

Fall Back Up
(Renata)

Surrealist Dramedy

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CAST LIST:

Bella–

Teetering on the hyphen, Late 20s, Mexican-American/Chicana

Malcolm–

A lost soul, early 30s

Rosa–

A smart, sharp wit that sometimes can be a mask, Early 20s, Mexican-American/Chicana

Leo–

The artist of the bunch, temperamentally, Late teens, Latino

Actor 1:

Josh– Wants to always look like he can handle it, Late teens, Mexican-American/Chicano

Father Diaz– A priest, mesmerizing but also vaguely repugnant, middle age, Latino

Mictlantecutli– Charming, frightening, an Aztec god of the dead

Actor 2:

Lilly– The most mature of the bunch but feels weird showing it, late teens,
Mexican-American/Chicana

Santa Muerte– Mexican neopagan goddess of death

Actor 3:

Lucas-- A teenage boy with a teenage girl on his mind, Late teens, Not Latino

Dylan– Somebody who makes his new projects his entire personality, mid/late 20s, Not Latino

Actor 4:

Carolyn-- A teenage girl anxious about what romance means for a girl, Late teens, Not Latina

Mrs. Davidson– An utterly joyful woman, Bella's landlady, 80s, Not Latina

Notes.

*When a prop enters the set or 'play' area, if it's not notated to exit it, it never has to. These shoes, chairs, flowers, plants etc. and anything added production to production can unobtrusively leave memories of what came before.

Fall Back Up (Renata) follows three storylines layered on a metaphysical collision course between reality and what's in between: Bella, a woman in a quarter-life crisis while grieving the death of her teenaged cousin, Renata; Malcolm and Rosa, who encounter each other on a bridge at an undefined place and must decide whether the world is ending - or if they're dead; and Lucas, Carolyn, Josh, Lilly and Leo, five teenagers, classmates of Bella's cousin, on a night out that begins to unravel after Leo goes missing. Grappling with grief and the brevity of our connections with one another, each of these stories drift to and from one another, and layer, like waves from the ocean, forever returning to the shore.

The play opens with strangers Rosa and Malcolm in conversation atop a bridge at sunset. In the midst of a witty exchange, Rosa reveals that she recently went to her own funeral. The duo spot a meteor heading for Earth, an existential threat that prompts Malcolm and Rosa to discuss their lives. Malcolm leaves the bridge in frustration with the uncertain situation. Rosa follows. There, Rosa reveals the details of her death and Malcolm fully realizes his own death. Back on the bridge, Malcolm panics and pushes Rosa off. She dies, but shortly thereafter re-enters, meeting Malcolm again, but with no memory of him. After talking for a bit, she remembers her real name, Renata, and leaves the bridge, deciding it's time to let go and cross to the other side.

Meanwhile, a trio (Lucas, Josh and Leo) and duo (Carolyn and Lilly) of teenagers, some of whom knew Renata, separately drive to a restaurant while discussing their romantic interests. They meet up by happenstance and head to the beach. But Leo loses the group and finds himself in the world in which Rosa and Malcolm inhabit. Wading through a river, he delivers a monologue on the surreal events he witnessed. He makes his way back to his friends, but a fight with Josh prompts him to return to the other world. Josh and Lilly search for Leo, leaving Caroline and Lucas alone to envision their romantic relationship in poetic verse. Josh and Lilly, giving up on Leo, share their confusion over their second generation Mexican identities. Leo sits with Rosa's body for a while before leaving the bridge once more.

Finally, we meet Bella, whose story travels between gardening with her gay neighbor, tea with her landlady, a poetry open mic night, conversations with her priest and an unexpected visit from Santa Muerte to her living room. These interactions prepare Bella for a mysterious appointment at an airport Starbucks with Mictlantecutli, the Aztec God of Death, the alter-identity of Bella's priest, where they discuss how Bella grieves. At the play's finale, Bella enters onto the bridge searching for Renata, only to find Malcolm still there, alone.

ACT 1

Scene One

A separation in action, real or imagined, is drawn. This can also be referred to as a curtain. Behind this curtain, stretching from one exit to the other is a bridge lined with marigolds. The bridge might have a railing that may be slightly rusted, showing its age, its durability or its weaknesses. It is sunrise or sunset. A woman called ROSA makes her way up the bridge. Once she reaches the top, she looks out on us, and whatever view there may possibly be.

A man named MALCOLM enters from the same way and mounts the bridge. As he walks, he spots ROSA. He looks at her with curiosity and the slightest hint of confusion. He keeps his gaze on her as he continues walking until he is just a little ways past her, beginning to descend down the bridge. At that point, his head turned, still watching her, he stops.

MALCOLM

What are you doing?

ROSA

Excuse me!?

MALCOLM

What are you looking at?

ROSA

The sun – why are you talking to me?

MALCOLM

Oh no. Don't do that.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

Don't look at the sun. It's bad for your eyes.

ROSA

Wha-- don't tell me what to-- Did you follow me here?

MALCOLM

No, I –

ROSA

This is my bridge. It has nothing to do with you. So why don't you skiddle-a-daddle your ass down the other side. Oh and looking straight ahead, and not staring at me like the per--

MALCOLM

Hey. You never gave me a chance to answer your first question.

ROSA

Which was?

MALCOLM

Why I am talking to you.

ROSA

Why do you want to talk to me?

Beat. MALCOLM says nothing. ROSA begins to lose interest and looks back over the bridge.

MALCOLM

Don't look at the sun!

ROSA

I think I'm fine with the sun. Maybe it knows something // you don't.

MALCOLM

Know anything about theatre?

ROSA

Why would I know anything about theatre?

MALCOLM

I don't know. I know nothing about it. I was hoping to meet someone that would know something about it.

ROSA

Oh. Well sorry I guess.

ROSA looks back out onto us or past us.

MALCOLM

You know, you have pretty eyes.

ROSA

So you are tryin to hit on me.

MALCOLM

What no? I'm gay.

ROSA

No you're not. You're straight as you are awkward.

MALCOLM

You're right. I was lying.

ROSA

Wait, really?

MALCOLM

I like girls too. Have you seen Rent?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

Me neither.

ROSA

I'm not gonna talk theater with you. I'm gonna keep staring at the sun. I want to know if it's different. Or just in case it knows something. And this is my bridge, and... you can leave.

MALCOLM

Can?

ROSA

Can.

MALCOLM

Is that the same thing as an invitation to stay?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

I just won't yell at you if you do.

MALCOLM

Got it--

ROSA

And don't talk to me.

MALCOLM

Got it.

(awkwardly.)

I'm uhh. actually gonna-- I'm gonna leave now.

ROSA

(anxiously.)

What?! Don't leave!

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

Now you should stay.

MALCOLM

Why should I stay?

ROSA

To berate me about staring into the sun, to talk about theater --

MALCOLM

You haven't even seen Rent!

ROSA

You know how hard it was to get tickets!

MALCOLM

Well maybe make a sacrifice for once in your life. Sure you'll have to buy the bad pasta for a couple months, but for a magical two and a half hour experience.

Beat.

ROSA

Wait! You didn't see it either!

MALCOLM

No, I didn't!

ROSA

And do you regret it?

MALCOLM

I have no idea! I haven't seen it!

ROSA

Have we met? Have we talked before?

MALCOLM

This is our first conversation.

ROSA

I don't usually forget a face.

MALCOLM

Sure.

ROSA

Did you follow me?

MALCOLM

No. Do you know if this bridge has a name?

ROSA

Why would I know--

MALCOLM

You keep calling it yours.

ROSA

I don't know if it's has a name. It's just my spot. My place to collect myself.

MALCOLM

Hm.

ROSA

Is there something wrong with that?

MALCOLM

No, it's just not what I really expected.

ROSA

That the woman alone looking at the sunset is having some time to herself? – And I know, don't look at the sun.

MALCOLM

That's not what I was going to say.

ROSA

What were you going to say?

MALCOLM

I was going to say that 'I mean, it's lower now, so maybe it's alright to look at it. And the moon is beginning to peak out from behind the light. And that's kinda nice. I like to think of colors like dust, but not like my allergies, like in a magical way.'

ROSA

Achoo! Sorry, the sun, at a certain angle makes me sneeze sometimes.

MALCOLM

Is that an actual thing? I feel like that's not an actual thing.

ROSA

Achoo!

MALCOLM

Was that a real sneeze? That was a bit—

ROSA

Of course it was a real sneeze! Why the fuck would I fake a sneeze?

MALCOLM

I don't know, there's---

ROSA

Achoo!

MALCOLM

It can't be the sun.

ROSA

The light prickles my nose.

MALCOLM

So you're allergic to light?

ROSA

I don't like people like you.

MALCOLM

You've barely met me.

ROSA

Maybe we've met before. Or maybe I had a friend like you.

MALCOLM

which of those is it, we've met or you had a friend like me?

ROSA

Neither really. At least off the top of my head. I don't usually forget a face.

MALCOLM

Sure.

ROSA

When you came on this bridge, where were you headed?

MALCOLM

Nowhere in particular. I wouldn't have stopped.

ROSA

What type of person has no place to be?

MALCOLM

I like to walk. You like to stare at the sun. Where are you suppose to be?

ROSA

I don't know.

MALCOLM

I was just thinking that maybe I could clear my head.

ROSA

Really?

MALCOLM

And then along the way I forgot what I meant to think about.

ROSA

Do you know what I did today?

I went to my funeral.

Silence.

ROSA

Everyone I knew and some people I didn't really know were there, and then there were some people who I'm gonna assume must of had a really good excuse, or maybe, maybe it was too painful to see them put a little girl's coffin into the ground. And the priest was nothing but a

drone, was nothing but static because I was dead and I couldn't hear him. I tried eating, but I obviously couldn't taste anything cause I'm a ghost. My little girl is somewhere else now.

ROSA picks up one of the marigolds and fiddles with it.

MALCOLM

I'm so sorry. You've been keeping it awfully well together for your child just dying-- sorry, that's the wrong thing to say, I didn't mean it--

ROSA

She's not mine. She's my step-sister.

MALCOLM

Ah. Now it would be mean to leave, wouldn't it.

ROSA

Yes it would. So I told you about me, now tell me about you.

MALCOLM

I don't have anything to say. I'm from Pittsburgh. I work at Eagle Bank. I'm really sorry. What you said about your step-sister really threw me. I'm having trouble talking to you.

ROSA

Forget it. It actually never happened. I was being cruel.

MALCOLM

Forget it? It neve--

ROSA

It never happened. Just talk to me.

MALCOLM

Forget it?

ROSA

Forget it.

MALCOLM

I'm confused.

ROSA

Then just don't say anything.

MALCOLM

I--

ROSA

Don't--

MALCOLM

But I like my voice.

ROSA

Well that doesn't mean I have to like it.

MALCOLM

Like what?

ROSA

You speaking.

MALCOLM

That's rude.

ROSA

Life's rude.

MALCOLM

I can't tell if you actually went to a funeral--

ROSA

To hell with funerals.

Oh my god! Look!

ROSA points out over the bridge. By now the sky is dark orange and purple.

ROSA

There's some sort of... something in the sky. Like a shooting star or.. even though it isn't quite dark yet.

MALCOLM

That's not a shooting star. It was in the sky way too long to be a shooting star.

ROSA

Well I don't know, maybe the shooting star just woke up and was hungover, so it moved slower.

MALCOLM

That would be... interesting.

ROSA

Then what is it?

MALCOLM

I think that shooting star is really a meteor headed towards the Earth at billions of miles an hour destroying our atmosphere and our lives as we know it.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

But I came here to talk to you about theater, how did we get so far off that?

ROSA

I think you can blame yourself – so there's this meteor headed towards us – so we're going to, we get to have our last few moments on my bridge. That's nice. I like that. I should've made a bucket list so I'd know what to do right now.

MALCOLM

Remember how there were all these disaster movies coming out like 5, 10 years ago?

ROSA

Yeah?

MALCOLM

Like Armageddon or..

ROSA

Deep Impact!

MALCOLM

Or even the Die Hard movies, like on a smaller scale, a disaster. All of them have Bruce Willis--

ROSA

And his smolder!

MALCOLM

Literally through the entire film, smoldering. And that was just part of the psyche. Disaster movies, earthquakes and meteors, and Bruce Willis smoldering. And now here we are with a meteor headed towards us. I guess – I guess what I'm trying to say is – What I'm trying to say is I wonder what Bruce Willis is doing right now.

ROSA

Waiting till the last possible second before we perish. It looks different to you?

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

The sun.

MALCOLM

No.

ROSA

I don't think I ever got your name.

MALCOLM

Malcolm.

ROSA

You're not a ghost, are you?

MALCOLM

No. And what's your name?

A pause.

ROSA

Rosa?

MALCOLM

Rosa, like uhhhh no one I know or heard of. You're thorny and you smell good.

ROSA

You know it wasn't actually my step-sister's funeral. It was mine. I was trying to spare you from knowing that. I was trying to be kind, but I guess I couldn't do it.

MALCOLM

I-- do you have a step-sister?

ROSA

Yeah. *(to herself)* I wonder how she's doing?

MALCOLM

Have we met before?

ROSA

No. This is our first conversation.

MALCOLM

Are you dead?

ROSA

I don't know.

