

Pedro the Puppeteer



Play by
Silvia Gonzalez S.

Screenplay in progress
with the same title and author.

CHARACTERS

Pedro..... A Puppeteer
Josie..... Girl friend of Pedro
Father Nuñez... A priest
Abuela....Grandmother Of Pedro

HAND PUPPETS

Vato Puppet....Card board puppet that is sitting in a car.
Chola Puppet.....a Girl puppet from the hood. Big earrings
Paco the Taco.....a taco puppet with a sombrero and mustache.
Evilito Puppet... a puppet that is 1/3 part Kermit, 1/3 Chucky,
and 1/3 skeleton

A puppet theater is seen on a stage. Pedro is behind maneuvering a cute Latina Ballerina. Kids and their parents are in the audience.

LATINA BALLERINA.

And that is how the story ends.

(giggles)

Did you like it kids? Wasn't that wonderful?

We hear an applause and enthusiastic kids.

LATINA BALLERINA.

And now, here again, is my very, very, very special friend, Pedro Rodriguez. The best friend any puppet can ever have. Here he is. Clap everyone.

Pedro emerges with Latina Ballerina in his hand. The applause continues with kids cheering.

PEDRO

Thank you, thank you. I hope all of you enjoyed the show. More applause and cheering.

PEDRO

Isn't Latina Ballerina wonderful. It's true. We have been friends for a very long time. I can't imagine life without her.

LATINA BALLERINA

Yay!

PEDRO

And thank you for being a great audience. We will be here for one more week. So tell your friends and family about us. They can get tickets online at ticketsR-US.com. Again, thank you. Puppet Show. More cheering. You hear people exiting.

PEDRO

Goodbye.

LATINA BALLERINA

Bye everybody! Hope to see you again.

We hear the audience leaving out the back door. Pedro waves intermittently at the audience and smiles appreciatively. We hear the door slam shut. The audience has left except for two. Pedro sees his parents sitting in the audience.

PEDRO

Oh hi. I didn't know you came. Did you like the show?

(silence)

This is what I like to do.

(more silence)

I know you would rather I do something else. Something more dignified, right?

(silence)

I love puppets. I always wanted to be a puppeteer. I'm doing what I love.

(silence)

You bought me my first puppet when I was a kid. Remember? It was Elmo. I loved Elmo. I would put him in my backpack and go everywhere with him. I couldn't be without him. Remember when I thought he was lost? I cried for days until you found him. You do remember that, don't you, dad? You were a hero for me.

(silence)

Mom, you even made me an Elmo piñata, remember? It was my fifth birthday and all the kids thought it was so cool to have an Elmo piñata. It was great until a kid bashed his head with the bat. The candy spread all over and I had a panic attack. To me, it was like Elmo's brains were scattering about, but it was candy. Remember me crying? Then you snuggled my Elmo to my chest, and I saw he was still there for me to hold.

(silence)

Did you see the kids laughing and enjoying the show?

Pedro sees his parents get up and leave.

PEDRO

Where are you going? ... I know you don't think it's a career.

(silence)

I'll see you at home.

He hears the door slam. He looks at Latina Ballerina in his hand.

PEDRO

(To Latina Ballerina)

Don't worry about them. Just because their only son is an embarrassment... It was a good show Latina Ballerina. Good show.

Pedro puts Latina Ballerina Puppet down and starts packing his puppets in a box.

Pedro hears a screech of a lowrider car stopping. The sound came from the puppet theater. Vato Puppet is at the puppet theater. He is appears at the puppet theater stage.

Vato is sitting in the car. He is dressed like a guy from the hood with a plaid flannel shirt, and a handkerchief tied on his forehead.

VATO PUPPET

Horale, vato.

PEDRO

Oh no.

VATO PUPPET

Hey, you. Listen up. I gotta ask you something.

PEDRO

Ah.

VATO PUPPET

What color are you wearing?

