Acting Edition

Somewhere Over the Border

by Brian Quijada

Co-Orchestrations by
Yendrys Cespedes and Julián Mesri

Co-Vocal Arrangements by
Julián Mesri and Brian Quijada

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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SOMEWHERE OVER THE BORDER received its world premiere on February 23, 2022, in a production by Syracuse Stage (Robert Hupp, Artistic Director; Jill Anderson, Managing Director), Syracuse, NY; and Geva Theatre Center (Mark Cuddy, Artistic Director; Christopher Mannelli, Executive Director), Rochester, NY; and Teatro Vista, Theatre with a View (Lorena Diaz and Wendy Mateo, Co-Artistic Directors), Chicago, IL.

The Syracuse Stage and Geva Theatre Center production was directed by Rebecca Martínez, with sets by Tanya Orellana, costumes by Asa Benally, lighting by Jennifer Fok, and sound by Jacqueline R. Herter. The dramaturg was Kristin Leahy. The music director was Julián Mesri. The production stage manager was Laura Jane Collins. The cast and band were as follows:

THE NARRATOR . . . . . Arusi Santi
REINA . . . . . Tanya De León
JULIA . . . . . Francisca Muñoz
ADÁN, CRUZ . . . . . Robert Ariza
NAPOLEON, SILVANO . . . . . Bobby Plasencia
ANTONIA, LEONA . . . . . Gloria Benevides
Keyboard, Band Leader. . . . . Sarah Pool Wilhelm
Guitar . . . . . Matt Pinto
Percussion . . . . . Freddy Colon
Bass . . . . . Hector Diaz

The Teatro Vista production was directed by Denise Yvette Serna, with sets by Yvonne Miranda, costumes by Sarah Albrecht, lighting by Diane Fairchild, sound by Stefanie M. Senior, projections by Liviu Pasare, props by Lonnae Hickman, and puppets by Grace Needlman. The dramaturg was Kristin Leahy. The production stage manager was Madeline M. Scott. The cast and band were as follows:

THE NARRATOR . . . . . Brian Quijada
REINA . . . . . Gabriela Moscoso
JULIA . . . . . Claudia Quesada
ADÁN, CRUZ . . . . . Tommy Rivera-Vega
NAPOLEON, SILVANO . . . . . Andrés Enriquez
ANTONIA, LEONA . . . . . Amanda Raquel Martinez
Covers. . . . . Ulyses Espinoza, Laura Quiñones, Jerreme Rodriguez, Karla Serrato
Keyboard, Guitar . . . . . Yendrys Cespedes
Percussion . . . . . Guido Acevedo
Bass . . . . . Roberto “Carpacho” Marin

SOMEWHERE OVER THE BORDER was written at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, by invitation of Jim Wren.

CHARACTERS

THE NARRATOR – Our charming guide. Any age. Preferably plays guitar well.

REINA – A Salvadorean girl. 18 years old.

JULIA – Reina's mother. 40s.

ADÁN – Reina's brother. 20s.

NAPOLEON – A Salvadorean man who owns the restaurant that Reina works at.

ANTONIA – An older woman who lives in El Salvador and has a daughter in the United States.

CRUZ – An indigenous Guatemalan boy with dreams of obtaining an American degree.

SILVANO – A man from Tapachula, Mexico, with a dream to reunite with the rest of his family in America.

LEONA – A meek catholic nun from Guadalajara, with rock and roll dreams.

DOUBLING

ANTONIA and **LEONA** are played by the same actor.

DON NAPOLEON and **SILVANO** are played by the same actor.

ADÁN and **CRUZ** are played by the same actor.

THE NARRATOR also plays a **BUS DRIVER**, various **MEXICAN OFFICIALS**, Silvano's neighbor **RODRIGO**, **EL GRAN COYOTE DE TIJUANA**, and **FERNANDO**.

SETTING

Chanmico, Guatemala City, Tapachula, Guadalajara, Tijuana, and San Diego.

