarts extra, actually. Enough for fifteen, sixteen apps. Give or take an app. You know how many we moved?

WHALID. *(eyes rolling a little but listening)* I don't know, man, ten? Twenty?

PETER. Fifteen.

WHALID. Fifteen.

PETER. You know how I knew how many limes to cut? *(***WHALID** *shrugs)* How many truffle squid apps from last week did we move? *(not bothering to wait for an answer)* 'Bout eighteen, twenty on Wednesday, *(remembering exactly)* twenty-…two on Thurday. And this week it's getting hotter, people like seafood in summer. *But* – remember 'bout half our customers see the word firecracker and say, *(imitating an unsure customer)* "hmmm…spicy"? *(referencing earlier)* Fifteen. Sixteen.

[You cut] A quart and a half extra limes. Not three. *(derisively)* Not "Four just in case" – [then you're] throwing out whole quarts end of night, run low today, have Pierre complain he doesn't have enough for the bar, have Laurent, Fabryce, make some noise about wasted fruit, give the dishwasher extra dishes –

WHALID. Alright, man, alright, I get it.

PETER. Only people who think this a dummy job people who never seen a bad back of house. You only ok 'cause we ok, helping you get right.

WHALID. *(with a little more appreciation)* Alright. Alright. I feel you.

*(***PEPE** *comes back in.)*

PEPE. *(fast, high energy)* There is all the pitchers, with the ice. I think maybe it will rain, Julien said it will rain. You think it will rain?

WHALID. Rain bills! *(turning to* **PETER***)* You think?

PETER. *(glancing toward the front with a grimace)* I don't know, man. Especially if it do rain. Shoppers stay home.

WHALID. So whachu think we make, ballpark? If it rains… but not too much.

PETER. *(shrugs)* Shift pay's twenty-five, plus tipout…forty.

WHALID. *(kind of wrinkles his nose a bit)* What if it pours? No one comes in, like it downpours, like crazy thunderstorm, like natural disaster, like the apocalypse *(keep ad-libbing until* **PETER** *cuts off "Like Sharknado, like –")*

PETER. *(some impatience)* Yeah man, then we just get shift pay.

WHALID. But we always get it? *(nods to himself)* Cool. Last place I worked, no one came in? You just shit outta luck.

PETER. That some bullshit.

*(***WHALID** *pulls out a pack of breathmints, pops one in his mouth, then holds it out to* **PETER** *who*

shakes off the offer. He's about to put them away when he looks over to **PEPE** *and holds it to him.* **PEPE**, *pleased, takes one.)*

(looking at his watch)

Almost noon. 'Bout to be in it.*(head in a cooler, seeing what they're missing)* Pepe – grab three OJ and a cran.

PEPE. Okay. *(makes toward the door but pauses and turns)* Grayfruit too?

PETER. *(looking into the cooler)* Yeah.

WHALID. And a Heineken.

PEPE. A Heineken?

WHALID. *(to* **PETER***)* That'd be nice, right? *(wiping the sweat from his brow)* Couple cold ones real quick?

*(***PETER** *kind of rolls his eyes, whatever.)*

*(***PEPE** *is still standing there, not sure what to do.)*

PETER. Dude, just get the juice.

WHALID. Yeah, yeah.

*(***PEPE** *exits.)*

PETER. *(looks to front)* And it's on.

(He grabs two bread baskets and a bottle of olive oil and heads to the front. **WHALID** *follows.)*

Scene Three

(Saturday 4:00 p.m. Switchover)

*(***PETER** *enters and immediately makes for the schedule. As he reads his posture indicates his frustration.* **PEPE** *follows right after and stands, too close, as* **PETER** *reads.)*

PETER. Eight to six Saturday and Sunday? Again?

PEPE. You want me to take one? I'll take them both. I can do more shifts –

PETER. Yo, dude, get off my shoulder. Get off my shifts, get off my balls.

PEPE. Brunch is good.

PETER. No, ese, brunch ain't good. Brunch *was* good. Brunch is good in January, brunch is good in February, brunch is good in March, brunch is good in April, brunch is ok for a few weekends in May but last weekend was Memorial Day, dummy, you know Memorial Day?