Streetlights on the bridge turn on, illuminating ROSA and MALCOLM just as they were becoming difficult to see.

MALCOLM

I was just about to say we should end the scene because it's getting dark.

ROSA

And I'm so tired.

MALCOLM

But we have to stay.

ROSA

You're probably right.

Streetlights flicker, then dark.

Scene Two

SETTING: Hillcrest, San Diego, Outside. TIME: Midday, early 2000s

BELLA, in funeral blacks, on the street outside her apartment.

BELLA

Somebody told me, well, my grandma – that when your ear starts ringing, that's the universe speaking to you but you see I have tinnitus in my left ear, so the universe won't shut up. It just won't-- it won't stop jabbing at me.

DYLAN enters. He's carrying a medium sized flower pot with a plant in it of some sort. He holds the pot with both hands and clutches a buzzing phone against the pot with one of them.

DYLAN

Hey Bella. Phone for you. The number's not in your phone.

DYLAN tries to hand BELLA's phone to her but drops it in the process. BELLA picks it up and holds it to her ear.

BELLA

Hello?... Uh-huh..... uh no.... Wait yes sorry.... Ok..... ok.....ok.....yep..... great. Th-- oh..... got it, yes, the 8th, I'll-- The 8th. I'll mark that down. Oh and what's your address again?.... Ok... ok--.... Ok. Thank you. Bye.

DYLAN

What was that?

BELLA

what are you holding?

DYLAN

A plant. What was that?

BELLA

It was for an appointment. Um. What type of plant?

DYLAN

I can't remember. What type of appointment?

BELLA

I have no idea. the woman on the phone wouldn't stop talking. I couldn't get a wor--

DYLAN

About?

BELLA

--d in about I don't know -- My tinnitus is bad today.

DYLAN

Ok.

BELLA

It really is. I keep drowning everything out.

DYLAN

Yeah. Sure

BELLA

Are you going to do something with that?

DYLAN

Oh yeah. Right. I'm gardening now.

BELLA

Oh that's nice!

DYLAN

Something I always thought of doing.

BELLA

Yeah. I'd be happy to help out with that stuff, if you'd like.

DYLAN

That's be fun!

BELLA

What are you planting?

DYLAN

I'm starting vegetables now. Some tomatoes, some squash, some peppers.

BELLA

Oh! I grew up with a community garden that some of my family was very into, and I know all that—

DYLAN

Cool. Noted. I'll let you know when I'm working. Or if you just see me—

BELLA

Yeah. When did you start gardening?

DYLAN

When I moved here.

BELLA

Oh, cool.

DYLAN

You know, when I moved in, originally I was going to do a flower garden. And before that I was going to put in a pond and buy a bunch of little statues – I haven't had my own yard before.

BELLA

Do you mean like gnomes?

DYLAN

No, little statues.

BELLA

I'm so sorry, what do you do again?

DYLAN

I'm a lawyer. // You?

BELLA

Mm. Data analyst.

DYLAN

I haven't had my own yard before.

BELLA

Yards are hard.

DYLAN

I'm from New York, so this space is baffling me.

BELLA

You're tackling that head on though. Most people don't do that.

DYLAN

Thanks. Anyway, I'm going to do that thing I'm doing now.

BELLA

... Gardening.

DYLAN

See ya.

DYLAN begins to exit from where he came. He bounces off with a youthful energy.

BELLA

Yes-I-already-knew-cause-I've-been-watching-you-- I mean good luck. Good luck Dylan.

DYLAN exits. The sound of running water from a sprinkler starts up.

BELLA

I'm not the girl next door, I'm that girl diagonally across the street, not straight across, but across then one over – Yeah. That's me.

*BELLA begins to appear anxious. The sprinkler gets louder. And louder. Then it becomes two sprinklers. Then three, crescendoing until suddenly, BELLA's submerged underwater. Pour a bucket on her for good measure. She holds her breath and swims before lifting her head up by holding onto the bridge. Gasping for air.
MRS. DAVIDSON enters with a float tube.*

MRS. DAVIDSON

Sink! I have news on the sink! Bella!

BELLA

Mrs. Davidson?

MRS. DAVIDSON

How are you, dear?

Another bucket of water onto head.

BELLA

Buoyant.

MRS. DAVIDSON

I love your word!

BELLA

What've you been up to?

MRS. DAVIDSON

Oh, a little bit of this and a bit of that. I started that kung-fu class today that I've been yammering about. And oh my lord, I would be so content to lay in a pool right now, I feel sprightly but I'm exhausted. I have to get off to the post office before it closes. They give me that look for getting there at 4:58, you know that one, and I just don't want to deal with it. Oh yes and no need to monkey with the sink. I have someone coming for it first thing in the morning.

BELLA

That's great. Really appreciate that.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Oh and just a reminder you still owe me for the electric bill. Please send that my way as soon as you can. I know I forget these things too.

BELLA

Yes, right. I'll drop off a check tomorrow morning. My bad.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Are you alright, dear? You're making a face.

BELLA

Oh, sorry. Just thinking. I'm perfect.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Don't forget that! Goodbye!

MRS. DAVIDSON floats away.

FATHER DIAZ enters onto the bridge, looking down on BELLA.

FATHER DIAZ

Isabella? It's Isabella, right?

BELLA

Yes.

FATHER DIAZ

I apologize. I haven't seen you since—

BELLA

A while. It's been—

FATHER DIAZ

A while.

BELLA

It's not my funeral. What do you have to say?

FATHER DIAZ

It's just I've been talking with Valentina, your aunt—

BELLA

No.

FATHER DIAZ

It's just — your aunt. And you know your aunt.

BELLA

I know her.

FATHER DIAZ

Well, we're concerned about your attendance at mass. Especially with everything that's been going on—

BELLA

I don't want to hear it.

FATHER DIAZ

Faith is an essential part of a well led life—

BELLA

I don't want to hear it.

FATHER DIAZ

Alright then, forget your aunt, forget mass. This is not the right place for this. I'm sorry. How are you feeling?

BELLA

How do you expect me to feel?

FATHER DIAZ

Of course. Were you close?

Silence.

FATHER DIAZ

It's natural to have a lot of emotions today. That's what we're here for.

BELLA

I know. But I just find myself so numb.

FATHER DIAZ

That's natural too.

BELLA

Is it? Auntie's been bawling all day. I miss her, but I can't feel any part of my body.

FATHER DIAZ

They say there's five stages of grief, but I just think everybody feels these losses differently.

BELLA

Yeah.

FATHER DIAZ

I heard through the grapevine—

BELLA

What's the grapevine?

FATHER DIAZ

You know, the grapevine, that you've been struggling with work?

BELLA

That's not true. You can't be believing – who told you that? Was it Lola?

FATHER DIAZ

I'm not sure. I think from her mother.

BELLA

I'm doing well, I'm actually getting paid pretty good. That bitch always trying to put me down.

An awkward beat.

FATHER DIAZ

Congratulations.

BELLA

Thank you.

FATHER DIAZ

We want to at least talk at the church. Monday?

BELLA

I have an appointment that day after work. And I'm pretty busy next week generally.

FATHER DIAZ

Ok. Sometime later?

BELLA

Thanks.

FATHER DIAZ

I shouldn't tell you this, but your Dad stopped by last week.

BELLA

What?

FATHER DIAZ

Very briefly. He just heard about Renata a few days ago.

BELLA

Ok, and? Why do I care?

FATHER DIAZ

He felt like he at least needed to go to the church. That's all.

BELLA

Was there anything in particular he said?

FATHER DIAZ

No, but I'm also not at liberty to say.

BELLA

I'll try to stop by next week.

FATHER DIAZ

Happy to have you.

BELLA

All I said is that I'd try.

FATHER DIAZ

Claro.

BELLA

Right now, I need to say hi to mi abuela.

FATHER DIAZ

Please, don't let me hold you. Hope to see next week.

BELLA exits. FATHER DIAZ exits the other way.

Scene Three

Three teenage boys, JOSH, LUCAS and LEO enter. They hop in a car, maybe we see them drive it. Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg can be heard on the radio. Or maybe Outkast.

LUCAS
So uh boys, I met someone.

JOSH
Eyyy. Like met or *met*?

LUCAS
We're keeping it casual.

LEO
Eyyy. What's her name?

LUCAS
Carolyn.

JOSH
She cute?

LUCAS
You've met her. Fernando's last week.

JOSH
What?

LUCAS
I got this Polaroid of her then.

LEO takes a photo out of a wallet and hands it to JOSH who's driving.

JOSH
Lemme see. Not bad brother.

LUCAS
Not bad? She's gorgeous.

JOSH

She's decent looking. She's good looking.

LUCAS

Give it to Leo. And you shouldn't be talking. Your last girlf--

JOSH

Don't say that name. Nope. Don't talk to me about that--

A car horn sounds. JOSH swerves the wheel.

JOSH

Crazy motherfucker! I was--

LEO

Who votes we don't let Josh drive again.

LEO raises his hand. LUCAS does as well.

LEO

Motion approved.

JOSH

That wasn't my fault. The guy behind us tried to switch lanes into the--

LUCAS

Bro chillax.

A beat.

LEO

Did y'all here about that girl that died? In Grant Hill? I know someone that knows some of her fam--

LUCAS

Wait, shit really? Carolyn is kinda from around there.

JOSH

Casual my ass.

LUCAS

Oh hell no. Just someone died. It's–

LEO

So you gonna talk to her bout it?

LUCAS

Nah, it'd send the wrong message.

JOSH

Good call.

LEO

Is that Dre?

JOSH

Yeah.

LEO

Man's hard. Turn that up.

LEO starts bobbing to the music. JOSH and LUCAS talk with themselves.

JOSH

So uh you really catching feelings for this girl or...

LUCAS

Starting a relationship in summer is always iffy.

JOSH

Keep it chill my dude. Don't let this like 110 degrees heat get ta' you.
And boys we've arrived.

LEO

I've literally never been more hyped for wings.

LUCAS

Not a chain either. We're on some of that socially conscious – chicks dig that.

LEO

Facts.

JOSH

Aight. Let's hop out.

JOSH, LUCAS and LEO exit. CAROLYN and LILLY enter. They get in the car. CAROLYN drives. LILLY in the passenger. Alanis Morissette on the radio.

CAROLYN

Sooooo I heard this is kinda around where he lives.

LILLY

Somewhere on this street?

CAROLYN

Somewhere on this street.

LILLY

There's a cute guy trying to plant a plant over there. Is that him? Oh wait. He's like 30. Can we come back? I want to stalk plant guy.

CAROLYN

No! If he sees me around here, just for like no reason, we'd be so screwed. He'd totally freak out.

LILLY

But plant guy looks like he's having so much fuunnnn.

CAROLYN looks behind her, where LILLY is looking.

CAROLYN

Aww. A man who gardens.

LILLY

Hubby material.

CAROLYN

Lilly you're at least 10 years apart--

LILLY

I don't care!

CAROLYN

You got like two good looks at him.

LILLY

Yeah but one of them was of his ass. We're meant to be.

CAROLYN

Lilly!

DYLAN enters with a few gardening tools and sweaty, dirty clothes on. BELLA puts on gardening gloves.

LILLY

Carolyn.

(She mumbles.)

I appreciate good material when I see it.

DYLAN

Hey!

CAROLYN

AH! //

BELLA

Hey! Hey Dylan!

LILLY

Good DENIM! Of course I mean good denim!

CAROLYN

You're going to make me crash this car. I swear—

LILLY

You're a good driver.

CAROLYN

No I am not. My Dad put extra insurance on me cause he's expecting it to go up since I got my own car.

LILLY

Dennis is so smart.

CAROLYN

I'm not that bad. Don't-

LILLY

Absolute genius.

CAROLYN

Bitch, you want me to crash this or not.

LILLY

I'd probably prefer you don't crash it. Ah ha-hu. That's actually kinda a sensitive subject right now.

CAROLYN

Oh my god, I completely forgot. I am so sorry. She was so sweet.

LILLY

Yeah, I knew her better when we were younger.

She was a good person. I hate saying 'was'. She was never really someone I thought I'd miss, but now I miss her.

CAROLYN

Yeah. I get if that's all really hard. I mean, it is hard.

LILLY

Even for someone that was a bit more, like, on the second ring of my circle. One moment they're around. And they'll never be around again. It's unsettling. I don't really know what to think about it except it's like "this happened. It's really shitty and sad."

CAROLYN

It makes me think about bigger things.

LILLY

You know they don't know if she meant it.

CAROLYN

Yeah.

LILLY

That must be so hard for her family–

CAROLYN

I know, just–

LILLY

Let's talk about something else.

CAROLYN

Whatever you want babe.

LILLY

Do you want to create a backstory for plant guy?

CAROLYN

YES.

LILLY

Ok. Well his name is Victor.

CAROLYN

Victor? That's such an ugly name.

LILLY

Yes, he hates it, but I think it's sophisticated.

CAROLYN

His ass does not look like a Victor.

LILLY

Well what do you think he's called?

CAROLYN

He looks like a Dylan.

LILLY

Ew. no. we're calling him Victor.

CAROLYN

Ok fine. Victo--

LILLY

He grew up in New York. He's trained and tested in all the ways of that city.

CAROLYN

But he's always been a country boy at heart.