TIME

In the 1970s.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

01. Everyday Towns. . . . . The Narrator, Reina, Company
02. In the USA . . . . . Antonia, Reina, The Narrator, Company
02A. Scene Three Transition . . . . . The Narrator
03. El Gran Coyote de Tijuana . . . . . Napoleon, Reina, The Narrator, Company
03A. Gran Coyote Transition . . . . . Instrumental
04. In the USA (Reprise) . . . . . Reina, Adán
04A. Scene Five Transition . . . . . Instrumental
05. Somewhere Over the Border. . . . . Reina, The Narrator, Company
06. The Tornado . . . . . The Narrator, Antonia, Reina, Company
07. Beautiful Boy . . . . . Reina
07A. This Is It . . . . . Reina
08. Ride Up the Road (Guatemala) . . . . . The Narrator, Reina
09. Cruz . . . . . Cruz, Reina
10. In the USA (Mini Reprise) . . . . . Reina
11. Ride Up the Road (Tapachula) . . . The Narrator, Reina, Cruz
12. What I Know . . . . . Julia
12A. Transition to Silvano's Inn. . . . . Instrumental
12B. In the USA (Final Reprise) . . . . . Cruz
13. Silvano . . . . . Silvano
13A. El Gran Coyote Reprise . . . . . Reina, Silvano
14. Dream (Tapachula). . . . . The Narrator, Company
14A. Ride Up the Road (Guadalajara) . . . . . The Narrator, Reina, Cruz, Silvano
14B. Guadalajara Incidental . . . . . Instrumental
15. Leona . . . . . Leona
16. Dream (Guadalajara) . . . . . The Narrator
17. Ride Up the Road (Tijuana) . . . . The Narrator, Reina, Cruz, Silvano, Leona
18. Red Skies . . . . . Julia
18A. Coyote the Wizard . . . . . Reina, Cruz, Silvano
18B. Kick in the Balls . . . . . Instrumental
19. Desert (Part 1) . . . . . Instrumental
20. Desert (Part 2). . . . . Reina, Cruz, Silvano, Leona
20A. Flower Truck . . . . . Instrumental
21. Step by Step . . . . . Reina

22. Life in America . . . . . Reina, The Narrator, Cruz, Silvano, Leona
23. Beautiful Boy (Duet) . . . . . Reina, Fernando
24. Beautiful Boy (Underscore) . . . . . Reina, Fernando
25. Everyday Towns (Reprise). . . . . The Narrator/Fernando, Company
26. Bows & Exit Music . . . . . Instrumental

Inspired by the real-life story of my mother, Reina Quijada, and
L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

Scene One

Everyday Towns

(Lights up on **THE NARRATOR**. *He has a Cumbia-style band behind him. He begins to play the guitar strapped to him.)*

[MUSIC NO. 01 – EVERYDAY TOWNS]

THE NARRATOR. *Vaya Pues!*

THERE ARE TOWNS, LIKE MANY, MANY OTHER TOWNS
DIFF'RENT BUT SIMILAR TOWNS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES,

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.

ALL ACROSS THE EARTH
WITH PEOPLE WHO GO 'BOUT THEIR DAYS
TRYING TO GIVE THEIR OWN LIFE SOME SORT OF WORTH

THE NARRATOR.

MAKIN' THE BEST OF THE BEST WITH WHAT THEY GOT
TOWNS WITH FORGOTTEN PEOPLE,
WHO LIVE WHETHER THEY HAVE THE MEANS OR NOT.

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.

WORKING TO LIVE AND LIVING TO MAKE THEIR DREAMS COME TRUE
THE WORLD IS FILLED WITH DREAMERS, DREAMERS LIKE ME AND YOU.
DREAMERS LIKE ME AND YOU. DREAMERS LIKE ME AND YOU.

THE NARRATOR.