PEPE. I know Memorial Day, I know it's for remembering the American soldiers who died as patriots –

PETER. No pendejo! Memorial Day is the last weekend you can hope to make more than fifty dollars on brunch because everyone who lives on Madison Ave and Fifth Ave and anywhere near this goddamned restaurant breaks open their golden piggy bank, gets in their Mercedes come Friday afternoon and drives to their luxury house in the Hamptons! And eats their goddamn steak tartare at a restaurant there! Every Friday, so they ain't here Saturday and they ain't here Sunday. And they ain't eatin', so we ain't getting' paid.

PEPE. Ok, man, ok.

PETER. Ok then. Ok. Shit.

(He looks up at the ceiling and then looks back at the schedule, drawing a line with his finger from his name to his shifts, as if they might have changed since he checked last. **PEPE** *finds a spot in*

a corner and begins eating his plate of family meal he had put off to the side for himself.)

PETER. I should have Tuesday night.

(He exhales loudly.)

Damn.

*(***WHALID** *enters and sees* **PETER** *at the schedule.)*

WHALID. You got boned homes?

PETER. Like a virgin. Saturday, Sunday brunch.

WHALID. Ouch. This ain't the season for that shit, is it?

PETER. Middle of the week only money in summer. Laurent ain't done summer schedule.

*(***WHALID** *looks at him questioningly.)*

I gotta talk to Fabryce. Laurent taking his sweet time. *(in mocking French accent)* Oh, yes, zee shifts, yes, we do the switch now. Eez very busy in zee Hamptons, you know what I mean, eh? Eh? *(pause)* Last day of school is this week. I gotta start paying for summer camp. Shit.

WHALID. Maybe you gonna have to go back to turnin' tricks, huh? Give them babies what they want –

PETER. Blow my nuts man, your sister tricks for free.

WHALID. I don't even *have* a sister.

PETER. [But] If you did have a sister –

WHALID. *(deadpan)* She might give discounts. But she would *not* trick for free.

*(***PETER** *shakes his head at him – "you're stupid.")*

(He heads through to the front, **WHALID** *grabs a few empty water pitchers and follows.)*

*(***JORGE** *enters, exactly on time, instead of his usual ten minutes early, there's something funny about his face, an odd resolution. In addition to his regular backpack, he is carrying a duffel bag – not huge, the size of what one might take with them to the gym.* **PEPE** *notices the bag.* **JORGE** *goes down*

to his locker and spends a moment fitting both bags in. He returns to the prep area.)

*(***PEPE** *peers again at the schedule posted on the wall. He eventually starts organizing the prep table, pulling out a cutting board for fruit, etc, and beginning to cut fruit.)*

PEPE. Hola. ¿Qué onda?

*(***JORGE** *just nods to him.)*

*(***PETER** *re-enters from the front as* **JORGE** *closes the locker.)*

PETER. *(greeting)* Jorgiiito! Bueniss díass.

JORGE. *(defensive, looking at his watch/phone)* I am not late.

PETER. *(genuine)* Yo man, chill, I ain't said you was late. I ain't said shit. You alright?

JORGE. *(terse)* Sí. Sí.

*(***PETER** *looks at him, a little concerned.)*

PETER. You sure, man?

JORGE. Sí.

*(***PETER** *gestures with his hands – "Ok, let me not bother you.")*

(more politely)

Sí. All good.

PETER. Cool.

*(***JORGE** *immediately gets to cutting fruit.)*

(A text comes in on **PETER***'s phone.)*

(He exits to the front.)

PEPE. ¿Por qué trajiste otra bolsa?

*(***JORGE** *kind of just shrugs for a moment and then decides to answer.)*

JORGE. In case I need.

*(**PEPE** just kind of looks at him waiting for the rest of his answer.)*

JORGE. There is a leak in my building.

*(**PEPE** looks at him questioningly.)*

(makes a hissing leak sound and shows with his hand)

Una fuga.

PEPE. Ahhh.

JORGE. The… Con Ed-ison will come.

PEPE. Con Ed-ison?

JORGE. La compañía de gas.

PEPE. Ah, sí, sí. ¿Pero…?

JORGE. Maybe the fire department come too.

*(**PEPE** looks at him with a question in his eyes.)*

(a little impatient, schooling him)

Maybe they want to go in. To every apartment. Es posible.

PEPE. Oh. That is…not good.

JORGE. Mmmmph.

PEPE. *(looking again at the bag)* Is all your things?

JORGE. What I need.

*(**PEPE** looks at him but can see that is all the info he will get. A few beats go by as they both cut fruit.)*

PEPE. *(nodding over toward the schedule)* Next week I work *two* dinner, you think it will be busy? You think I will make money?