LILLY

He's always been a country boy at heart, which is why he gardens. To connect with the earth in a way he--

CAROLYN

never could in the big city. He dreams of moving out to the Midwest when he's older and running a small farm.

LILLY

He's already got the place picked out on realtor.com.

CAROLYN

Or farm realtor. Does realtor.com have farms? I feel like it wouldn't--

LILLY

Yeah, you're right; farm realtor.com. And despite his youthful rich city boy demeanor, he's really spiritual.

CAROLYN

Ew gross. Like he calls himself a Buddhist.

LILLY

But actually doesn't do that kinda pop Buddhism. He actually practices. Like he actually--

CAROLYN

Actually.

LILLY

Actually. He was the weird kid on the lacrosse team.

CAROLYN

But ridiculously good.

LILLY

And got along with everybody despite his weirdness. Or--

CAROLYN

Mostly everybody. And all his ex's have been really toxic and taken advantage of how sweet he is.

LILLY

And as a result has kinda become a bit toxic himself, disillusioned from

CAROLYN

L-love.

LILLY

And

CAROLYN

He needs someone that can treat him good, treat him the way he deserves. Someone like Lilly.

LILLY

Fuck yeah. Someone like Lilly.

CAROLYN

Mm-k. We here.

LILLY

I love. the. wings. here. Did you use to think this restaurant wasn't a chain?

CAROLYN

Yeah, oh my god, the way they market themselves it's like it's the only one. It's really misleading.

LILLY

SO misleading. It's like a local chain though. I don't know.

CAROLYN

Talking about whether restaurants are CHAINS. Such interesting conversation.

LILLY

Something Victor– or sorry, Dylan, would go on about.

CAROLYN

Oh my god, 100 percent.

LILLY

Uh are we gonna get out?

LILLY and CAROLYN exit the car. They shut their doors. They exit. They leave DYLAN and BELLA behind. DYLAN's bent over with his butt high in the air.

BELLA

Did you see that car that slowed way down passing by us?

DYLAN

No, what's this?

BELLA

I'm just imagining things. It's so ungodly hot out.

DYLAN

Yeah.

BELLA

Is it me or do tomatoes not like being alive?

DYLAN

No, I've begun to get that feeling too. You know how there's that saying you can lead a horse to water – *(to the tomatoes)* well I'm literally giving you water and you still doesn't grow. What was your phone call about?

BELLA

Just family stuff.

DYLAN

How's everyone holding up?

BELLA

We're fine. I mean, we're obviously not fine but – we're getting better.

DYLAN

Good.

BELLA

We've been having these mandatory family gatherings. This week we all went to one of my cousin's to watch *sports*.

DYLAN

Oh that sounds very fun for you.

BELLA

Yeah it was a soccer game. Cruz Azul vs. I don't know, somebody. And there was this guy there that kept telling me how many mosquitos he killed sitting on the porch. I don't even know who he was.

DYLAN

Drunk?

BELLA

Yeah.

DYLAN

Was he like– what was the purpose of him saying that?

BELLA

I think he was boasting? It was exhausting to listen to, buzzing in my ear– My aunts – We'll never be adults to them except when it comes to money. They can't keep forcing us to get together.

DYLAN

I thought you liked the family time – well, at first.

BELLA

It's just awkward. Maybe it's nicer than being alone, I don't know.

DYLAN

And how are you holding up?

BELLA pauses in what she's doing. She can't think of how to respond.

Scene Four

BELLA rises and the living room of her apartment rolls on behind her as she wanders. She picks up her phone. DYLAN picks up his, who takes a break from his plants while they talk. SANTA MUERTE enters, wanders and listens.

BELLA

I'm fine. Everything's fine.

DYLAN

Ok.

BELLA

What's up with you?

A light flickers.

BELLA

Damn, the power really just decided to space out just then.

DYLAN

It sneezed. It really just had to have its moment.

BELLA

No, you should've seen it. It really, like, went full haunted house on me.

DYLAN

I swear I saw a ghost today.

BELLA

This again?

BELLA's ear begins ringing and SANTA MUERTE enters into her space. They make eye contact. BELLA starts to sweat while SANTA MUERTE wanders around the living room observing her.

DYLAN

No I swear I did. I was sitting at a picnic table at this park and this woman sat down across from me, which already was weird. And she was really distant when talking and had this constipated look on her face, like she was trying to stay visible—

Was she high?
BELLA

What?
DYLAN

Was she high? Were you high?
BELLA

Not really—
DYLAN

Am I high? I have to go.
BELLA

What?
DYLAN

BELLA hangs up.

Hi. Um, how did you get in here?
BELLA
(to SANTA MUERTE)

No response.

I don't know if that's a dumb question or not. What are you here for? Am I—
Can you say something? Are you gonna say anything?
Do you want to sit down?
BELLA

SANTA MUERTE finds a chair to sit in.

Do you want anything? like wine or iced tea um.
BELLA
(nervously)

A sympathetic look.

BELLA

Tea good?

SANTA MUERTE stands again, walks right up to BELLA and peers into her left ear. BELLA attempts to remain composed.

BELLA

Tea not good?

SANTA MUERTE peers some more. She takes out a medical flashlight to get a better look.

BELLA

I have tinnitus in that ear, but it's a perfectly normal thing.

SANTA MUERTE

Red or white?

BELLA

Red.

SANTA MUERTE

Good.

BELLA

Ok, let me just go get glasses.

SANTA MUERTE

I don't drink. It just tells me something about you. And your ear is dirty.

BELLA

Excuse me?

SANTA MUERTE

You need to clean your ear.

BELLA

Uh, of course, señora.

SANTA MUERTE

And circular motion if you're using Q tips, but it's much better to use a washcloth. Sit.

BELLA finds a seat. SANTA MUERTE observes her some more.

SANTA MUERTE

This isn't you.

BELLA

What?

SANTA MUERTE

You're a scientist, right?

BELLA

Yeah. Data analyst but yeah.

SANTA MUERTE

Then what am I doing in your living room.

BELLA

I don't know, you tell me what you're doing in my living room.

SANTA MUERTE

To tell you what I'm noticing.

BELLA

Ok, and?

SANTA MUERTE

You're looking a little pale. Do you need water?

BELLA

No, I'm good. Gracias.

SANTA MUERTE

Are you sure?

BELLA

Yes. I couldn't drink it if I had it, you might not be able to see it but I'm shaking.

SANTA MUERTE

Entiendo.

BELLA

I hate myself.

SANTA MUERTE

Why do you say that?

BELLA

Well I'm seeing things like Mexican goddesses. And nothing's making sense.

SANTA MUERTE

Why do you think this?

BELLA

Because I'm talking to you. And I work with numbers, I don't pretend to know about any of this stuff?

SANTA MUERTE

Stuff like me?

BELLA

No. I mean, yeah. I know about math.

SANTA MUERTE

Most of the world doesn't do math. Or at least the math that you do.

BELLA

Did you help any of my family pass?

SANTA MUERTE

I can't say.

BELLA

Why?

SANTA MUERTE

Dying is very private. Everything leading up to it and everything after no, but...

BELLA

Is everyone ok over there?

SANTA MUERTE

You ask them. Not me.

BELLA

I'm trying to remember. My Mom would tell me stories, you were sometimes in them, in which everything was messy, but they always found a way to tie the bow.

SANTA MUERTE

Muchas cosas son desagradables.

BELLA

I've never felt like I had an ending to something. So it's weirding me out I'm seeing you.

SANTA MUERTE

Mija, you're not dying.

BELLA

Oh. I assumed this was a sign.

SANTA MUERTE

No. But you're thinking a lot about death, yes?

BELLA

I'm not sure if I ever processed it when – Everything passes me by.

SANTA MUERTE

We're all passing through.

BELLA

You'd know.

SANTA MUERTE

That's what they say. You know, you never let anybody see your cards. If they don't know your cards, they can't help you.

BELLA

When I got to college, I ignored you. And I can't really remember anything you've ever said. Is that bad?

SANTA MUERTE

It's normal.

BELLA

Not really.

SANTA MUERTE

Am I messy story or real to you?

BELLA

Messy story.

SANTA MUERTE

Because you're a scientist.

BELLA

Not really technically a scientist but yeah.

SANTA MUERTE

Why do you think you're seeing me then? Or what do you see in me?

BELLA loses her words for any type of response.

SANTA MUERTE

You're not being yourself. This isn't you.

SANTA MUERTE turns to leave.

BELLA

Because I'm seeing you and I'm a scientist?

SANTA MUERTE

No.

BELLA

What isn't me?

She exits. BELLA's phone rings. She picks up.

BELLA

Mom?

DYLAN

Uh it's Dylan. You just hung up so suddenly and it made me stressed—

BELLA's ear starts ringing. She hangs up.

BELLA

Tengo bastante de los hombres. What my aunts say. Bastante. Bastante. That-- that wasn't even a dream.

BELLA grabs her ear.

Bastante. We used to make fun of them for that word. Now I'm saying it. Electric bill. And there's something else I don't remember. Fuck.

Lights and set begin to change again. BELLA grabs a handle above her as the sounds of a subway enter the atmosphere.

And then the train stops. BELLA exits.

LUCAS, JOSH and LEO enter into a subway car. The thrum of wheels on a track resumes.

LEO

Do you think it's a problem that we left the car back at the restaurant?

JOSH

Nah we'll be fine. Traffic's a bitch tonight. So many road closures I can't even — just fuck.

LUCAS

For some reason I thought we'd see Carolyn there. I just had a feeling.

JOSH

You feeling ok, dawg?

LEO

Like did you hit your head on the beam when you went to take a piss? The ceilings were short in there.

LUCAS

Did you do that, cuh? That's weirdly specific.

A pause.

LEO

Yeah.

JOSH

He just wanted to know if anyone else felt his pain.

LEO

Yup. No one's going through what I'm going through.

JOSH

You hit your head on the fucking ceiling.

LEO

Fuck yeah I did. No one else here feels my pain. Like on my forehead.

JOSH

Ay, chico, mira a dónde vas – espera. No hay nada en tu cabeza.

LEO

Dolío. ¿Cuya mamá usa una chantla? ¿Tuyo? No sabes el dolor real.

JOSH

Pobre pobre Leo. Mi tía es la misma—

LUCAS

Inglés, por favor!

The lights in the subway flicker and the train jolts a little.

JOSH

That did not just happen. That did not just happen. That was mad creepy.

LEO

The subway's creepy like that. Everybody knows--

JOSH

I don't fuck with this. We getting off at the next stop.

LUCAS

Then we'll have to walk forever. We're nowhere near the car or the water.

JOSH

We'll call a taxi!

LUCAS

For real?

JOSH

Nah I'm just messing around.

LEO

Nah you're not messing round. I know you, Joshua. You're gonna get possessed down here. Either that or Lucas is, I--

JOSH laughs uncomfortably as if he's brushing it off, but is in reality nervous. LUCAS looks off into the car in front of them.

JOSH

Dawg, why would you say that? Why would you--

LUCAS

Guys, I think Carolyn is in the car ahead of us.

LEO

You're wack as fuck. Get off that--

LUCAS

No, seriously, look.

LUCAS looks. JOSH stands and looks. LEO tries to wave at her. She doesn't seem to see him.

LUCAS

I swear that's her.

CAROLYN and LILLY enter into their own car. LUCAS knocks on the glass at the end of the boys' car. He waves.

LUCAS

That's her.

CAROLYN

Oh my fucking god. That's Lucas!

All three boys wave. After a moment, CAROLYN and LILLY wave back.

LEO

Who she with?

LILLY

Who he with?

LUCAS

I think her name is Lilly.

CAROLYN

I don't know. I think I met at least one of them at a party.

JOSH

They talking about us?

LUCAS

I'd assume so.

(to CAROLYN while exaggerating his enunciation and lip movements.)

Do yOU WanNA GEt Off aT tHE NExt sTOp?

CAROLYN

SURe.

LILLY

What does he want?

CAROLYN

Like for us to meet up.

LILLY

Word.

The lights flicker a bit more dramatically. The train shakes a little bit more dramatically. JOSH looks around nervously. LEO stumbles a bit.

CAROLYN

Wow that was hella freaky.

JOSH

No fucking way. No fucking way. No fucking way. No fucking—

LILLY

Wanna get off at the next stop?

CAROLYN

Yeah. Let me talk to him first.

(to LUCAS while exaggerating her enunciation and lip movements.)

WE're GOinG TO tHE BEaCH. WanNA COme?

LUCAS

She just said something to me.

JOSH

What did she // say?

LUCAS

I don't know.

CAROLYN

I don't think he can understand me.

JOSH goes over to help.

CAROLYN

(while half mouthing, half speaking.)

BeACH. BeACH. BeACH. BeACH.

JOSH

She's saying 'Bitch' over and over again?

LUCAS

What?

JOSH

Time to tear up that polaroid, dawg.

The lights flicker. The train jumps as if it skipped a beat.

JOSH

What the fuc-k!!

CAROLYN and LILLY scream. A moment.

JOSH

Yo like where are they?

LEO

They're on the floor. If you stand you can kinda see them.

JOSH

Oh shit.

LEO

Lilly's shaking.

JOSH

Oh my fucks– women.

LEO's looking off the other direction.

LEO

Was there always a person in the car behind us?