EV'RYDAY DREAMERS. IN EV'RYDAY TOWNS.
WITH COMMON EV'RYDAY PEOPLE
OUT THERE MAKING THEIR ROUNDS.

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.

EV'RYDAY TOWNS WITH EV'RYDAY FOLK
EV'RYDAY DREAMERS WITH STORIES THAT MUST BE TOLD.

Yo! *Que pasó? Qué'onda! Cómo estamos?* How you feeling? Welcome. *Bienvenidos*. There have been extraordinary everyday people since the beginning of man. Tonight, we rewind to 1978. We spin the globe and land on one place to look back at one everyday town like any other town called *Chanmico* in the country of *El Salvador*, lodged right up in there between *Honduras* and *Guatemala*. And in this everyday town we find an everyday girl like any other named Reina.

*(***REINA** *is lit. Her back is to the audience. She turns her head.)*

REINA. An everyday princess.

THE NARRATOR. Recently turned Seventeen.

And recently…pregnant.

(The **COMPANY** *gasps.)*

But this is not a story about teen pregnancy!

I mean it is, but it isn't.

You see, Reina didn't know any better.

Dropped out of school at fourteen not out of disinterest,

but out of a necessity to work.

She was never told that *this (Re: her belly.)* might happen if another little thing happened to happen with a charming young boy, too young and naïve to stay.

She's the only girl in a family of brothers

All raised by Julia.

*(***JULIA** *is lit.)*

JULIA. A single mother.

THE NARRATOR. Now this is not a trait of all Salvadorean men. It just so happens that father figures don't really figure into this story.

Anyway! *Chanmico*, this everyday town, is their home!

A TOWN, LIKE MANY, MANY OTHER TOWNS
DIFF'RENT BUT SIMILAR TOWNS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES,

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.

ALL ACROSS THE EARTH
WITH PEOPLE WHO GO 'BOUT THEIR DAYS
TRYIN' TO GIVE THEIR OWN LIFE SOME SORT OF WORTH

And like any common everyday story, this story begins with the most worthy of worthy reasons. This story begins with life.

*(***REINA** *births her baby.* **JULIA** *is there.)*

COMPANY EXCEPT REINA.

AHH. AHH. AHH. AHH.

*(***REINA** *birthing the baby.)*

Ahhhh!

*(***REINA** *wraps her baby up in a blanket.)*

THE NARRATOR. Little Baby Fernando! Now, most of us can agree that babies are adorable, and they change you forever and add so much happiness to your life, but they can also RUIN IT! You will not sleep and you will rely on coffee 'til the end of days! *(To audience member.)* You know what I'm talking about!

THE NARRATOR. On top of that, the situation in this everyday town of *Chanmico* is, well…

LET ME PAINT THE PICTURE, LET ME BE SUPER CLEAR
LET ME PAINT THE PICTURE, LET ME BE SUPER CLEAR.

Things are not okay here.

Nah, cuz as all of you damn well know, every place can get dark and grey sometimes. Every place can experience civil unrest. Nationwide division. Protests against the government. It is 1978 y'all and a Civil War is on the horizon in *El Salvador*.

And we're not stopping there! *Nombre!*

Even if there wasn't a war coming, consider the endless hours of work to barely make ends meet, now add an extra mouth to feed.

Puchica!

THE GRIND IS A SERIOUS THING.
PROVE YOURSELF BY WORK ETHIC AND THE COIN YOU CAN BRING IN
YOU WORK SO YOU DON'T ROB OR STEAL
HONEST, THE GRIND IS REAL.

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.

YOU WORK AND WORK AND WORK AND WORK AND WORK
AND SERVE AND SERVE AND SERVE TO GET WHAT YOU DESERVE

THE NARRATOR.