PEDRO

What?

VATO PUPPET

I said, what color are you wearing?

PEDRO

Ah. Where did you come from?

VATO PUPPET

Are you listening? I said, what color are you wearing?

On my shirt?
PEDRO

Yeah.
VATO PUPPET

I'm wearing gray.
PEDRO

No, man. You're wearing red.
VATO PUPPET

It's a gray shirt.
PEDRO

It's red.
VATO PUPPET

It's not red.
PEDRO

Fair warning. You can't wear red in this part of town.
VATO PUPPET

I'm not wearing red. I'm wearing gray.
PEDRO

You're wearing red, ese.
VATO PUPPET

I'm wearing gray... I am.
PEDRO

The puppet looks him up and
down.

You are?
VATO PUPPET

I am.
PEDRO

Pinche madre. I keep forgetting I'm color blind. Sorry man.
Then you're okay.
VATO PUPPET

Where did you come from?
PEDRO

VATO PUPPET
Say what?

PEDRO
I never saw you before.

VATO PUPPET
No?

PEDRO
No.

VATO PUPPET
I've been driving around. Checking out the scenery. Why you ask?

PEDRO
Well, you're in my puppet theater.

VATO PUPPET
And?

PEDRO
I never seen you before. So, how did you get there? You're not one of the puppets that I use in my show.

VATO PUPPET
So it's like that?

PEDRO
What do you mean?

VATO PUPPET
Rejection is not a good thing.

PEDRO
I'm not rejecting you. I just don't know where you came from.

VATO PUPPET
You're hurting me man.

PEDRO
I don't mean to.

VATO PUPPET
Well, you did. I may look like a tough guy, but I can feel rejection and it's not a good feeling. I'm going to have to go for a drive and try to get over it.

PEDRO

I didn't want to hurt your feelings.

VATO PUPPET

Well, you did. See you later, man.

The Vato Puppet drives off.
Pedro walks around the puppet
theater and tries to see where
the Vato Puppet went to.

PEDRO

Wow. He's gone.... Where did he go? He's not here.

Chola Puppet appears at the
puppet stage. She has large
hoop earrings, a flannel shirt
over a crop top, and very red
ruby lips.

CHOLA PUPPET

Hey you.

PEDRO

Oh crap.

CHOLA PUPPET

I said, hey you.

PEDRO

What's going on?

CHOLA PUPPET

Whacha looking for?

PEDRO

Ah.

CHOLA PUPPET

Looking for your cahones?

PEDRO

No.

CHOLA PUPPET

Then what's your problem?

PEDRO

Ah.

CHOLA PUPPET

I said, what's your problem?

PEDRO

I... Well, I.... Really, this is all strange.

CHOLA PUPPET

You trying to insult me?

PEDRO

Honestly, I don't know what's happening.

CHOLA PUPPET

You don't?

PEDRO

I don't. I was just here doing my art, and my parents showed up unexpectedly, and gave me that look.

CHOLA PUPPET

What look?

PEDRO

The look of disappointment.

CHOLA PUPPET

They say anything?

PEDRO

No. They just stared at me... Then left.

CHOLA PUPPET

That's rude. Didn't even give you flowers after the show?

PEDRO

No. No flowers.

CHOLA PUPPET

That's too bad. I'd have a talk with them.

PEDRO

I sort of did.

CHOLA PUPPET

What they say?

PEDRO

Nothing.

CHOLA PUPPET

They don't understand you?

PEDRO

They don't.

CHOLA PUPPET

Yeah. That's how it is.

She pulls out a mirror and
checks her very red lips.

PEDRO

Ah, excuse me.

CHOLA PUPPET

Yeah?

PEDRO

Where did you come from?

CHOLA PUPPET

What?

PEDRO

You're not one of my puppets.

CHOLA PUPPET

I should hope not. Being a puppet is not for this girl. I
don't listen to nobody.