JOSH

I don't remember. Maybe.

The boys begin looking around, fiddling with themselves or finding other ways to distract themselves.

LUCAS

Yeah, I feel like I saw them earlier. But I'm not really sure.

LEO

(unconvincingly.)

Yeah now that you mention it, I think I saw her as well.

LUCAS

Are we getting off at this stop boys?

LEO

Yeah.

JOSH

Yeah. They'll be getting off too.

The train slows to a stop. Doors open. The three boys begin to exit the subway. LEO looks off into the other car.

LEO

Where did that woman go?

JOSH

Maybe she already got off.

LEO

Well damn she must've sprinted.

The boys are on the platform. The doors close. It's a stop above ground.

LUCAS

Where are the girls?

JOSH

Over there.

CAROLYN and LILLY enter. LILLY still appears pretty shaken. CAROLYN puts on a face.

CAROLYN

Hey! That was really freaky, huh?

LUCAS

Hella freaky.

CAROLYN

We were going to go the beach. Our car is in a garage not too far from here. You guys wanna come along?

LUCAS

Yeahh for sure. We were bout to be headed to the beach too.

JOSH

For sure.

LEO

Dope.

CAROLYN

K, you guys wait here. Lilly and I need to freshen up.

JOSH

You're using the tourist bathrooms? That's nasty. That's so fucking // nasty.

CAROLYN

We'll just be a sec.

LUCAS

Ok.

LUCAS, JOSH and LEO exit.

CAROLYN

If you say anything to them about it, you're ruining my chance with him.

LILLY

Carolyn, we need to talk. What the actual-- I think that was-- She looked just like Renata.

CAROLYN

No, she was much older.

LILLY

Oh my god, oh my god..

CAROLYN

Lilly!

LILLY

She looked the same though.

CAROLYN

How can you tell that?

LILLY

She just felt the same. I don't know. She just--

CAROLYN

Lilly, take a breath.

LILLY

It was like she was trying to reach out.

CAROLYN

Sometimes we just see things and we can't really explain it.

LILLY

Are you saying forget it?

CAROLYN

I'm saying stop talking about it! – Sorry, lets go to the bathrooms.

LILLY

Ok.

CAROLYN and LILLY exit.

Scene Five

BELLA gets off at her subway stop. She looks around.

BELLA

I don't feel good enough for this house apartment in this neighborhood. I look around to all these perfect bundles of joy doing something far more interesting than me and now I'm seeing things—I'm literally seeing things. I'm going places I don't think I should be. This block made me crazy. I'm crazy.

I miss my mom. She works too much. Dad's gotta be hiding somewhere around here. He loved to write. Maybe he still does. I never could be a writer like him. I'm not a scientist. I should check on the plants— oh shit. I'm gonna be late!

BELLA takes her preferred method of transport to an undisclosed location.

BELLA

You know once during college, I went to this open mic night for poetry. I was so nervous. I didn't think that was my path. I felt awkward.

Still. Maybe I'm a messy story, like when I was little. It's nice to think you mean enough to have a tale. I feel like that mother who drowned her children, in that all I do is weep and wander.

My mom, mi abuela, my ear. Tonight I'm hosting my own open mic night. The title and theme is 'Life is a Spiritual Mess'. In lieu of an admission fee, you are invited to donate through the QR code on your program. All proceeds go to undocumented families. I hope you enjoy.

FATHER DIAZ mounts the bridge. He faces the audience.

BELLA

How can I still be at the funeral?

FATHER DIAZ

Today we gather to honor the life of Renata Ramírez de Santillana. She was an ambitious, fearless soul. She excelled in school while acting as an important keystone to her field hockey team. She loved and spoke passionately about animal abuse and racism in her community. She kept a journal where she'd imagine herself writing to Ryan Gosling, though I'm sure she sought to take that pastime of hers to the grave. (*awkward silence*) Anyway, while working with her during her preparation for her confirmation and twice during our youth group's annual retreat, I was struck by how much of an effort she put into reaching out to those she might not normally, actively inviting others into the group and creating a comfortable space. She always saw immediately in everyone she encountered that little light inside them and truly possessed a gift in drawing it out.

For any young person to leave us when they're still growing into the beautiful person they are is truly a tragedy. There are few other words to describe // her passing.

BELLA

My third youngest cousin. As the oldest, I changed her diapers but, you know, then she got older. Maybe my ability to blow bubbles out of those wands or as she hit late elementary and middle school, drive her places she shouldn't be – it wasn't enough. Sometimes in such a large family, it feels like you can know everything about a person even when you see them sparingly. But us two were strange. I still knew her. We were close. We talked. She was so much younger than me. And wiser. We all obviously devastated. I'm devastated. They don't know if she intended it – We don't know what she intended – If I somehow found out what she wanted, then there'd just be something else – then another question, then another question. Even at the funeral, I snuck out early. I felt like shit. It didn't feel real. I remember seeing everything and everyone but not seeing them at all.

The power goes out.

BELLA

(to herself)

Oh – the fucking lights.

(to audience)

Everybody, I'm so sorry, the power has seemed to have momentarily failed us. Give us a second and we'll be right back with you with the lovely work that we have planned.

Scene Six

The curtain is drawn. We return to the bridge where MALCOLM and ROSA are in darkness. Occasional meteorite 'booms' of impact can be heard in the distance. MALCOLM is inspecting one of the lamps lighting the bridge, standing on the edge of the bridge to do so. ROSA looks on at him.
The light MALCOLM seems to be fiddling with turns back on.

MALCOLM

The bulb just wasn't screwed in all the way, that's all.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM hops down now that they have minimal light.

MALCOLM

The bulb. It wasn't screwed in all the way.

ROSA

Oh.

ROSA

The world still seems to be ending.

MALCOLM

Yeah.

ROSA

Much prefer a night alone on my bridge.

MALCOLM

This was never really your bridge, right? You were just trying to mess with me.

ROSA

Yeah, you're right I've never been here before.

MALCOLM

I knew it.

ROSA

Ok you don't need to be like that.

MALCOLM

Like what?

ROSA

A child.

MALCOLM

You're the one that lied to me for some reason!

ROSA

When I found this bridge I thought no one else had seemed to claim it. So it might as well be mine.

MALCOLM

I had that exact same thought when I first walked by here, but then I saw you and--

ROSA

I beat you to it. What's your biggest regret?

MALCOLM

Because the world is ending?

ROSA

Naturally.

MALCOLM

Get me a fishing pole. I need to think about this.

ROSA retrieves a fishing pole. She hands it to MALCOLM. He lowers the line.

MALCOLM

This is how my Dad thought about things. Probably. No one's really asked me that. Probably meeting all the right people at the wrong times. Not taking advantage of my relationships when I had them. Like I wish I was closer to my brother when I was a teen. I wish I met this person at a different stage of life. It's always felt out of order. You?

ROSA

No I'm not gonna answer that.

MALCOLM

We don't have all night. There's, you know, the apocalypse.

ROSA

Well then how about you save it. You're not Bruce Willis. He's probably out there working his ass off to keep us from obliv--

MALCOLM

I. Turned On. That. Streetlight. I stood on the edge of the bridge at my own risk – I could've fallen-- and turned it on!

ROSA is suddenly very still. She looks down at the water. She looks a little pale.

MALCOLM

Rosa? Hey, Rosa! ROSA!

ROSA seems to come out of her trance.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

You just seemed to be on a pause button for a sec there. You just froze.

ROSA

I did?

MALCOLM

Yeah, I was yelling your name.

ROSA

Oh. I heard you say it, but, um.

MALCOLM

Where did you go?

ROSA

Um nowhere. I haven't moved.

MALCOLM

Yes physically, but--

ROSA

I've had a rough day. I was lost in space.

MALCOLM

I just think about how people persevere and put themselves through the weirdest shit sometimes, you know?

ROSA

No I don't but also yeah I think I know what you mean.

MALCOLM

I think about that with myself sometimes. You get drained. And when you froze there, I just saw all the color go out of your face. And you keep pushing.

ROSA

I push however much I need to.

MALCOLM

Fine, be like that, but that's not a thing.

ROSA suddenly appears anxious.

The streetlight flickers dramatically. MALCOLM seems to become not himself, his energy shifting ever so slightly. He stands his fishing pole up on its own.

MALCOLM

Dumb bitch.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

What did you just say to me?

MALCOLM

I didn't say anything!

ROSA

No, you--

MALCOLM

Sheesh first the freezing thing and now you're hearing things? You alright?

ROSA

I-- I had a rough day.

MALCOLM

Yeah I guess you must've.

The streetlight flickers dramatically.

ROSA

Get away from me.

MALCOLM

I-- I don't understand what happened. One moment we were trying to think of if we've met and the next you're really upset – what-- what--

ROSA

Something-- you reminded me-- Just let me be alone for a moment.

MALCOLM

Ok. I'll just be towards that end of the bridge. If you need me, just come over or give me a shout or whatever.

ROSA nods and begins to control her breathing as MALCOLM exits. She looks up towards the sky.

ROSA

Why-- every single--

LEO enters from downstage, walking through the house looking very lost. The sound of running water eases into the soundscape. He mimes wading through a river of sorts until he is a little bit underneath ROSA.

LEO

Do you know where I am?

ROSA

Not really actually.

LEO

I was trying to leave the subway station but I lost track of the boys and now I'm in a river.

ROSA

Yes, I can see that. Not that you were in a subway station or that you lost the boys, but uh you are definitely in a river.

LEO

Yeah, uh did you come from the subway?

ROSA

Um no I did not.

LEO

Huh I thought I might've saw you in the car-- eh-- nothing. Nothing.

ROSA

Well if there is one thing I can tell you for certain, it's that I haven't been in the subway recently – uh where you from??

LEO

Uh San Diego. Is that-- is that not where I-- oh. um.

ROSA

San Diego got a subway?

LEO

Um um yeah. I think. Uh yes?

ROSA

Missed that somehow. I grew up there. Didn't have one then. We have a trolley!

LEO

Oh cool I know. I'm going to keep going up this river and see if I can get back to my stop. My friends are probably wondering where I am.

ROSA

Ok. Well good luck!

A boom reverberates in the background.

ROSA

Jesus well that's still going.

LEO

What is that?

ROSA

A meteor. Me and a friend of mine who you'll probably pass by-- he's somewhere round here--- we saw it.

LEO looks at ROSA like she's crazy.

LEO

Oh well ok. Have a good night.

LEO continues wading, heading upstage, going under the bridge before exiting.

ROSA

You too.

ROSA exhales loudly. She looks back up to the sky.

ROSA

Why is it-- why do they always say women are always imagining things?

MALCOLM reenters.

MALCOLM

Did you see that kid wading through the river? What the actual frickin-- what?

ROSA

Yeah I talked to him for a little bit. He said he came from the subway. I think he might've hit his head on something.

MALCOLM

I mean, it is the apocalypse. I imagine people are coming from all over.

ROSA

Yeah but wading through a small river. Tengo bastante de los hombres. Ayyy I sound like one my aunts or grandmas. Bastante. Bastante. Bastante. It gets passed down I guess. I had this one older cousin, we'd always make fun of our older relatives and now I sound like them. I wonder if she sounds like--

MALCOLM

Do you want to talk about whatever happened a little earlier?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

Ok.

A pause.

ROSA

Back there, you made a gesture or it was something you said about 'not a thing' and you just suddenly you started to become completely different in my-- my head. I know it sounds dumb. it's just what occurs since -- well
None of that's really important now.

MALCOLM

No I guess not.

Silence. It lasts for a little while, long enough so both ROSA and MALCOLM begin looking in other directions. ROSA eventually puts her gaze on the sky. MALCOLM's rests his on the water below.

ROSA

There are entire worlds we don't even know about. There are these places that'll we'll never see, that'll we'll never even hear of. I know people tell us to look at the stars and the universe is so expansive, but what about this rock. There are places we'll never see. I-- I don't even know what's on the other side of that bridge. I don't even know who in my life is alive right now or if they're astroid dust.

MALCOLM

I keep everything so close to myself. It's too often misty and cloudy. My neck is always stiff cause my eyes are tunnels so I can't move side to side. I can't see what else is out there. Except a light somewhere towards the end, maybe it's in the middle, there's no way for me to know when the light is coming from. I heard there was a ladder along here for me to climb out of this cell, but I don't even know what's on this side of the bridge. Where was that boy going again?

ROSA

Up the river somewhere. To find his friends.

MALCOLM

He thinks that'll work?

ROSA

He seemed to think it made sense.

MALCOLM

I don't know how much sense that makes.

ROSA

Kids don't make a lot of sense.

MALCOLM

No, I never did.

ROSA

I didn't either.

MALCOLM stands. He heads over to his fishing line. He exhales loudly.

MALCOLM

Do you know what I did today?

ROSA

What?

A long beat.

MALCOLM

I can't remember all the facts. It's muddled.

ROSA

What actually happened?

MALCOLM

I've never made it past half-truths.

A loud boom reverberates. The bridge rattles. The singular street light flickers then goes dark. A roar returns to MALCOLM's voice.

MALCOLM

God Damn't!! I just fixed that!. You know what, I'm going to see what's on the other side of this shit. I don't care if I die! I'm tired of being half-way—*MALCOLM walks off the other side of the bridge. His voice cuts off as he exits. ROSA chases after him.*

ROSA

Malcolm!