AND IN THIS EV'RYDAY TOWN, THE PAYOFF IS LESS THAN EV'RYDAY
AND IF YOU PRESS THEM AND SAY,
"HEY, I NEED MORE PAY!"
THEY MIGHT SAY "OKAY, GOODBYE, WE'LL GRAB THE NEXT PERSON IN LINE. THAT'S FINE, THEY'VE BEEN WAITING."
PENNILESS AND UNEMPLOYED, YOUR FUTURE STARTS FADING

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.

THE GRIND IS A SERIOUS THING.

PROVE YOURSELF BY WORK ETHIC AND THE COIN YOU CAN BRING IN.

THE NARRATOR.

AND REINA IS PART OF THIS SYSTEM, THIS EXPECTED WORK HORSE EXTREME

SHE COOKS AND CLEANS AT HOME AND GOES TO TOWN TO WAITRESS AND SELL THE FARM'S COFFEE BEANS

REINA GETS UP EV'RY MORNING WHEN THE BABY CRIES, BEFORE THE ROOSTER CROWS.

AND SHE PUSHES THROUGH HER JOBS WHILE A CLOCK NEVER STOPS, A LIFE OF FEW HIGHS IN A WORLD OF MANY LOWS.

THE NARRATOR & REINA.	**COMPANY.**
EV'RYDAY. DAY IN, DAY OUT.	EV'RYDAY.
DROWNING IN RESPONSIBILITIES.	DAY IN, DAY OUT.
THREE MEALS A DAY IS RARE	
AND A FULL NIGHT'S SLEEP,	FULL NIGHT'S SLEEP
IS NOTHING BUT A DREAM.	DREAM, DREAM, DREAM!

JULIA. You're off to a late / start.

REINA. Well Fernando kept waking up / in the middle of the night.

JULIA. That's no excuse. There's work / to be done.

REINA. I know. I have to head down to the lagoon / to do laundry.

JULIA. Your brothers are already out on the field, so / do that quickly.

REINA. Yes mother.

JULIA. You'll also have to help work the Porteros' field this morning.

REINA. They can't work their own field?

JULIA. They're gone.

REINA. Gone? Where?

JULIA. God knows. They took all their things. The National Guard shootings in San Salvador must've scared them. *(Scoffs.)*

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.
EV'RYDAY. DAY IN, DAY OUT.

JULIA. *Pasmádos.*

So, we're gonna take over their farm. Bunch of ungrateful *idiotas*. So hurry up. Get your work done here before you head out to the market.

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.
DREAM. DREAM. DREAM

*(***REINA** *heads down the hill to the Chanmico Lagoon where she washes and cleans their laundry, trying to scrub away an endless dust from their clothes.)*

REINA.
YOU WORK AND WORK AND WORK
AND WORK AND WORK
AND SERVE AND SERVE AND SERVE
TO GET WHAT YOU DESERVE.

COMPANY.
AH
AH
AH
AH
AH
AH
AH

PEOPLE WORK, PEOPLE STAY, PEOPLE
RUN AWAY.
WILL THIS LIFE THAT WE LIVE,
ALWAYS STAY THIS WAY.
WILL WE EVER BREATHE?
WHEN SO MANY LEAVE,
I WONDER IF THEY ALL SEE
SOMETHING WE DON'T

AND IF SO, MY MOTHER WOULDN'T
ADMIT IT
BUT IT'S OBVIOUS THE COUNTRY HAS
SHIFTED
SO GREY.
AND I DON'T WANT MY SON TO DIE
AH
AND WHAT IF ALL MY WORK RUNS AH AH
DRY
I HAVE NO OTHER OPTIONS TO TRY. AH AH
WE'RE BARELY GETTING BY, AH
AND I WISH WE COULD JUST FLY AH AH
FLY
AWAY.

JULIA. *(From offstage.)* Reina!!

*(**REINA** grabs her clothes in one hand, Fernando in the other, and runs off.)*

THE NARRATOR.
WORKING TO LIVE OR LIVING TO MAKE THEIR DREAMS
COME TRUE
THE WORLD IS FILLED WITH DREAMERS, DREAMERS LIKE
ME AND YOU.
DREAMERS LIKE ME AND YOU, DREAMERS LIKE ME AND
YOU.