PEDRO

I don't mean a person who is a puppet to another. I mean, an
actual puppet. Where you put your hand inside.

CHOLA PUPPET

(she snaps)

Inside!?!.....YOU PUT YOUR HAND IN ME AND I WILL CHOP IT OFF.
THROW IT IN THE STREET. WAIT FOR CARS TO RUN OVER IT, AT
LEAST TEN TIMES. THEN I'LL SCOOP IT UP AND FLUSH IT IN THE
TOILET.

PEDRO

Yikes.

CHOLA PUPPET

What's the matter? Too harsh?

PEDRO

Just a bit.

CHOLA PUPPET

Sorry. I go from zero to a hundred a little too fast.

PEDRO
I guess so.

CHOLA PUPPET
So, what do you really do?

PEDRO
Like a professional job?

CHOLA PUPPET
Yes.

PEDRO
I'm a puppeteer.

CHOLA PUPPET
No really, like for real.

PEDRO
I'm a puppeteer.

CHOLA PUPPET
A fuck'n what?

PEDRO
I'm a puppeteer.

Chola stares at him.

PEDRO
What's the matter?

CHOLA PUPPET
A puppeteer.

PEDRO
A puppeteer.

CHOLA PUPPET
Okay. If you're going to say it, say it with pride. Come on.
Say it again. Say it like you're really proud of it.

PEDRO
I'm...a puppeteer.
CHOLA PUPPET

CHOLA PUPPET
That's not good. Do it again.

I'm a puppeteer. PEDRO (CONT'D)

One more time. CHOLA PUPPET

I'm a puppeteer. PEDRO

There's no career in that! CHOLA PUPPET
(bust out laughing)

Hey. PEDRO

A puppeteer? That's so funny. CHOLA PUPPET

That's what I am. PEDRO

You make any money at that? CHOLA PUPPET

I do. At times. PEDRO

You got a girlfriend? CHOLA PUPPET

I do. PEDRO

She goes for that? CHOLA PUPPET

She's okay with it. PEDRO

Loser. CHOLA PUPPET

Hey. PEDRO

LOO-SER. CHOLA PUPPET

PEDRO

I'm not.

CHOLA PUPPET (CONT'D)

You know, there's no girlfriend that's okay with that.

PEDRO

Well, she is.

CHOLA PUPPET

I bet your parents think you're a loser.

Pedro puts his head down.

PEDRO

... Well, when I was younger, they told me to be anything I want.

CHOLA PUPPET

And bananas grow on trees.

PEDRO

Actually, bananas do grow on threes.

CHOLA PUPPET

The square root of 100 is 10.

PEDRO

It is.

CHOLA PUPPET

Pi equals 3.14.

PEDRO

It does.

CHOLA PUPPET

And an avocado is a vegetable.

PEDRO

It's actually in the fruit group.

CHOLA PUPPET

Fuck. At least I know math. Let's get back to your parents thinking you're a loser.

PEDRO

They don't... Well, I guess they do.

CHOLA PUPPET

Trust me, they do.

PEDRO

...Today was the first time they came to see my show. They never wanted to before. Then they came and I thought there was hope. I thought it was great to see them here. Like maybe they're starting to understand me and how I just love this. But they sat there quietly. Just staring at me... Staring at me from the back of the theater... Then they got up and left.

CHOLA PUPPET

They told you to follow your dreams.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

They did. All the time.

CHOLA PUPPET

But not that one.

PEDRO

Yeah. Not that one.

CHOLA PUPPET

They're embarrassed.

PEDRO

Yeah. They are. It's just that, they have respectable jobs.

(pause)

Everyday they give me this look like -- how can their only son be a puppeteer. I'm an embarrassment to them.

CHOLA PUPPET

What do they say to people?

PEDRO

I'm not sure.

CHOLA PUPPET

I know, I know, they cover for you.

PEDRO

I guess they do. You know how parents are.