There are a few moments of silence and then a few more.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT 2

Scene One

LEO appears from upstage. He wades until he is just past the bridge. He looks out upon us.

LEO

I think I'm pretty lost. Like dawg – I was on the subway – then I was off the subway – then I was here. Then I met this weird lady and this weird man. I thought both couldn't of been real, but like none of that ghost shit. Or I'm the ghost. I keep thinking about that girl that died. She's not here. She's not back at the subway. She's not anywhere. I can feel it in myself I don't really know what that means. That's honestly really frightening. And now I feel like I'm just waiting to make sense of it. I'll look around here and say to myself "Well, went to Narnia?" or I'll get a little higher than I usually do, a little more trashed cause I don't understand something. Why don't stuff make sense no more? If it did all make sense or at least mostly make sense or even half make sense – I was wading up that way as if I was crawling up a mountain. The sky, the air slowly turned a pinkish orange. With anything and everything else crumbling, the trees suddenly became, like, more alive. They were the new us. I saw only two people the whole time, both around this bridge.

So I kept going, after a while I realized I was significantly gaining height. I was wading up a mountain. The trees became shorter and for some strange shit, air traffic was off the rocker. Big, commercial planes passing by me. A few at a time, sometimes right over my head. It was fucking deafening. Just ringing and ringing and ringing in my ears. I had no reception this whole time. I got to the summit and it was pitch black everywhere around me. I see no lights of anything, but it's foggy by the water.

The stars were brighter than I ever seen them before. Just kinda dotted across the entire sky in this mystical, almost protective way. But uh that wasn't it though, the air was that pink for a reason I guess, 'cause as soon as I was about to call it quits and head back down the wind picked up and these thundering firecracker bangs and all these little, or probably not so little flames began popping up around the hills. I heard some bangs in the distance a little earlier, but this shit was like close. I was probably in danger. We was at a pitch dark midnight black blue star covered sky and it just exploded. The air became really dense. But that's not important, cause those fires let me see where I was. Or kinda where I was. I wasn't in Narnia. I wasn't in heaven or hell – I was in Los Angeles. And all the stars disappeared in the light of the blazes. The city sprawled out to my right. The city lights blinking in some sort of confused pattern of morse code. All synchronously. And that was wack, but it was L.A. Those little fires burning across the landscape lit the water in a really wonderful way. I kept asking myself if I was dead. Instead I sat somewhere comfy and said to myself this must be one hell of a bender. But I don't remember

drinking. I feel like this is the weekend I like to think I have. As I was hiking and wading, I just kept thinking I don't know who the fucks I am. Who is in this body that I seem to inhabit? No matter what I do with myself, how I build myself or how I spend my time, who I spend that time with or shit, I feel like I'm inscrutable to myself. I don't have an identity. I'm just the opposite's perception of me. Pulled off to every direction, I can't tell what days they fence me out and what days they fence me in.

I hiked some Hollywood hill today. I saw air traffic moving in the way of an apocalypse and all these hills catch on sky fire. I was haunted on a subway that might not exist. I waded through a long ass river and I contemplated whether I was still alive or not. And so what? Who gives a fuck? Who gives a fuck what I'm saying? I'm all fucking wet.

There was this girl and she died. Inscrutable. My family was invited to the service, but I never met her and we didn't know the family that that well so I went to a soccer tourney I had that weekend instead. We were knocked out in the group stage. We played like shit. It was a waste of a weekend. I hit my head on a beam in the bathroom earlier tonight. The ceilings were low. There are people like me who'd be happy just to be alive, especially now, and we, the people around me just be slowly or quickly killing ourselves. I mean, you're rich then you're a nihilist. But I always feel stuck in the middle of that cause I live with like more fear. It's like I'm always sitting, waiting to get murdered even when I prolly ain't. But at the same time, I always seem to sneak out alive. No matter what I do. No matter how we try to self-fulfill our narcissistic prophecies. And she crashed her car I think, one way or another, cause she was really, really genuinely sad. But like, who decided she'd be feeling that way? Why do I feel so much empathy? Why do I feel like I'm behind her eyes? That I saw it all happen. That I was in her head that night she went into that ditch. But if I was that little voice, what did I say? To someone I never met in her last moments. The air's become so hot and dense. Like the inside of a burning car. Maybe, somehow, I'm there right now. Maybe I'm really actually there right now. But I found water. I get to live.

Scene Two

The lights come up, as if fixed. MRS. DAVIDSON enters with a microphone stand and microphone.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Buoyant by myself.

I'm buoyant, beside myself,
 repetitive, every day, even today
 I walked, talked and thought before I walked
 and talked and thought again to a painless rhythm
 in one, a whoosh, a creak, a gurgle, a scream in fright
 "Oh my God!"

I must be slower than I used to be. Time for me to admire my own
 shadow against the different gazes of the sun
 on this sweating pavement that cracks, creaks and gurgles from
 a lifetime basking in the summer shine
 but here I am buoyant, by myself, even today.
 And you.

You're afraid of your own disproportioned outline, down
 and to your left to confirm your grandiosity,
 smallness – dependency
 on the time of day. Don't fret, I'm just like you
 too and I am not you
 at all I'm buoyant, be myself, even (today).

An audience claps. MRS. DAVIDSON exits. LILLY enters carrying a beach chair. Takes her place at the microphone.

LILLY

Hi.

Eaten by Lilly Herrera

Underneath a wave and above the ocean surface
 for a moment
 there's a space
 a pocket inside an oyster
 the world is yours
 It's Mine, it's mine
 who's sculpting through their mind's eye
 there– thorned teeth in twilight sky,
 wickedly playful sorry gaze

of an unattainable self
 in hindsight, we've arrived
 Eaten by
 Death. The End of Times.

A step removed, I'm always
 chasing your tireless tail, sister, Gods-less than human
 An animal but beautiful I'm never gonna meet anybody
 who I won't unknowingly eat, in my mind
 the bringers of the apocalypse are all foodies
 blogging away, reality reloading on a broken website
 crawling with peculiar digital bugs

An audience claps. LILLY finds a spot and sits in her beach chair. Somewhere in here ocean noises creep into the atmosphere, suggestive of a beach. Meanwhile, DYLAN enters. Takes his place at the microphone.

DYLAN

Shit.
 Lined in the sand between possibility and impossibility.
 Coloring red outside the lines.

A few claps.

DYLAN

Wait! I forgot I'm not finished. The final line is
 "Do you wanna grab coffee?"

An audience claps. MALCOLM enters. Takes his place at the microphone. He starts to speak but then decides against it, leaving the stand for someone else. CAROLYN enters with a beach chair and sits next to LILLY. Meanwhile, FATHER DIAZ enters. Takes his place at the microphone.

FATHER DIAZ

Flowers are red.
 Roses are blue.
 and so make me coffee or shoo
 Under recognized. I'm like the Dalits in India.
 Gold fronts. Colonize my America.
 Put me on a cross. Sacrifice me

White collar heathen hysteria.
 Can't pin me down. Or bound in black to the knee.
 Like 30 mosquitos I killed in 43 minutes.
 Jungle climate got me feeling different.
 Stick out my tongue, fear Mictlantecutli's grimace.
 I'm rickety and grisly, I don't breathe.
 Clawing my chest for a heart on my sleeve.
 Generations of blood I can't can't unsee.
 This is what your God means to – Amen.
 La misa ha terminado, ve a estar en paz.
 The mass has ended, go be in peace.

FATHER DIAZ exits. A few moments.

JOSH and LUCAS enters with beach chairs and sit by LILLY and CAROLYN. JOSH also has a bag of popcorn in hand.

JOSH

Um. Where the fuck is Leo at?

There's a hint of fear in his voice. It takes a moment before anyone realizes JOSH is actually asking a question.

JOSH

He's got my joint.

LUCAS

Fuuck. Carolyn and I finished hers earlier.

CAROLYN

It was almost gone anyway.

JOSH

He doesn't just disappear. He steals shit from me. I swear when I see him--

LILLY

Where'd you get the food?

JOSH

When you guys went to the bathroom. It has been blessed with this holy butter flavoring.

LUCAS

Amen.

The waves' sound begins to intensify.

CAROLYN

Romeo?

LUCAS

Yeah shawty, what up?

CAROLYN

The waves are getting kinda bigger.

LUCAS

Shit, a lot bigger. Or is that just tsunami fog? It's dark--

A crash. LEO enters drenching wet head to toe. He looks maniacal. He stumbles over to JOSH.

LEO

You left me on the platform! // With that I.C.E. pig. You know I always forget my papers.

JOSH sets down his popcorn and approaches him.

JOSH

Dawg! You're drenching wet. What've you done // with my joint?!

LEO

I been to fucking hell and back // and you tell me--

JOSH

Where's my ? What the fuck have you done with my // joint? You can't stay in one place bro, huh? You always have to go off--

LEO

Are. You. Hearing. A. Word I'm Saying!?

CAROLYN

Everyone's so loud.

JOSH

on your own little adventure! Why do you never stay with the group!?

LEO

You separated from me. I lost y'all—

JOSH

Give me my weed!

LEO punches JOSH. JOSH falls to the sand.

LEO

Bitch, I never had it. I would've been screwed if I did.

JOSH checks his pockets. He pulls out a pill container enclosed with a small joint.

LEO

Fuck y'all.

LEO re-disappears into the waves. There's a silence.

LUCAS

Dawg, I'm high as fuck but something the fuck is up with him.

JOSH

And I just blessed my popcorn.

LUCAS

He seemed drunk.

JOSH

He wasn't drunk. He was angry. I'm not going after him alone.

LILLY

I'll go.

LILLY and CAROLYN exchange looks.

JOSH

I just wanted to have fun. Shit always happens.

LUCAS

Homie, the shit is Leo. We were having fun. Chillax, he's just in his feels about it–

JOSH

No it's not his fault!! You were there!! Can you not be so fucking gringo– Lilly, you coming? He won't hurt you. He's not like that. I just need a second person along to quell the peace with what's going on for him.

LILLY

Ok.

LILLY stands and begins to follow JOSH. JOSH has taken his popcorn with him.

LILLY

He came from a weird direction.

JOSH

Leo don't have a sense of direction.

LILLY

Blind leading the blind.

JOSH

Yeah I know, jus I don't know where else to start looking for him.

LILLY and JOSH exchange looks and then exit where LEO exited, leaving LUCAS and CAROLYN alone. There is a silence.

LUCAS

I didn't know this all somehow would turn into a date.

CAROLYN

Me neither!

A beat.

LUCAS

I've been meaning to ask, uh that girl that died recently, uhh Renata, she went to your high school, right?

CAROLYN

Yeah. We used to be close but then she kinda disappeared.

LUCAS

Oh.

CAROLYN

She and Lilly were friends a little longer.

LUCAS

Ok.

CAROLYN

Um yeah, do we have to talk about that?

LUCAS

No, I just thought I should ask--

CAROLYN

No, it's ok you did. Just I don't really want to talk about it.
You've always been in San Diego?

LUCAS

This is my home.

CAROLYN

I moved freshman year.

LUCAS

Huh. You seem like you're from here.

CAROLYN

What does that mean?

LUCAS

Where did you come from?

CAROLYN

Massachusetts.

LUCAS

Yeah, nothing bout you says ‘Massachusetts’, I don’t know how to explain it.

CAROLYN

And it does say San Diego?

LUCAS

Like Josh is from New Jersey and it always feels like he’s overcompensating for shit. You’re not overcompensating. You’re not trying to be nothing.

CAROLYN

... Cool!

Leo isn’t usually like that?

LUCAS

No, that was wack. Maybe he was crossed? I don’t know.

CAROLYN

I hope he’s ok. When do you think they’ll all be back?

LUCAS

I don’t know. I have no idea how long it’s been.

CAROLYN

I don’t either.

LUCAS

Time doesn’t really have a plan.

Wanna go walking, like along the beach?

CAROLYN

I can’t really in these shoes. But I can take them off.

CAROLYN begins taking off her shoes and socks. LUCAS does the same.

LUCAS

We can leave them just by the chairs.

CAROLYN

No one will take them?

LUCAS

No.

LUCAS and CAROLYN leave their socks and shoes by the chairs. They walk off. Ocean noises fade.

Scene Three

Fog has settled in. MALCOLM enters and wanders for a bit. ROSA does the same. They each find a spot distinct from one another and face away from each other.

MALCOLM

No, I don't go to grad school here.... I'm not from here either.... I came with Derek.... yeah, he brought me... We went to high school... yeah.

ROSA

No, it's not like that. No, he's never--

MALCOLM

I'm here for the weekend. Passing through.... Could be moving.... No, I don't know that yet.

ROSA

Like the other day, we went to the cider mill and the sweetest thing... No let me tell you, the sweetest thing, he put me in this little wooden cart and drove me around the orchard... it was so much fun.... yeah, but it's not just that one...

MALCOLM

I've looked at places... could be an upgrade... maybe not... ... yeah maybe I'm just jealous of him-- no, for real... shit it's starting to rain, we need to move. Everyone else is inside anyway, what the fuck we doing... Right?