JORGE. Puede ser. But it is summer coming…

PEPE. *(not really listening)* I think I'll made good cash. Sí. Two dinner? Sí…sí. My brother, he is still in Juarez, but he'll come soon. You think I can get him a job here? Or you know somewhere else –

JORGE. Summer is not so busy.

PEPE. *(not hearing)* He comes, we will live together. Get our own apartment, you know? Not share with so many people.*(smiling broadly)* He loves la Nueva York, el hip hop? He loves el hip hop. He email to me "You see any rappers? You see Jay-Z?" Él es un año más joven pero somos más como gemelos que hermanos, ¿sabes?

(Even **JORGE** *has to smile a little at how excited* **PEPE** *is.)*

(looking back to the schedule)

Thursday Friday, sí, cash.

JORGE. Puede ser.

PEPE. I make good money, maybe after I can go to that club, se llama, este… –

JORGE. ¿Un club?

PEPE. Sí, sí, en Corona, Ascensión me dijo de este club, con vodka, botellas de vodka, cincuenta dólares, pero, pero – for all to share, you just pay some…

*(***JORGE** *nods, he knows.)*

Ascensión me dijo es muy chido, muy chido *(making a kind of "bro" hand movement – "party!" and doing a little dance)* ¡Pachanga! Toda la gente *(continuing his dance)…*

*(***JORGE** *nods a little, maybe even does a tiny, tiny dance along with him. Barely one step.)*

You never gone? To the clubs?

JORGE. *(pause)* I have gone.

PEPE. Ahhh! ¿Sí? ¿Sí? Muy divertido, ¿no? Voy a bailar… *(winking at* **JORGE***)* con una mamacita *(does a little partner dance movement).*

*(***JORGE***'s expression changes. He is remembering something.)*

You…want to come…?

JORGE. No. No.

*(***PEPE** *notices and raises his eyebrow.)*

*(***JORGE** *picks up a container of cut limes and rapidly brings it over to the cooler.)*

*(***WHALID** *re-enters, changed into his street clothes to go home.)*

WHALID. Peace out y'all.

*(***PETER** *re-enters and not seeing* **WHALID** *at first, accidentally steps on/near his toes.)*

PETER. Peace.

WHALID. *(looking down at his feet)* Yo! My man, check yourself, these shits fresh out the box, I ain't even scotch-guarded them yet.

*(***PEPE** *looks over to check them out.)*

PETER. *(rolling his eyes)* My bad.

WHALID. They nice, though, right?

PETER. *(conceding)* They pretty tight.

PEPE. *(trying to join)* They are Nikes?

PETER. *(looking down at his phone, walking towards the back to outside)* A-yo Jorge, you picked up shift pay? Loan me twenty for two secs? Sharee's outside, I gotta give her some cash real quick.

JORGE. I did not go up yet.

WHALID. It ain't here.

PETER. What? Shift pay ain't here?

WHALID. Laurent ran by earlier, I asked him bout it and he was like, "No, eez not here."

PETER. Not here? *(looking over to* **JORGE** *who has also stopped his work)* What's going on?

PEPE. We don't get today?

WHALID. He was real quick, in and out, I don't know, maybe end of shift it'll be ready –

PETER. *(looking to* **JORGE***)* That's weird, though, man, they never hold more than one day.

JORGE. *(thinking)* …No. *(pauses)* Well – mmmm, a few time, while ago.

PETER. But it's rare, man, come on. *(pause)* It's this friggin' Laurent, man. Fabryce need to get back here regular. *(walking back toward the exit to outside)* Sharee ain't gonna be happy.

WHALID. That your girl? Oooooohhhh –

PETER. Shut it.

*(***WHALID** *exits toward front of house.)*

PEPE. *(wanting to go back to the light mood)* ¿Hay un problema? *(***JORGE** *shrugs)* It's just a…cómo se dice, dee-lay, ¿no?

JORGE. No sé. *(casually)* But if you want to save money, maybe your "club" is not such a good idea.

PEPE. Ahhh… *(pause)* So what you will do tonight? For to sleep?

*(***JORGE** *looks at him – "Huh? What are you talking about?")*

The Con Ed-ison?

*(***JORGE** *makes a gesture – "It's fine.")*

JORGE. Figure out something.

(beat)

PEPE. *(gesturing to the bag)* Always you are ready, huh?

JORGE. You must be.