CHOLA PUPPET

No. I don't. I'm a fuck'n puppet. My only parent is this guy name Mark from Chicago who made my ass.

Oh. PEDRO

A²+B²=C² CHOLA PUPPET

What? PEDRO

That's math. Know it? CHOLA PUPPET

I forgot that one. The Pythagorean Theorem. Ha! I may not know my vegetables, but I know math. PEDRO

Fruit. PEDRO (CONT'D)

What? CHOLA PUPPET

An avocado is a fruit. PEDRO

CHOLA PUPPET
(gets angry)
I'm getting out of here. Something about you is getting on my nerves. Chola Puppet exits into the puppet theater. Pedro looks inside and around it and sees nothing.

PEDRO
This is so crazy. Pedro continues to pack his puppets. He sees a program from his show on the floor and picks it up. He sits on the stage looking at it. Then tosses it. Josie enters.

Pedro. JOSIE

Oh! Hi. PEDRO
(startled)

Hi... What's the matter? Nothing. JOSIE

Show go good? JOSIE (CONT'D)

Yeah. It was good. PEDRO

Lots of kids? JOSIE

Yeah. PEDRO
(nervous)

That's good. You ready to go home? JOSIE
(no answer)

Pedro? Pedro looks around.

What's the matter? JOSIE (CONT'D)

Ah, nothing. PEDRO

Something happened. I see that look. JOSIE

Ah. PEDRO

Come on. JOSIE

My parents came. PEDRO

I thought they never wanted to see a show. JOSIE

Well, they came. I didn't know they were there. PEDRO

Good thing, it would have been hard to do the show. JOSIE

Yeah. They say anything? PEDRO

Nothing. PEDRO (CONT'D)

Nothing? JOSIE

PEDRO
Just stared at me.

JOSIE
They're worried about you.

PEDRO
I guess.

JOSIE
What are you going to do?

PEDRO
I can't give it up. It's what I wanted to do since I was a kid.

JOSIE
I know. You're going to go home?

PEDRO
I have to. I'll have to face them like I do every day.
(silence)

JOSIE
... Need help packing?

PEDRO
It's okay. I can do it.

JOSIE
You should start letting me help. I'm good at packing.

PEDRO
I have a special way of putting the puppets in their boxes.

JOSIE
Are you sure?

PEDRO
You help enough by driving me to shows. And I do appreciate that.

JOSIE
I know... Well, okay. Pedro hears. He reacts to it and looks at Josie to see if she heard it.

PEDRO
Did you hear that?

JOSIE
No. What did you hear?

PEDRO

Not sure. Josie sees the Latina ballerina puppet and picks her up.

JOSIE

Ah, she's so cute. I like how the kids respond to her. She is so friendly and sweet. She's the star of your show.

PEDRO

Yeah, the kids really like her.

JOSIE

How come she looks a little sad right now.

PEDRO

What?

JOSIE

Look at her.

PEDRO

She looks the same to me.

JOSIE

She looks sad. Why?

PEDRO

I don't know. Josie puts Latina Ballerina Puppet down.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

Josie.

JOSIE

Yeah? Thanks for helping me book the puppet gigs. You're so good at it.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Sure. It's easy and everyone loves a puppet show.

PEDRO

I do have a question about this place.

JOSIE

Yeah?

PEDRO

When you booked it, did the owners say anything about it?

JOSIE

Like what?

PEDRO

Like, maybe it's haunted?

JOSIE

Haunted?

(She bust out laughing)

Now that's hilarious. You think this place is haunted?

PEDRO

No cemetery underneath the building?

JOSIE

Oh, gawd! That's so funny. Come here. Let me give you a hug. You're so funny. Josie closes in to hug and give him a kiss when there is another strange sound and Pedro pulls away.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

PEDRO

Did you hear that?

JOSIE

No.

PEDRO

I heard it.