ROSA

Ok, so what I've told that one before... I told you I hit myself on the dishwasher at work! No, it's not him. It's not him. It's not him. It's--

MALCOLM

It is so much warmer in here, what were we doing?... *(to someone else)* Heyyy. Hey! Yeah, I met --uh what's your name?...

ROSA

Do we really need to have this conversation now? Is that necessary? Is that really what we need to--

MALCOLM

Oh, ay -- just passing by me there. I come to this shit with him, now he's just ignoring me?... But you live in Columbus, right?... Yeah I got a few places in mind, if you know anything about the area.

ROSA

This isn't your place to judge.... No, you're not concerned. You're just--- I don't even know what you are. This is the choice I've made, ok? This is my choice. You don't be telling me who I date. I don't tell you-- I don't tell you--

MALCOLM

Oh, my name's Malcolm.... Yeah, from Pittsburgh... No, I'm pretty sure I'm the only Malcolm he knows... What do you mean "I'm dead"? uhh Did I do something?

ROSA looks down.

ROSA

Oh shit, he's been texting me. I've-- I've got to go. He's really sensitive about this stuff. I need to go see him.... Uhhh-- bye!.... I don't have time for this. I've got to go.... No, bye. ... Fine. I agree to talk to you later... ... Get the fuck out of my life!

MALCOLM

Dead? Literally dead?... Who are you? Uh, I mean, um, what now?

ROSA

What now?

After a bit, MALCOLM slowly approaches ROSA.

MALCOLM

Have we met before?

ROSA

I don't think so.

A beat.

MALCOLM

I died.

ROSA

Yeah, I figured. I died too. Eight years ago. Eight years ago here. Time's different here somehow. Sometimes I see little glimpses of the other side in the river. For my friends and family it hasn't been that long.

MALCOLM

When did I die?

ROSA

I'm guessing today. Do you remember how?

MALCOLM

No.

ROSA

It took me a while – I – I have to say it.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

I have to- I killed myself – I think something with my car.

MALCOLM

Why didn't you mention any of this before?

ROSA

It's hazy. And I didn't know who you were or what you were doing here. I didn't know if I could trust you or if you were sent to punish me or--

MALCOLM

Yeah, ok. The world didn't end. We just did?

ROSA

I don't know maybe it is? I don't-- it's confusing.

MALCOLM

Was that kid we met dead too?

ROSA

I assume so.

MALCOLM

He was – he was looking for his friends. We should find him. We should tell him he's dead, right?

ROSA

I guess. I mean, do you think he's dead?

MALCOLM

What the fuck am I suppose to add to that?

ROSA

He came here from the subway.

MALCOLM

What is this?! Who is this kid!?

ROSA

I don't know--

MALCOLM

Am I dead!? What IS THIS??

ROSA

I just said--

MALCOLM

Who are you, huh?!?!

ROSA

I don't know, ok?!? I don't know!!

MALCOLM

You don't know.

ROSA

I don't know. I'm just guessing. I just got here and – and – I'm not even that sure I know how I died. When you asked me-- and my memory comes and goes and I can't tell you what half my life looked like before this. It's just in and out and in and out, coming and going, coming and going –I'm just guessing, Mac. My last memory is being upside down surrounded by fire in the driver's seat and took me forever to get there, ok? Ok?!

MALCOLM

Alright.

MALCOLM re-mounts the bridge to check on his fishing pole, stood up. He stares at it.

MALCOLM

It's not picking up anything.

ROSA

I don't know if there's any fish.

MALCOLM

Know-it-all, Rosa. Come up here.

Rosa obliges.

MALCOLM

There's nothing everywhere. Every direction. Just the trees and the shrubs. I spotted a beetle. But in the midst of it all, for no particularly obvious reason, lies a bridge. And it's your bridge, right?

ROSA

Not actually, that's just something I said—

MALCOLM

Did you kill me?

ROSA

What? How would've I--

MALCOLM

Well, you at least convinced me I'm dead. The world is ending. A kid walks in a river. Sometimes we have light. Sometimes we don't. And the only constant thing is you. So what are you hiding?

ROSA

I could say the same thing to you. There were no meteors or explosions until you showed up. But I eventually decided to trust you, but maybe that's misplaced. I don't know.

MALCOLM

Stop being so fucking coy!! This isn't about me!

ROSA

What the fuck do you want me to say?!?!

MALCOLM

What you know!!–

ROSA

I don't know shit!!

MALCOLM

Gah!

DYLAN enters onto the scene with a yoga mat. He lays it down, sits and begins meditating.

ROSA

Dylan?

MALCOLM

You know that guy??

ROSA

Not really–

MALCOLM

You need to start giving me answers, Rosa. What did you do? You need to start giving me-- this doesn't add up here–

ROSA

Mac–

MALCOLM

I don't even know who you are anymore. What are doing with me? You know this is your fault and you aren't even sorry. Do you want me to tell everyone how terrible you've been to me? How'd you like that? You're lucky I'm so nice to you bitch. I'm fucking dead!

MALCOLM pushes ROSA to the edge of the bridge. She almost falls off but recovers, clearly shaken. MALCOLM has a quiet look about him.

ROSA

Malcolm, calm down.

MALCOLM

You aren't real.

MALCOLM pushes ROSA again but this time off the bridge. By the side of the river, she lands and dies.

The action freezes, as if painted.

A long moment.

MRS. DAVIDSON enters.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Yes, dear?

BELLA enters, no longer in black. She carries a purse and is freshened up to go some place.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Up early?

BELLA

I have an appointment. It's Monday, right?

MRS. DAVIDSON

I thought it was Saturday, but the weeks have all been kinda blurring together lately. I don't know.

BELLA

The calendar application on my laptop is all loopy. I can't really explain it. Maybe I got hacked.

MRS. DAVIDSON

And you're asking me? I use a calendar on my wall. That's somewhere around here – that's strange. I'm not quite senile yet, am I?

BELLA

If you are, so am I.

MRS. DAVIDSON

You're here to drop off your check? Do you want tea?

BELLA

That would actually be lovely. And I have the check in my purse.

BELLA takes a check out of her purse. MRS. DAVIDSON pours a mug for BELLA.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Here you go.

BELLA

Thank you.

MRS. DAVIDSON

The days aren't relevant to me the same way anymore. I hate to say it, but it's true.

BELLA stirs her tea in a way as if she's fiddling a little bit, in silence. She stares off into space, not quite there.

MRS. DAVIDSON

I'm not sure if the days have been relevant since Tony worked – No, there were other weekly happenings about – Maybe since his health declined, but, I will say the Chargers game is on the 3rd, but I won't say Saturday. Cause other weeks it might be Sunday or Monday, sometimes even Thursday. They say the team might go to L.A.. You know everything seems to cycle through there. San Diego gets no respect.

BELLA

Yeah I know what you mean by that–

MRS. DAVIDSON

I've lived with it.

BELLA

Nothing fits right into this city unless it is unable to fit anywhere else. My whole life it's always felt to me like a co-opted heaven. Everything in it is like three different colors at once. All imagined.

MRS. DAVIDSON

All imagined. Mm.

BELLA

Yeah.

MRS. DAVIDSON

You go through life in a wonderful way, my dear.

MRS. DAVIDSON turns and sees DYLAN.

MRS. DAVIDSON

What are you doing?

DYLAN slowly opens his eyes.

DYLAN

I'm trying to meditate.

MRS. DAVIDSON

What. For?

DYLAN

It makes me feel calmer.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Oh, that's nice. Do you want tea?

DYLAN

Um, of course, later. After I'm done here.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Come by whenever.

MRS. DAVIDSON and BELLA continue enjoying their tea.

LEO appears from upstage. He wanders down the same river he's waded through before.

LEO

I was collecting myself, I guess you could call it meditating. Up the side of this hill.

LEO passes by ROSA. He notices her laying motionless. He looks up. There is no one he can see. He looks back at ROSA.

LEO

Do you ever think you're just reliving the same dream?

DYLAN rises and takes ROSA's body away. LEO watches him. MALCOLM walks to the top of the bridge, looks out on us and whatever the view may possibly be. Meanwhile,

DYLAN reenters with a rose. He places it where ROSA's motionless body lay. Next to the rose, DYLAN sits cross-legged, and begins silently meditating.

LEO

(LEO gestures to the rose.)

Your body lays there and it's so beat it looks like nothing more than something to donate.

ROSA enters. She observes the bridge, then mounts it. As she walks, she spots MALCOLM. She looks at him perplexed. She keeps her gaze on him as she continues walking until she is just a little ways past him, beginning to descend down the bridge. At that point, her head turned, still watching him, she stops. MALCOLM continues looking out onto us or past us or wherever his eyes wander.

ROSA

What are you doing?

LEO

It's dry and shriveled.

MALCOLM

Sorry, what?

ROSA

What are you looking at there?

MALCOLM

The moon. Um why are you talking to me?

ROSA

I don't really know. I was just walking and then you were just standing there doing nothing really. I'm not quite--

MALCOLM

Do I know you? Have we met before?

ROSA

I don't think so.

MALCOLM

I don't usually forget people. Did you follow me here?

ROSA

No, I didn't even see you. Have you been here long?

MALCOLM

I'm not sure.

LEO

There's no sense to it. You wilt and you die. You burn and explode, barely conscious, not even awake enough to struggle with the seatbelt.

MALCOLM

You should leave.

ROSA

W-why?

MALCOLM

I don't want you here.

ROSA

Well who says where I should be.

MALCOLM

This is my bridge and I don't want you on it.

ROSA

Who made it yours?

MALCOLM

It's just my spot to-to recollect myself.

Cause do you know what I did today? I killed someone. I knew they'd die the moment I did it. I didn't really mean it, but I'm not sure. They're somewhere else now I guess.

LEO

And then you become dirt. Or ashes or-- and you rise up again as what you were. Dying over and over again. In my head, I can't see where there's any beauty in that.

ROSA

Who did you kill?

MALCOLM

I can't remember.

ROSA

Oh.

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP:

Scene Four

MALCOLM, ROSA and LEO are gone from the scene. BELLA, in street clothes, finishing her cup, rises.

BELLA

Anyway, I have to be off. Thank you so much for the tea.

MRS. DAVIDSON

What is this appointment for again?

BELLA

I – I don't quite remember. My memory will probably be jogged when I get there.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Well better get jogging.

As BELLA leaves, she passes by DYLAN meditating. He opens his eyes, noticing her, they make eye contact.

BELLA

Hey, am I interrupting?

DYLAN

Not at the moment. I was just coming out of it.

BELLA

It?

DYLAN

My meditation.

BELLA

Oh, right.

DYLAN

Where you off to?

BELLA

I got an appointment. Listen, there's something I've been meaning to talk to you about for a while, um...

DYLAN

Ok.

BELLA

I really have liked getting to know you these past few weeks. I'm wondering if you maybe would be interested in going on a date sometime?

DYLAN

Um, I'm gay.

BELLA

Wait, what?

DYLAN

I'm so sorry, was that not, like, obvious?

BELLA

Oh my god, this is so embarrassing.

DYLAN

No, it's fine. I'd still love to get dinner! Just not as–

BELLA

Yup.

DYLAN

Sorry.

BELLA

You know, in almost 30 years of living, that's the first time I asked a guy out.

DYLAN

I'm flattered.

BELLA

I was wondering why you weren't making a move – oh my fucking god.

DYLAN

Well, glad we were able to clear that up.

BELLA

Oh my god, yes.

DYLAN

It's not that big a deal.

BELLA

What do you think about when you meditate?

DYLAN

It depends. Sometimes I imagine an empty room. Sometimes I imagine I'm in nature somewhere. Sometimes I just think about what my immediate surroundings are. Once I thought about being a UPS package. I got into Buddhism cus of phenomenology, this idea that everything can only truly exist because of our ability to be conscious and perceive.

BELLA

So if you perceive yourself as a UPS package, then do you believe you actually are a UPS package?

DYLAN

A little bit.

BELLA

Ok then.

DYLAN

You know, I truly believe South Asia had it all figured out. There's so much to learn. You can land anywhere, just in your head, and take so much from it.

BELLA

Where were you just now when meditating?

DYLAN

I actually don't remember.

BELLA

How are the tomatoes today?

DYLAN

Better. I've read they'll do nothing for a bit and then suddenly everything in a week.

BELLA

I actually think I've experienced that before. I really have to be off. I don't want to be late.

DYLAN

Oh yeah, duh. The tomatoes seem to hate me. We should get dinner!

BELLA

Um, yes!

BELLA begins to exit.

DYLAN

Good luck with your thing! What was it?

BELLA

A thing! I don't know!

DYLAN

Ah yes, a thing.

BELLA exits. DYLAN rises and goes to find MRS. DAVIDSON. He knocks on a door. MRS. DAVIDSON goes to answer.

DYLAN

Hey.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Here for tea?

DYLAN

Yup!

MRS. DAVIDSON

I'll warm the pot.

She does. It's quiet.

MRS. DAVIDSON

How was your meditation?

DYLAN

Like every other.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Mhm. You want honey today?

DYLAN

That'd be great. Thank you.

MRS. DAVIDSON

If it's a honey day, then there's something up, isn't there?

DYLAN

Bella asked me out.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Wait, but I thought you were—

DYLAN

I am.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Did you agree to go out?

DYLAN

Yes. As friends.