(He brings the filled container of fruit to the fridge. **PEPE** *watches for a moment and then returns to cutting fruit.)*

Scene Four

(Monday 4:05 p.m. Between Shifts)

*(***JORGE** *is downstairs unpacking the clear plastic bags of clean linens that have just arrived from the laundry company and putting them on their proper shelves in the storage area. His phone is on the prep table next to him and is playing music ["I'm Coming Home" by Diddy*[*]*])*

(He is singing along but in Spanish, over the English lyrics, in an unusual display of carefree openness. This should be him fully belting out, for the entire thirty seconds, with unreserved gusto.)

JORGE. Mi casa voy, mi casa voy, dile al mundo mi casa – voy! (etc.)

*(***WHALID** *enters and* **JORGE** *immediately turns off the music, embarrassed.* **WHALID** *just kind of looks at him and goes off to the side to begin unpacking other stock like cans of juice and putting it on dry storage shelves.)*

*(***PETER** *enters a moment later and pulls an MTA violation ticket from his bag.)*

PETER. *(to* **JORGE***, holding up his violation ticket)* This how my week gonna *start*? Really? *(***JORGE** *looks at him questioningly.)* With a criminal record and a hundred dollar ticket. You see this bullshit? I swear.

JORGE. *(in sympathy)* Ah. *(examining the ticket, realizing)* This is why you need to switch the shift today –

PETER. Yeah man, thanks for that.

JORGE. What happened?

PETER. Last night. For 'jumping the fare.' I cannot believe this shit.

---

*Please see Music Use Note on page 3

JORGE. *(shaking his head, lets out a low whistle)* That is a big ticket. *(shaking his head)* It is dangerous to jump the fare, ¿no?

PETER. *(growing in agitation as he relives it)* Man, nah, I ain't even *jumped* shit like kiddie-style. I *had* my weekly. But the train was coming and this was like 12:45 something, you know, when shit might not come for like, twenty, thirty minutes, right? And I was *supposed* to be working lunch in the morning, trying to get home at a decent hour so I can get up early, see my daughter for breakfast before I leave again, you know?

*(***JORGE** *nods.)*

So I go to grab my card but this lady in front of me is swipin', swipin', swipin', shit ain't going through and it's that single lane one, you know the floor to ceiling one? *(indicating with his hands)*

JORGE. Yes.

PETER. But then there's the emergency exit, you know where I'm saying, right next to it – *(again with his hands)*

JORGE. Uh huh.

PETER. I see it's open – whachu do, you see it's open and you hear the train?

*(***JORGE** *doesn't say anything.* **PETER** *looks at him, expectantly.)*

Whachu do?

JORGE. *(confused)* With?

PETER. *(growing frustrated)* I'm sayin', the person in front of you can't get through, they swipin', swipin', you hear the train coming, it's late, you see the emergency door open, whachu do?

*(***JORGE** *looks at him, blank, no clue what* **PETER** *is getting at.)*

WHALID. *(from the side, clearly he has been listening the whole time)* Go through.

(He pauses for a second to glance at **WHALID***, seeing him in a new light, appreciating that* **WHALID** *got it.)*

PETER. *(vindicated)* Go through.

*(***WHALID** *stops his folding and gives him his full attention.)*

(to **WHALID***, turning from* **JORGE***)*

Boom! MTA police –

WHALID. Shit…rent-a-cocks.

PETER. Goddamn entrapment!

WHALID. Uh huh.

PETER. "Step aside, please." All calm I'm like, bro, no way, I got a weekly, I'm just trying to catch the *train*. Swipe my shit, I'm telling you, I'm just tryna get home, swipe it –

WHALID. *(joining him in his disgust)* He ain't swiped it –

*(***PETER** *just raises his eyebrows at* **WHALID** *like "Of course not.")*

PETER. Hundred dollar ticket.

WHALID. *(feeling it)* Owwwwwwww.

*(***PETER** *just shakes his head.)*

Jesus. But ok, so then, how you get arrested though? – *(looks at him questioningly)*

*(***PETER** *gets a semi-guilty/regretful, semi-proud look on his face.)*

(enjoying the co-conspirator role)

You said something?

*(***PETER** *pauses, shaking his head at his folly, but still, a little proud.)*

PETER. *(back in the moment of the incident, re-enacting, takes a moment for a dramatic pause* 'What's – '*(laughing at his own recollection, he has to stop and compose himself)*

'What's it like to be an… *MTA* cop? *(pause)* It make you a little sad every day…don't it?'