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.
EV'RYDAY TOWNS, WITH EV'RYDAY FOLK
EV'RYDAY PEOPLE WITH STORIES THAT MUST BE TOLD.

(Transition.)

Scene Two

Village Market

(A small coffee bean stand is lit. **REINA** *stands behind it.* **ANTONIA** *enters unseen.)*

ANTONIA. Say cheese!

*(***ANTONIA** *snaps a picture of* **REINA** *and baby Fernando with a Polaroid Instant Camera.)*

REINA. Whoa!

ANTONIA. Oh that was a good one!

REINA. What is that?

ANTONIA. It's my new camera! It prints out a color photograph! *Mira Mira!*

*(***ANTONIA** *hands* **REINA** *the Polaroid picture.)*

Here.

REINA. There's nothing here.

ANTONIA. Give it a little shake shake.

*(***REINA** *does a little shimmy with it.)*

Put your hips into it! Trust me I'm the expert on the shake shakes, it's how I tricked my Ernesto into marriage.

REINA. *(Re: Polaroid.)* I guess I have a lot to learn. Still blank.

ANTONIA. It takes a bit. Don't worry. You'll get there.

REINA. So, where have you been all summer? I was worried something had happened to you.

ANTONIA. Oh I know. I heard about the massacre at the University. *Qué desmadre*. How's your family though? Everybody safe?

REINA. We're okay. For now. But people are leaving. Our neighbors The Porteros have already taken off.

ANTONIA. Oh yes, I heard they lost their son in the shootings. *(Beat.) Ay* Reina, I used to live and breathe *chisme* but now the only thing *chisme* gives me is hot flashes!

REINA. Oh. So, where were you?

ANTONIA. Oh, I spent the summer in The United States with my daughter Soyla in her beautiful home in California. Helping to take care of *her* newborn baby.

REINA. Doña! You're a grandma?

ANTONIA. *(Flips her hair.)* I know!

REINA. Wow!

ANTONIA. Babies, babies, babies.

She has two now. The older one's five.

Look!

*(***ANTONIA** *takes out some Polaroid pictures and shows them to* **REINA**.*)*

That's my daughter right there. And there are my grandkids. Aren't they beautiful?

REINA. *(Eyes still glued on the picture.)* That's a lovely home she has.

ANTONIA. It's her apartment. She split from the children's father and moved into her own place. It's for the better. Trust me. Boy was a *bochinchero*.

REINA. She lives there alone? How long has she been in the States?

ANTONIA. She was about your age when she left.

REINA. Really?

ANTONIA. Yup. She's a citizen there now. And last year she had my papers squared away so I could come visit. I flew there and back.

REINA. You got on a plane?

ANTONIA. Sure did.

REINA. Weren't you scared?

ANTONIA. No! It was luxurious! I forgot I was sitting in a chair in the sky! I had a beautiful blonde *gringa* lady bringing me things, a half-chicken right to my seat, peanuts, and she even helped me light my cigarette. I don't even smoke, but everyone else was smoking so I said, "screw it! I'm living large!"

REINA. Wow. And your daughter, she's raising the kids all on her own?

[MUSIC NO. 02 – IN THE USA]

ANTONIA. Yes! And she hasn't gone crazy like I did. It's a miracle! Oh God…

California. Reina! America, it's something else.

HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT LIFE IS!
IN THE USA, IT SEEMS LIKE LIFE IS ENDLESS
THE YOUNG KIDS ARE STRESS FREE AND THE OLD FOLKS ARE RICH
OLD PEOPLE, YOUNG PEOPLE, SICK PEOPLE, HEALTHY PEOPLE I CAN'T EVEN TELL YOU WHICH IS WHICH
THE SCHOOLS ARE BETTER WHICH MEANS THE KIDS ARE HAPPY.
AN UPBRINGING SO DIFF'RENT THAN THAT OF THEIR GRANNIES.