MRS. DAVIDSON

I try to be gentle about it, but that girl is too much in her head.

DYLAN

Very spacey.

MRS. DAVIDSON

But Bella's not the reason for the honey.

DYLAN

No. When I was meditating, for a few seconds, well for more than a few seconds, um...

MRS. DAVIDSON

What is it?

DYLAN

I thought I was carrying a corpse.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Oh.

DYLAN

And then my Dad's fall last week. She was as light as him.

MRS. DAVIDSON

She?

DYLAN

I'm actually not sure what gender they were. I don't think it was my Dad. But I don't know.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Your parents get old. It's strange to witness.

DYLAN

I noticed. I don't know, I've been finding this religion – are you religious to anything? I've never heard you mention–

MRS. DAVIDSON

(humorously)

The old lady doesn't talk about God! I either forgot what I was supposed to believe or figured it wasn't all that important a long while ago.

DYLAN

So are you agnostic?

MRS. DAVIDSON

All those words are silly.

DYLAN

Really?

MRS. DAVIDSON

Yes.

DYLAN

I can't say I agree.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Always with the opinions – Then don't.

DYLAN laughs.

DYLAN

What do you think happens when you die?

MRS. DAVIDSON

Don't know and don't care. Maybe I'll go to Fiji.

DYLAN

Is that what makes you not agnostic to you? Not just that you accept you don't, but you also don't care?

MRS. DAVIDSON

If you're going to keep asking me questions, do you want to come on my walk with me?

DYLAN

Sure.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Do you need to get anything?

DYLAN

No, I think I'm set.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Good, because I'm ready to go.

DYLAN

Why Fiji?

DYLAN and MRS. DAVIDSON exit. BELLA reenters and ROSA simultaneously enters on the bridge.

BELLA

Hey, I forgot my keys – hello?

BELLA looks to the bridge and spots ROSA.

BELLA

Oh.

BELLA and ROSA make eye contact.

ROSA

Hi.

BELLA

When I look over my shoulder, I usually think it's my Mom, or I don't actually think it's my Mom, I just think of her – that sounds crazier out loud, but–

ROSA

Not your Mom.

BELLA

(laughs)

No.

ROSA

But Mom's love looking over your shoulder.

BELLA

Of course they do.

ROSA

That same furrowed look.

BELLA gives a furrowed look.

ROSA

Yes, like that! Stop that, you're making me nervous.

Ay, I'm sorry.

BELLA

I don't know what's happening to me.

ROSA

Oh, nena, no one ever knows what's happening to them.

BELLA

That doesn't make me feel better!

ROSA

Every time you fall, you just have to fall back up.

BELLA

How do I seem to you?

ROSA

Older.

BELLA

What happened to you?

ROSA

What do you mean?

BELLA

You're just—

ROSA

What?

BELLA

Why are you sweating so much?

ROSA

It's hot!

BELLA

Not that hot.

ROSA

I been rushing around.

BELLA

Just fucking take a breath, you know?

ROSA

I don't know what happened to me. I don't feel real anymore.

BELLA

I never did.

ROSA

I know. You look at me differently.

BELLA

How so?

ROSA

I mean, you're a kid.

BELLA

But how do I look at you?

ROSA

I – What's it to you?

BELLA

Why does that matter–

ROSA

Well, you did yourself in – Sorry.

BELLA

ROSA turns pale. She races down the bridge and exits.

BELLA

I can't believe I – Wait!

LIGHTS DIM.

BELLA

Mierda!

BELLA can be hardly seen.

Scene Five

The sound of airplanes taking off. Suitcases rolling across tile, clicking against every groove. Metal detectors detecting metal.

A VOICE

If you're on the left side! Take off all belts and shoes! Drink or dispose of any and all liquids! Remove all electronics from backpacks and carry-ons!

The voice begins to loop with the other sounds, completing the soundscape. BELLA enters. She drags behind her a carry-on roller case. She strides all over across stage until a door rolls on. There is a sign on it which reads "Bella's Appointment". BELLA goes to open the door. It's locked. She struggles with the handle a few more times, then takes a step back. SANTA MUERTE, fashioned as someone soon to catch a flight, enters with a suitcase behind her. BELLA might not recognize her.

BELLA

That's. That's some bullshit.

SANTA MUERTE

What's that?

BELLA

This door that's for me won't open.

Also, I found this carry-on in the bathroom and I haven't been able to find a front desk. Have you seen anything?

An airport Starbucks is rolled on behind the door. MRS. DAVIDSON sits at a table. DYLAN prepares orders as a barista.

SANTA MUERTE

I don't know where we are. And sorry, what's so important about that door?

BELLA

It's a whole day for me to go to an appointment. At some place I haven't gone to before. For an appointment. I'm fucked.

SANTA MUERTE

I see.

BELLA

Is someone saving me? Or condemning me? I was brought up to think in that binary. I still do obviously. There's a sense of order to it that I feel like isn't found in too many elsewhere's.

SANTA MUERTE

Catholic?

BELLA

Yeah.

SANTA MUERTE

Good luck with that.

BELLA

I don't know what it is. For me— do you ever feel old but really really dumb. Just so hopelessly stupid?

SANTA MUERTE

I try to pretend I'm wise at least. I work as—

BELLA

I love these monologues because no one can talk over me. What if I was brought here to board a plane? I could go anywhere.

SANTA MUERTE

I have a flight to catch.

BELLA

Have a good flight!

SANTA MUERTE disappears with her suitcase.

MICTLANTECUTLI (FATHER DIAZ) enters behind the door in his priest wear and sandals. He also could wear some elements of a blood spattered skull mask with eyes and a headdress of owl feathers modeled after the Aztec god of death, Mictlantecutli. With the stride and confidence of a businessman, he walks over to the door.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Hi, I thought I left it unlocked, apologies. You're getting coffee with me.

BELLA

Hi, sorry, before I do that, what is this for again?

MICTLANTECUTLI

We're scheduled to have a meeting about death.

BELLA

And why me. for that meeting?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Oh, it has nothing to do with you, I just enjoy talking about myself. Though laughs aside--

BELLA

But you said we're talking about death.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Sweetheart, my head is a skull.

BELLA

Lots of people have skulls as heads, that doesn't necessarily mean anything.

MICTLANTECUTLI

That's fair, but it always means something. Didn't your family tell you stories about how I tear in half every soul who passes my way and eat them?

BELLA

I mean, my mom made a point of teaching me my culture, but then my parents got divorced, and I didn't see her as much so I forgot most of it. After Dad left, all she did was work. But that aside, the goddess for death is Santa Muerte. Who the fuck are you?

MICTLANTECUTLI looks at the carry-on.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Less popular. You have some place to be?

BELLA

Yeah. I'm leaving town. I should actually be--

MICTLANTECUTLI

You know I've been impersonating your priest.

BELLA

Well then where is he?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Oh, I split him in half.

BELLA

What does that mean?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Well, I guess he's me now too.

BELLA

Ok. So you've always been my priest? Or my priest has always been you?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Kinda. Actually not really at all – what's your order? I can get it for you and you get a table for us.

BELLA

Are you going to tear me in half?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Are you dying?

BELLA

No.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Then probably not.

BELLA

Your homilies have gone downhill.

MICTLANTECUTLI

I've been working hard on them! And they come up fast. One every single fucking week, preparing an hour of shit to do. It's the worst job in the world. Now, see the lengths I've gone to grab you – will you get coffee with me?

BELLA pauses for a moment to think to herself, then cautiously follows MICTLANTECUTLI inside with the carry-on. He closes the door behind them.

BELLA

How long will this take?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Not too long. What do you drink?

BELLA

Americano Grande.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Will be right back with that!

BELLA takes a seat. DYLAN, appearing behind the counter, takes MICTLANTECUTLI's order. He goes to make the coffee. MICTLANTECUTLI finds where BELLA's seated and sits across from her.

MICTLANTECUTLI

You owe me.

BELLA

How much?

MICTLANTECUTLI

What? – No, not for the coffee.

BELLA

What then?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Your cousin.

BELLA

Renata?

MICTLANTECUTLI

So unless she accepts the journey to the underworld–

DYLAN

Tall Decaf Mocha spiked with rum for Kathleen!

DYLAN sets a cup on the counter. MRS. DAVIDSON rises to retrieve her drink. BELLA notices her.

BELLA

That's my landlady.

MICTLANTECUTLI turns to see who BELLA is looking at.

BELLA

Is she real? Is that her?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Probably not. But you never know. Where was I?

MRS. DAVIDSON returns to her seat with her drink.

BELLA

¿Mi prima?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Right, your cousin. So unless she accepts the journey to the underworld, her soul might very likely dissipate into agonizing—

DYLAN reenters with another drink.

DYLAN

I have two drinks here for Mictlantecutli, the God of Death! Two drinks the God of Death!

MICTLANTECUTLI sighs.

BELLA

Are you gonna get those?-- Or should I—

DYLAN

God of Death!!

MICTLANTECUTLI rises to retrieve both drinks. BELLA turns to MRS. DAVIDSON.

BELLA
(tentatively.)

Mrs. Davidson?

MRS. DAVIDSON

Yes.

BELLA

What are you doing here?

MRS. DAVIDSON

Having my morning coffee.

BELLA

At the airport?

MRS. DAVIDSON

Wherever you like. I enjoy the hustle.

MICTLANTECUTLI sits back down with drinks.

MRS. DAVIDSON

Is this for work? I won't bother you two.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Work.

MRS. DAVIDSON

How nice.

BELLA

Work?

MICTLANTECUTLI

For me. And I'm outsourcing.

BELLA

What do people like you drink?

MICTLANTECUTLI

This is a Salted Caramel Cream Cold Brew.

BELLA

Do you always get cold brews?

MICTLANTECUTLI

No?

BELLA

Cause you're Death. Cold?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Eso es simplemente vergonzoso.

BELLA

I know I'm embarrassing, me dicen mucho, but can we get back to Renata? Is she in trouble?

MICTLANTECUTLI

I need someone to cross the border. And it has to be a family member.

BELLA

Why?

MICTLANTECUTLI

She won't listen to anyone else. It would be mean el mundo para tu familia.

BELLA

I don't know – Ah!

BELLA's ear begins ringing. If not other times, this time for sure, we all hear it. She grabs it. MICTLANTECUTLI tenses.

MICTLANTECUTLI

What are you doing?

BELLA

I'm not doing anything.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Who are you talking to?

BELLA

(under her breath.)

The carry-on.

BELLA jumps to the bag. She struggles to open it.

MICTLANTECUTLI

What are you doing? Do you not love your cousin? Feel any type of responsibility to your family!? Her soul will die if you leave her be. You can't just unpack now.

BELLA

I KNOW. I know. I keep getting this ringing in my ear. Is it her? I found this baggage. Something told me to take this baggage. Why isn't it opening? Why doesn't it open? Why does it never open? Why did you take her away from me?!

MICTLANTECUTLI

Take...

BELLA

Renata! ... Mom! Anyone! Why did you-- WHY-- did you--

MICTLANTECUTLI

I didn't know why. Aren't we much stranger than a god all knowing?

BELLA

You don't know? It wasn't right.

MICTLANTECUTLI

The priesthood is just how I survived. It's how I make sure I got something in the fridge.

BELLA

You barely honored her. Your eulogy made me numb. I loved her.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Sorry.

After a bit more struggle, the bag pops open. She turns the bag towards MICTLANTECUTLI. He looks through it, mostly knowingly.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Dog bones. Maize. Arrows. Gold. Popcorn? You know these are things you're going to need when I tear you in half and swallow you. An "I Am" poem. "I am pretty. I am caring." Child drawings? Another poem. "Violets are red. Roses are violent."

BELLA

I think it's an offering. You're not as nice as Santa Muerte—

MICTLANTECUTLI

SHUT UP— Look, I brought you here because I'm nice. I'm doing this because your cousin's refusing to pick a side.

BELLA

Why does she need to choose anything?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Dying things need to die.

BELLA

But how do you know it's really dying?

MICTLANTECUTLI

For me, I just look at it. You can't just sit in the middle of these borders. They say strange things happen. People notice. Did you know San Diego got a subway?

BELLA

That's an awful idea.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Exactly, so help me, help her, or you'll be fucked over too. We're just — how do I even say this? If you don't stake a claim over where you fit, they make you disappear.

BELLA

Who?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Who? All of us. The colonists. You, yourself. You make yourself disappear. Living in between, it breaks your back, your soul, your life. That's what's happening to Renata. That's what gonna happen to you if you don't break the connection with her. That's how these borders work.

BELLA

I'm Chicana. When did I ever give a fuck about a border?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Bella.

BELLA

I don't need to leave her. You're just being a fucking pig that nobody knows about. What you say means nothing. You're nothing. An Aztec god in priest robes?! Who are you? I actually know who I am. I—

MICTLANTECUTLI

You don't get to decide who you are you spoiled shit, you solamente eres y actúas en consecuencia. So now— shut up, go talk to your cousin and fucking deal with it instead of doing everything, *even insulting me*, to avoid these problems.

BELLA

I—

MICTLANTECUTLI

If you think I'm somehow confused, how many days a week do people think you're your landlady's cleaner? This is the world we live in. You just are and act accordingly.

BELLA

That's not a good way to live!

MICTLANTECUTLI

Who said anything about living?