JOSIE

Seriously, if you don't like this place, I can cancel it for next week. I can find another place. I really don't want to cancel. It's already advertised and tickets have sold. I'd disappoint the kids who have tickets.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Are you sure?

PEDRO

Yeah. I can't cancel.

JOSIE

Okay.

(She looks at him deeply)

Your parents coming unannounced upset you a lot. Didn't it?

PEDRO

I've invited them before, but they never came.

JOSIE

I guess they want to see if you are happy.

PEDRO

I am happy. They're not.

JOSIE

You got to think of yourself. You got to make yourself happy.

PEDRO

I know. But right now, I'm not sure if I'm happy.

JOSIE

Oh, you're coming down with something. You never talked like this before.

(she touches his forehead)

Do you have a fever?

PEDRO

I'm fine. No fever. Maybe hungry.

JOSIE

I can get you something while you pack your puppets.

PEDRO

It's okay. We can go out to dinner after.

JOSIE

Sure. She picks up a panda puppet and a dragon puppet.

These are so cute. I'll see
your show next weekend. It's
fun watching the kids enjoying
your shows. She puts the
puppets in a box.

PEDRO

Those go in that other box.

JOSIE

Oh, sorry... Look, I can go to the boutiques near here. I saw some art galleries. I can come back for you later. You want me to call before I come back and see if you're ready, or just show up.

PEDRO

Just show up. I should be done when you come back.

JOSIE

Okay.

PEDRO

Okay.

JOSIE

Bye. She gives him a hug and starts to exit. She stops, and turns around.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Your parents are going to ask if you did okay with this gig.

PEDRO

I know. They always do. It was a good pay day.

JOSIE

Good.... What if they...?

PEDRO

I keep telling them this is a real job, for me.

JOSIE

I know. She exits. Pedro picks up the panda puppet and puts it in another box. When he turns around he sees Paco the Taco Puppet. tiny sombrero and tiny cowboy boots.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Someone say dinner? If it's Taco Tuesday, I'm out of here.

PEDRO

What?

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

I see you looking at me with those hungry eyes. Go ahead. Ask me.

PEDRO

Ask you what?

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Ask me if I am chicken, shredded beef, chorizo, barbacoa, al pastor, carnitas, carne asada, or lengua.

(No answer)

Come on. Take a guess. All is very tasty.

PEDRO

Ah, what are you!?

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Are you blind? I'm a taco. Guess what kind of meat I have.

PEDRO

This is insane.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

I'm lengua. I like to be a lengua taco 'cause most people are not too crazy about eating tongue.

PEDRO

I eat lengua.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Ah chip.

(he laughs)

Get it, ah chip.

PEDRO

Where did you come from? I came from Taco-rama.

(no answer)

It's across the alley from here. A new taco place. Have you been to it?

PEDRO (CONT'D)

No.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

We have mariachis on Fridays. It's a good time.

PEDRO

This is crazy.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Crazy? You know where my primos live?

PEDRO

Where?

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

In Tacoma.

(He laughs)

PEDRO

I'm having a really bad day.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

You want to TACO-bout your feelings? Pedro stares at him.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET (CONT'D)

Okay, okay. You don't like my jokes.

PEDRO

(says to himself)

I'm starting to worry about myself.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Only worry when it's taco Tuesday... Did you hear about the family of onions that died?

PEDRO

No.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

They will forever be minced.

(no answer)

That was funny. That was one of my best ones. What's the matter with you. Looks like you're stressed. I am.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET (CONT'D)

Let me give you some advice. When things get tough, you got to lettuce help you.

(He laughs)

PEDRO

That's not funny.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

What the guac? I'm just trying to cheer you up. You're pretty down. Is there anything I can do for you?

PEDRO

Stop telling jokes.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Done.

PEDRO

Explain to me what is going on?

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

You don't know?

PEDRO

Know what?

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

You don't know what's going on?