ANTONIA.
THE STREETS, THE TREES,
THE SUNLIGHT, COLORS
I'VE NEVER SEEN
THE WATER, RESTAURANTS,
AND BATHROOMS
ARE SO FREAKING CLEAN!

THE NARRATOR & REINA.
THE STREETS, THE TREES,
THE SUNLIGHT,

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT
LIFE IS!
IN THE USA, IT SEEMS
LIKE LIFE IS ENDLESS
IN THE USA. IN THE USA
EV'RYONE IS OUT, TAKING
IN THE SUN
BURNT SKIN IS NOT A
MARK OF WORK, IT'S
DESIRED BY EV'RYONE
TIME IS A PLENTY
TIME FOR YOURSELF, AND
TIME FOR THE KIDS,
AND THE INCOME IS
STEADY
WHICH MEANS YOU AREN'T
PINCHING PENNIES
AND YOU DON'T HAVE
BELLIES GROAN
AND YOU CAN WORK ONE
JOB AND BE FINE AND
BUILD A HOME OF
YOUR VERY OWN.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT
LIFE IS!
IN THE USA, IT SEEMS
LIKE LIFE IS ENDLESS
IN THE USA, YOU CAN JUST
FEEL IT IN THE AIR

HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT
LIFE IS!
USA
USA
AH
CHA LA LA LA

THE NARRATOR & COMPANY.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT
LIFE IS!
USA,
USA

REINA.

OUT THERE, IT FEELS LIKE LIFE IS A BIT MORE FAIR.
IN THE USA, IN THE USA

A HOME, OF YOUR OWN, AND THREE MEALS A DAY
SOMETHING SO FAR-FETCHED HERE, IS THE AMERICAN WAY

It almost doesn't sound real. So why don't you just stay out there?

ANTONIA. Ernesto's mother is sick and we need to be here for her final days.

REINA. Ay. Doña. I'm so sorry.

ANTONIA. No, it's okay. I hate my mother-in-law. And good news, when she dies, we're getting her farm. Yay!

REINA. Oh. Yay.

ANTONIA. Okay check your picture now.

(They both look at the picture. **REINA***'s heart melts.)*

That Fernando is a little piece of *semita dulce*, isn't he?

REINA. Thanks Doña. I hope one day I can give him all the things your grandkids have.

ANTONIA. Oh, I know you will. So…?

REINA. So what?

ANTONIA. Unless you expect me to die right here, I need my beans sweetie! Let's bag it up!

(They laugh.)

(Lights transition as **REINA** *contemplates.)*

Scene Three

Napoleon's Pupuseria

THE NARRATOR. Ugh, the USA sounds so good I know! But no time to daydream though! On to the next job at Napoleon's *Pupuseria*!

[MUSIC NO. 02A – SCENE THREE TRANSITION]

YOU WORK AND WORK AND WORK AND WORK.
AND SERVE AND SERVE AND SERVE.

And after a long night…

*(***REINA** *is finishing cleaning the restaurant. Fernando is in a basket on a table.* **NAPOLEON** *hands her her pay.)*

NAPOLEON. Here ya go Reinita.

REINA. Thank you.

*(***REINA** *sits and looks at her money, disappointedly.)*

NAPOLEON. I know. It's been so slow. The protests have been really messing with our sales.

REINA. *(She sighs.)* Lord. Will it ever be enough?

NAPOLEON. Listen, you've worked so hard for me since you were a *bichita* and you deserve so much more. We'll get through this.

*(***REINA** *is silent. Then…)*

REINA. Don Napo, have you heard of The USA?

NAPOLEON. *(Beat.)* Have I heard of the enormous country above *Mexico*?

No, never. Tell me.

REINA. Well, it's a place / where you can –

NAPOLEON. I know what it is. *No soy baboso*. Why do you ask?