BELLA

You're so warped.

MICTLANTECUTLI

You want to make everything harder for yourself. Do you even realize how much you have!? How much we've given you and her!?

BELLA

You act like living in America is like I'm some sort of valley girl!

MICTLANTECUTLI

Yes you are! You get Starbucks every day!

BELLA

I feel these eyes on me all the time. I feel them right now, so I shift my weight slightly. I want to feel like I belong with them, but instead I'm just something to look at.

MICTLANTECUTLI

I know.

BELLA

You feel them too?

MICTLANTECUTLI

Look at me now, mija.

BELLA

Sometimes I can drown them out. I have tinnitus so, you know. My grandma would say that's my ancestors.

MICTLANTECUTLI

Pero nunca estuvimos aquí. Why do you think I cloak myself in robes? It's cover. These days I just float between airports and keep people apart. Honesetly, I hate it. We'll always be terrified of what we've lost, but mija—

BELLA

But I have my people. They're all in my ear—

MICTLANTECUTLI

I don't remember what it was like anymore before we were ghosts. And neither do you. We can't worry ourselves with who we are anymore.

BELLA

Maybe. But I want to be home. Renata and me, if we dissipate together, we dissipate. If we live in the inbetween, we breathe into who we are. I don't want to drown, I don't want to live with half of me. I belong on the bridge.

MICLTLANTECUTLI

That's dangerous.

BELLA

No me importa un carajo.

BELLA begins to exit the room, taking the suitcase with her. The airport's soundscape returns.

MICLTLANTECUTLI

Know where you're going?

BELLA

I'll ask the people that do.

Scene Six

Ocean noises ease back into the atmosphere. LUCAS and CAROLYN amble on with no socks or shoes.

CAROLYN

I've known about you forever, but I like barely know you. Sorry, that sounds weird to say--

LUCAS

No, I know what you mean. I don't really know you either. But yeah, I've been aware of you.

CAROLYN

What were your expectations for this?

LUCAS

I don't know.

CAROLYN

Ok.

LUCAS

Do you wanna sit? It's not too windy here.

CAROLYN

Yeah, sure. Maybe it's easier just not to have this conversation. Let's just talk – like--

LUCAS

Don't we kinda need to have it though?

CAROLYN

No.

LUCAS

What do you mean?

CAROLYN

Why do we need to have it?

LUCAS

Cause it's like bad not to I feel like.

CAROLYN

Why's that?

LUCAS

Cause I don't know what the fuck is going on.

CAROLYN

Me neither. But what is there to say about it?

LUCAS

I don't know, I guess that...

CAROLYN

I guess that there is something frightening about a relationship being put on you rather than allowing it to build. Sometimes someone tells us what we are rather than us just growing into it. Sometimes those people are ourselves. We put these expectations of this label or that label onto something that isn't really this label or that label. Instead, we think it's going to be or we want it to be. We become so caught up in that prediction or fantasy that we stop seeing ourselves and after that anyone else enclosed in that unreality.

We're so small out here. The water and the sky. You can't dream up someone else without dreaming up yourself first. I don't really wanna call you my boyfriend.

LUCAS

I don't really wanna call you my girlfriend.

CAROLYN

But in my head.

LUCAS

In my head.

LUCAS AND CAROLYN

Of course I do.

LUCAS

In my head.

CAROLYN

In my head.

LUCAS

If we try to get too close, too comfortable, we're going to fall apart. We'll be fated to never be. Cause if we try, we could fail. So all I do is try to avoid failure. Avoid hurt, cause what am I living for if I'm putting myself in harms way?

CAROLYN

What am I living for if I don't try, but try with someone I judge is safe, where I think I have an out to spare myself, to not sink when he realizes those stars don't want us. So in my head.

LUCAS

In my head.

CAROLYN

These anxieties

LUCAS

pile on

CAROLYN

until

LUCAS

the fantasy is easier. Let's get married.

CAROLYN

Let's get married--

LUCAS AND CAROLYN

--As a joke.

LUCAS

Or maybe as a final resort

CAROLYN

to boredom. Or maybe to self-

LUCAS

sabotage. Or in an unrealistic play!

Or in Vegas!

CAROLYN

Maybe just give up on it all together.

LUCAS

The whole charade.

CAROLYN

Or just be ok with failure.

LUCAS

A girl died.

CAROLYN

She did.

LUCAS

I thought I saw her ghost earlier tonight but we won't talk about that.

CAROLYN

We never will.

LUCAS

No. Think she's really out there

CAROLYN

somewhere? Why would I

LUCAS

know? I hope that she is. Sometimes I

CAROLYN

Just think

LUCAS

That

CAROLYN

The universe is
LUCAS

Just strands of missing
CAROLYN

Pieces
LUCAS

From someplace else
CAROLYN

And really we're all accidents
LUCAS

And someone else is saying
CAROLYN

"Ah FUCK"
LUCAS

About us
CAROLYN

Somewhere else.
LUCAS

A silence.

Then, the ocean takes LUCAS and CAROLYN away.

LILLY, and JOSH enter onto the scene. On a sandbar.

JOSH
We really went swimming for this fucker.

LILLY
Yeee-up.

JOSH
You're sure the tide is going out, right?

LILLY

M-hm. We'll be able to walk it if we keep waiting.

JOSH

I'll believe you.

LILLY

Nice to be believed.

JOSH

Why you say that?

LILLY

Caroline and I thought we saw Renata's ghost on the train earlier tonight.

JOSH

Honestly, same.

LILLY

I feel like this is why my Mom gets so mad at me for not speaking Spanish.

JOSH

What do you mean?

LILLY

Because if I felt more Mexican I feel like somehow I'd know how to deal with tonight.

JOSH

Like, con Leo?

LILLY

Sí dumbass.

JOSH

No soy tonto. Mi español es mejor que tuyo.

LILLY

Yeah? Well you're spooked by a train.

JOSH
So are you.

LILLY
We're from the south. It shouldn't be underground.

JOSH
No.

LILLY
Exactly.

JOSH
Some sort of ghost train.

LILLY
That sounds even more Mexican.

JOSH
What do you know about being Mexican?

LILLY
I am Mexican.

JOSH
But hasn't your family been here like forever, like since the Mexican-American war or some shit.

LILLY
Not that long, but yeah. How the fuck do you know that?

JOSH
Something Leo said.

LILLY
Where the fuck is he? How worried should we be?

JOSH
Well, if he was able to find us again. And we're not going anywhere.

Ok. LILLY

He just needed to stomp off. He's a dumbass. JOSH

You're dumber. LILLY

Fucking rude. JOSH

Or honest? LILLY

Never. JOSH

I don't think anywhere is my home. LILLY

No? JOSH

Is that honest? LILLY

It's real. Ahora necesitamos- JOSH

also verde. Some pot. I love after getting home, I get LILLY

the last kick and melting into my bed cus JOSH

Carolyn LILLY

JOSH

The white girl gets good shit. Are they

LILLY

Wrong for calling me Mexican? Even though—

JOSH

You called yourself that.

LILLY

They're wrong for calling me American. They wrong for calling me Chicano. I'm nothing. I'm nobody's. I listen to Alanis Morissette more than Selena. But these hoops and eyeliner are as big as they are big in my heart. But then somebody told me I'm

JOSH

Too Americanized for that shit. I love but don't rep Cypress Hill. When I put on plaid, I don't really know if I look more cholo or

LILLY

Like a frat boy. Well it depends who's watching, who they are and what they care to know. Most people

JOSH

know nothing but I can't really blame them because

LILLY

I barely know nothing either. What if I wanted to be

JOSH

nobody's? You already are, I already

LILLY

Am confused. Of course we're something, even if just

JOSH

Sad and

LILLY

Stranded

JOSH
On a sandbar. Metaphorically or some shit

LILLY
We're turtle eggs

JOSH
Just about to hatch

LILLY
Waiting for our first swim, but–

JOSH
Are we? Sometimes I think I've lived

LILLY
A thousand lifetimes before this moment

JOSH
A thousand and one tongues. Like Gods. Like

LILLY
Humans. Like a different type,

JOSH
A different version of God.

LILLY
Usually this time of night

JOSH
I get an erection

LILLY
in my sleep – What?

JOSH
Nothing. But tonight

I'm not sleeping, I'm wading

LILLY

To walk on water. I'm 16

JOSH

And helpless. What else

LILLY

Am I supposed to do?

JOSH

*JOSH and LILLY look at each other for a good second, then start making out.
Then, the ocean takes them away.*

Scene Seven

The scene is set exactly as Scene Three ended, except the fog has cleared and the sun is just beginning to rise. The sound of the river returns. LEO puzzles over the rose. He enjoys the water and the nature around him.

ROSA

Is it, like, blocked out? When you killed someone? Um.

MALCOLM

Yeah, I guess.

ROSA

Where are we?

MALCOLM

Your bridge.

ROSA

My bridge?

MALCOLM

Yeah, you came across it, no one else seemed to claim it, so you made it yours.

ROSA

This is my first time here.

MALCOLM

No, it isn't.

ROSA

How's that?

MALCOLM

Please tell me you're lying.

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

I'm going to look off the other side. Don't talk to me.

MALCOLM

Ok.

MALCOLM hangs his head for a bit, then continues to look out on us, past us, on the infant sunrise or wherever his gaze may wander.

MALCOLM

You know, I just don't know what to do about this. Do you have any ideas?

ROSA

What the fuck are you talking about?

MALCOLM

About our predicament. Here, on the bridge, however long we been on this bridge.

(a pause.)

They say the world is ending. Or at least I thought it was. Do you believe that?

(a pause.)

How was the funeral?

ROSA

How did you—

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

I hated it.

MALCOLM

Yeah, tell me about it.

ROSA

How was yours?

MALCOLM

I didn't get one.

ROSA

Oh. Was that hard?

MALCOLM

I don't know what would've been better.

ROSA

It's hard to know what would've been better when what's happened has already happened.

MALCOLM

Either way, it's a new day. Look at the sunrise—

ROSA

Don't look at the sun.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

Bad for your eyes.

MALCOLM

Makes sense. When you came by this bridge, where were you going?

ROSA

I was on a walk.

MALCOLM

Where to?

ROSA

Nowhere in particular. Otherwise, I wouldn't have stopped.

MALCOLM

Why did you stop?

ROSA

When someone is doing nothing but leaning on a bridge railing, looking at the sunset and looking somber, isn't there a part of you that always wants to stop?

MALCOLM

I don't think so.

ROSA

There's nothing romantic to that moment?

MALCOLM

No, it's not that it's not romantic, it's more I think everything we do, we do on impulse. Sometimes the biggest changes in our lives come from 5 second decisions, in fact, I'd go so far as to say we do so much more instinctively than we'd like to admit. That's why whenever you hear about that person you lost touch with, you're always surprised by what they're doing.

ROSA

So say I decided to talk to you on this bridge by impulse. Did I just change my life?

MALCOLM

At least a little bit.

ROSA

What do you mean?

MALCOLM

You're here instead of wherever else.

ROSA

Do I know you? Have we met before?

MALCOLM

Um—

ROSA

Not on this bridge, like, before that.

MALCOLM

I'm pretty sure I'd remember it.

ROSA

Oh.

MALCOLM

Maybe in another life.

ROSA

Or another world.

MALCOLM

I didn't mean for you to actually die. Really.

ROSA

Shut up.

MALCOLM

For what?

ROSA

I believe the entire universe reincarnates. Just one bitch decides to off herself. Whatever.

MALCOLM

The entire universe?

ROSA

We're on like our sixth or seventh one now.

MALCOLM

Wow.

MALCOLM goes to check his fishing line.

ROSA

Had any luck with that?

MALCOLM

No, but there's that kid down there.

ROSA looks over the bridge with MALCOLM.

ROSA

Oh fuck. That's me.

The kid?
MALCOLM

No.
ROSA
(pointing at the rose)

No, my body.
MALCOLM

Where?
ROSA

To the left of him!
MALCOLM

There's nothing there.
LEO

Hello?
ROSA

No my body. It's literally right there. Fuck.
LEO

Hello?
ROSA

Who are you? What are you doing with my body?
LEO

Wait, are you Renata?
ROSA

My name – how do you know me?
LEO

You died.
ROSA

I know that.

In a car accident.

LEO

I know that.

ROSA

My family's friends with your family. We actually were invited to the funeral.

LEO

Invited?

ROSA

I didn't make it.

LEO

Fuck you.

ROSA

You don't even know me.

LEO

You're dead too?

ROSA

Not sure, but I really need to figure that out. I got lost leaving the subway.

LEO

That's my body. I'm dead.

ROSA
(to herself)

I know that.

LEO

I need to go too. I needed a way to cross. I needed a pocket of space cause I never had any.
(to Malcolm)

I need to go. Mac.

ROSA descends the bridge and exits.

MALCOLM

Rosa, wait.

He's too late.

LEO

She's just gone.

LEO look at us, almost squinting as if trying to make us out. He treads downstage.

Saying nothing. LEO enters into the audience. He exits through the house doors.

A few moments pass, then—

BELLA mounts the bridge with the suitcase. She walks to the top. MALCOLM turns towards her. Suspension.

BELLA

(Spoken or Thought.)

Wherever could you be, my love?

Fade to black.

END OF PLAY