PEDRO

I honestly don't.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Let me tell you another joke.

PEDRO

No more jokes.

PACO THE TACO PUPPET

Alright. I guess I've been a little cheesy.
(Laughs)

PEDRO

Stop. Okay. I'll leave you alone. Seems like you have a lot on you plate!

(he laughs)

Paco the Taco exits laughing. Pedro turns around to see Evilito Puppet in his puppet theater. Evilito is an odd looking puppet. 1/3rd of his face is the Chucky character and the other 2/3rds is Kermit the Frog. Evilito has one arm and leg as Chucky limbs. The other arm is Kermit's arm. One leg is a skeleton leg. The chest is Chucky with a partial skeleton rib cage attached to it.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

(Freaks out)

Oh no!

EVILITO

Hello there.

PEDRO

Ah.

EVILITO

What's your name?

PEDRO

Ah.

EVILITO

I said, what's your name?

PEDRO

Pedro.

EVILITO

I'm going to call you Peter.

PEDRO

That's not my name.

EVILITO

It's Peter. No.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

Now Peter. What seems to be the problem?

PEDRO
What do you mean?

EVILITO
You got problems man. I wouldn't be here if you didn't have problems.

PEDRO
This place is definitely haunted.

EVILITO
How can that be?

PEDRO
With what is happening.

EVILITO
What is happening?

PEDRO
I'm seeing puppets I have never seen before.

EVILITO
You mean me?

PEDRO
Yes. And three before you.

EVILITO
I work alone.

PEDRO
Oh.

EVILITO
So, tell me. What seems to be the problem?

PEDRO
Actually, I don't know.

EVILITO
Then why did you bring me here?

PEDRO
I didn't.

EVILITO
You did. You brought me here. I did?

EVILITO (CONT'D)
Of course you did.

PEDRO

I wouldn't do that.

EVILITO

But you did. Since you did, can we be friends?

PEDRO

I don't think so.

EVILITO

Why not? You and I are one.

PEDRO

Heck no!

EVILITO

Come here. Give me a hug.

PEDRO

No!

EVILITO

Come on. Then I will give you a hug. Come over here.

PEDRO

No.

EVILITO

Can't you see? I'm disabled, you have to come to me.

PEDRO

You stay there.

EVILITO

Are you a good guy?

PEDRO

I am.

EVILITO

Can you help a brother out and let me sit on your shoulder? I'm rather fatigued right here. Plus we are having a good conversation.

PEDRO

I don't know about that. Come on. I won't hurt you.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

I'm seeing things.

EVILITO

If you are, then what's the harm? Come on. Let me sit on your shoulder.

PEDRO

This is not happening.

EVILITO

If it's not happening, then why resist? Pedro takes a step forward.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

Come closer. Pedro gets closer.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

Closer. Pedro gets closer.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

A little bit more. Pedro gets closer. Evilito gets on Pedro's shoulder.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

There. I feel much better now. Feels good up here. I can see better. We can talk better. Evilito takes more prominence on Pedro's shoulder by shifting and settling in.

PEDRO

What are you doing?

EVILITO

What?

PEDRO

What are you doing up there? Getting comfortable. Let me see. Which side do I want to sit at. On this shoulder or that shoulder. Hey, have you seen on TV where an angel sits on one shoulder and tells the person how to behave? And on the other shoulder, other things are said.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

You mean a devil on one shoulder and an angel on the other shoulder?

EVILITO

What? There's such a thing?

PEDRO

Yes.

EVILITO

That's not what I'm talking about.

PEDRO

Yes you are.

EVILITO

No, nothing like that.

(laughs)

I'm just saying I can switch shoulders easily up here. Look, I can go here.

(he moves to the other
shoulder)

And I can go here.

PEDRO

That's not what that concept is.

EVILITO

What do you mean?

PEDRO

It's a representation of deciding on good or evil. A devil sits on one shoulder telling you bad stuff and to do bad. And an angel sits on the other shoulder telling you what you should do. It's a decision one makes.