REINA. No, it's just...

I talked to a lady at the Village Market today and she told me about her daughter in The United States.

NAPOLEON. Antonia? The shakey shakes lady?

REINA. Yes!

NAPOLEON. Ah yes. I helped her daughter Soyla cross many years ago.

REINA. You did?!

NAPOLEON. Yes – wait. You aren't thinking about taking this little guy with you, are you?

REINA. I don't know.

NAPOLEON. It's very dangerous. And expensive.

REINA. Why?

NAPOLEON. It's illegal.

REINA. Is there a legal way?

NAPOLEON. You can apply. But Don Lipo from Santa Ana died waiting for them to respond. And you can go to seek asylum but they'll usually just make you turn around. You remember Tito, who used to work in the kitchen? He got involved with some *gangeros*, left to seek asylum, was denied, and was forced to come back. A week later...well...we all sent his mother flowers.

REINA. So, tell me the illegal way.

NAPOLEON. Reina, I just want you to keep in mind that the journey is tough and –

REINA. I get it, it's dangerous and people die. People are also dying in the streets here. From gunfire or from starvation. You pick. Please. I'm just curious.

[MUSIC NO. 03 – EL GRAN COYOTE DE TIJUANA]

NAPOLEON. Okay. *(Beat.)* There's a man you need to see. He goes by...

EL GRAN COYOTE DE TIJUANA.
HE'S THE ONE THAT YOU NEED WHEN YOU WANNA ... GO.
WHEN YOU'VE PACKED A BAG AND LEAVE CHANMICO.
HE'S THE ONE AT THE END OF THE ROAD.
HE'S THE ONE THAT HAS GRACIOUSLY SHOWED
PLENTY OF FRIENDS OF MINE TO THEIR NEW HOME
SPENDS HIS TIME HELPING FOLKS THROUGH THE UNKNOWN.
IF YOU'RE IN SEARCH OF A LIFE SOMEWHERE OVER THE BORDER
YOU ORDER A DREAM, AND HE'LL DELIVER THE WAY
AS LONG AS YOU HAVE ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS TO PAY.

ADÁN, JULIA & ANTONIA. *(From offstage.)* Whoo!

REINA. One thousand five hundred?

NAPOLEON.

THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S NOT CHEAP.
BUT HE PROMISES THE AMERICAN DREAM TO KEEP.
IF YOU CAN KEEP UP, YOU CAN CLEAN UP.
MAKE YOUR AMERICAN DREAMS COME TRUE
THAT'S WHAT EL COYOTE DE TIJUANA CAN DO FOR YOU.

NAPOLEON, THE NARRATOR, ANTONIA & ADÁN.

EL GRAN COYOTE DE TIJUANA

NAPOLEON.

HE'S THE ONE THAT YOU NEED WHEN YOU GOTTA ... GO.
HE'S THE ONE WHO KNOWS HOW TO AVOID THE BORDER PATROL
AND STROLL INTO THE LAND THAT YOU DREAM ABOUT
HERE IN THE SOUTH, HE'S THE WIZARD OF METHOD

NAPOLEON.
TRIED AND TESTED, I CAN TELL YOU WHERE YOU'RE HEADED
JUST FOLLOW THE ROAD ON THE BUS AND KEEP QUIET

NAPOLEON, THE NARRATOR, ANTONIA & ADÁN.
IF YOU HAVE A NEED TO GO,

NAPOLEON.
REINA, I KNOW, YOU CANNOT DENY IT

NAPOLEON, THE NARRATOR, ANTONIA & ADÁN.
EL GRAN COYOTE DE TIJUANA

NAPOLEON.
HE'S THE ONE THAT YOU NEED WHEN YOU WANNA ...
GO.

REINA.
I SEE. I SEE.
THAT'S THE MAN I'D NEED.