WHALID. *(abandoning the linens, giving* **PETER** *the appropriate dramatic reaction, physically and vocally)* Oh shit! Oh shit! Homey, no man, no! Homey no! That *do* make them sad. Like sad sad. Like sad sad sad sad.

PETER. *(semi-smiling, rueful but satisfied)* Sad sad sad sad… mad.

WHALID. Sad sad sad sad mad? Oh no. Oh no no no.

PETER. *(again re-enacting, as the officer)* "Oh you in it now, son. You're under arrest. Theft of services. Threatening an officer. You in it now, sad-man."

I don't need to tell you the rest of this woeful piece of shit tale, right?

(beat)

(any joy from the story gone, now just weary)

Why couldn't he just swipe my shit?

WHALID. Wait but hold up, you said you got a record now –

PETER. Yup –

WHALID. Why'd you plead out? That coulda got dismissed, where's the evidence? I mean, they lie like hell, but still, shit can get dismissed, specially if they ain't show up to court –

PETER. Bail is five hundred dollars.

WHALID. Use a bondsman?

PETER. *(wearier)* Ain't enough, bondsman won't touch it, can't make profit –

WHALID. Shit.

PETER. And if you don't got it, you gotta wait in jail until trial –

WHALID. Ok, but then it gets dismissed –

PETER. 'Your case will be heard Friday.' In *five* days.

Four of which I'm on the schedule.

WHALID. Oh shit. So you pleaded out.

PETER. *(a statement)* What could I do.

(They go back to their tasks. The silence is heavy. Dull.)

(They finish the task. **PETER** *leans forward for a moment onto a prep table. He puts the ticket and money order into the envelope and licks it closed.)*

(not looking at **WHALID***)*

PETER. I was just tryna see my daughter for breakfast, man. Just wanted to make pancakes.

*(***WHALID** *looks directly at* **PETER**.*)*

WHALID. *(feeling it)* Yeah.

PETER. *(almost to himself)* Where the hell am I gonna get a hundred dollars?

*(***WHALID** *buttons up his uniform and exits to the upstairs.)*

(Uncharacteristically, **JORGE** *leans on the prep table for a moment as* **PETER** *studies an inventory sheet. There is a moment that hangs as* **JORGE** *waits to find the right thing to say, a way to maybe get back in.)*

JORGE. Hot in back today, huh?

PETER. *(changed back)* Hot? You ain't workin' hard enough to sweat –

JORGE. Ah, you don't know, we did thirty covers before one today!

PETER. Yeah? Nice. Still a little juice left in lunch at least.

JORGE. *(trying out the word)* Juice.

PETER. *(imitating, not unkindly)* 'Juice.' *(laughs a little)*

JORGE. What?

*(***PETER** *shakes his head, pauses.)*

PETER. You sound like my daughter.

JORGE. Your daughter is how old now? Four?

PETER. Cinco años, baby.

JORGE. Ah. Like mine.

PETER. Your daughter?

JORGE. No, my son. My daughter's four.

PETER. She big? *(with pride)* My daughter's a beast, five years old, she taller than Pepe –

JORGE. Mmmm, not too big. My son, he's getting bigger, his mom says. Two inches this year.

PETER. Give him those Wheaties, man, you gotta get 'em growin' when they young like that. You got Wheaties in Mexico? Wheatillas? Wheatitos? Wheatamole?

JORGE. No, I tell his mom, give him carne, make him strong –

PETER. Yeah, that's good, too.

(beat)

JORGE. I come home for Christmas, I'm going to take them from where they are living, with my suegra, my, the mother, of my wife?

PETER. Yeah, yeah, your mother-in-law –

JORGE. My *(missing the "in")* mother-law and then just say, come on, with me. And then my brother will be waiting outside, in his car, he has a car, you know, not a new car but not so old, and then we will get in the car, and when they ask me where we're going, I will say, oh we're going to your tío's house –

PETER. Ok, casa de tío –

JORGE. *(getting excited)* Right, right, and then we'll pull up and I will have told him to stop, for a second, but then we will keep going and they will ask "What's going on? Why aren't we stopping at tío's?" and I will say like "Huh, what?" like I don't get it –

*(***PETER** *has stopped what he is doing and is completely engrossed in the story.)*

PETER. Yeah –

JORGE. And then we will pull up in front *our* house, our new house and I will say, "I hope you have your cosas, like you know, your – "

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