COMPANY.
EL GRAN COYOTE DE TIJUANA
HE'S THE ONE THAT YOU NEED WHEN YOU WANNA ...

NAPOLEON.
GO.

[MUSIC NO. 03A – GRAN COYOTE TRANSITION]

NAPOLEON. One thousand five hundred Mexican pesos to the wizard. That's what it's gonna take to get you to the majestic Green everyone talks about.

REINA. Majestic Green?

NAPOLEON. Yeah.

Your Green Card.

REINA. A Green Card?

NAPOLEON. Yes. It allows you to work.

REINA. Ah, I see. Got it.

NAPOLEON. And some people make it so far, they prosper and send money back. Like Soyla does for Antonia.

REINA. My mother would wring my neck if I left.

NAPOLEON. *Sí, vea*. Julia would rip my tongue out if she found out I helped you.

But look, I pulled out of the family sugar cane business to start this restaurant. My mother didn't talk to me for months. But when she ate my *pupusas*, a recipe she taught me, do you think she still held a grudge?

REINA. No.

NAPOLEON. Of course, she did! She's a Salvadorean woman. BUT! She was proud that people from all over were coming to taste her recipe. But most importantly, I did what made me happy.

REINA. Thanks Don Napo.

(Transition.)

Scene Four

Brotherly Love

THE NARRATOR. Who knew Don Napo had so much flow?!

After work Adán, her brother, picks up Reina and Fernando to walk home.

*(***ADÁN** *waits for* **REINA**.*)*

ADÁN. Hey sis!

How'd you do at the market this morning?

Cuz I did horrible! I sold no milk. Which is terrible because Chula is pumping out that milk like it's soft serve! I'm having to drink it myself to make sure Mom doesn't notice! How 'bout you?

REINA. I saw Doña Toña at the market today.

ADÁN. Oh yeah? That lady with the shakey shakes? That witch is rich! She get you good?

[MUSIC NO. 04 – IN THE USA (REPRISE)]

REINA.

SHE JUST GOT BACK FROM CALIFORNIA
HER DAUGHTER LIVES THERE WITH TWO KIDS OF HER OWN
SHE SHOWED ME SOME PICTURES
OF THESE TWO PRETTY GIRLS, AMERICAN-GROWN.
IN A ONE-PARENT HOME.
HOW SWEET.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT LIFE SOUNDS
IN THE USA,

ADÁN.

WITH A BUNCH OF GRINGOS ALL AROUND

REINA.

BUT IN THE USA, THE SCHOOLS ARE SO MUCH BETTER

ADÁN.
AND IN THE USA, THEY HAVE CRAPPIER WEATHER

REINA.
IN THE USA, I COULD AFFORD BABY FOOD FOR HIM TO EAT.

ADÁN.
BUT IN EL SALVADOR, YOUR BREAST MILK IS ALWAYS FREE.

REINA. Shoes, Adán.
THEY WERE WEARING SHOES.
SUCH A SMALL LITTLE THING
BUT IF I HAD A LIFE TO CHOOSE,
I'D CHOOSE THE ONE WHERE MY SON OWNED SHOES BEFORE THE AGE OF TEN
CUZ EVEN GRINDING AWAY EV'RY DAY HERE I WON'T DO THAT BY THEN.

ADÁN.
SO, HE'LL WEAR THONGS LIKE HIS UNCLE A, THEY WORK FOR ME
EASY TO SLIP ON AND THEY LET THE TOES BREATHE.

REINA. Stop with the jokes.

ADÁN. We'll be *chancla* buddies!

REINA. I'm serious.

ADÁN. I know you want the best life for the little guy. I do too!

REINA.
YOU UNDERSTAND ME THEN, DON'T YOU NOW OLDER BROTHER?
I COULD RAISE YOUR NEPHEW PROPER EVEN AS A SINGLE MOTHER.

REINA & ADÁN.
HOW BEAUTIFUL THAT LIFE SOUNDS
IN THE USA,

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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