EVILITO

Crazy. I've never heard of such a thing. I have a different interpretation.

PEDRO

There's only one interpretation.

EVILITO

Really? Yes.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

That's crazy.

PEDRO

It's not.

EVILITO

It's totally different.

PEDRO

...So, are you good or evil?

EVILITO

Are you expecting an answer?

PEDRO

Yes.

EVILITO

I really can't say. If I have to answer, I'd say... Hmmm. I could be both. Or I could be one or the other. It's just whatever the day is.

PEDRO

What does today bring?

EVILITO

A friendly guy.

PEDRO

I'm not sure about that.

EVILITO

That wasn't nice.

PEDRO

Listen, I need you off my shoulder.

EVILITO

What?

PEDRO

I don't feel comfortable with you there.

EVILITO

Well, I'll move to the other shoulder.

PEDRO

No. That's still on my shoulders... Please get off. So you got a problem with me here?

PEDRO (CONT'D)

I do.

EVILITO

So, you want me off?

PEDRO

Yeah. Can you get off?

EVILITO

Am I upsetting you?

PEDRO

You are.

EVILITO

And why is that?

PEDRO

For one thing, you look kind of creepy.

EVILITO

I have a disability!

PEDRO

Whatever it is, I'd like you off my shoulder. You can talk to me in the puppet theater like all the other puppets.

EVILITO

What other puppets?

PEDRO

The ones that showed up and I don't even know where they came from.

EVILITO

Wow. That happened?

PEDRO

GET OFF!

EVILITO

What the hell? Isn't there any room for advancement? Did I already reach the glass ceiling?

PEDRO

Please get off my shoulder.

EVILITO

No. Please.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

Fuck you. Pedro punches Evilito in the face. Evilito flies off, then turns mid-air to jump on Pedro's face. Pedro falls to the floor and the two start wrestling. They roll back and forth with Evilito on top, then Pedro on top, and then switch. They do this several times during the fight. Suddenly, Abuelita, a Latina grandmother appears. She runs to the two holding a large cross. Evilito runs off-stage.

ABUELA

Are you okay, mijo?

PEDRO

Yes, grandma.

ABUELA

Did he hurt you?

PEDRO

I'm okay.

ABUELA

I'm glad I came. Your abuela makes sure her nientos are okay.

PEDRO

I might have a bruise.

ABUELA

I think you're fine... That was a terrible sight.

PEDRO

He was creepy. Thanks for chasing him off, abuela. De nada.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

What was that, though?

ABUELA

Aye. Terrible. You were fighting with the devil.

PEDRO

Yikes. He got on my shoulder! That was so creepy.

ABUELA

I bet.

PEDRO

Disgusting. Thanks again for scaring him off.

ABUELA

I come to help you all the time.

PEDRO

You do.

ABUELA

So happy to ameliorate.

PEDRO

Big word, abuela.

ABUELA

I had big aspirations too. It's me and you who are the artists of this family. They don't understand us. Constantly squashing artistic dreams.

PEDRO

You grandma? An artist?

ABUELA

Of course.

PEDRO

I didn't know. What was your dream?

ABUELA

I wanted to be a stand-up comic.

PEDRO

A standup comic?

ABUELA

I know that looks impossible to you. You have never seen any signs of it as you were growing up. That's because if I tried to be funny, I just made myself sad. Oh, sorry.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

My parents stopped everything I tried to do for that goal. They did not want a standup comic daughter.

PEDRO

Really grandma? A stand-up comic?

ABUELA

(insulted)

For your information I was hilarious. People thought I had in me to be a stand up comic. But that was an embarrassment to my parents. I don't know why. We always made each other laugh. But for me to do it full-time, they put their foot down. Do you know what that did to me?

PEDRO

What abuela?

ABUELA

It made me bitter. And when you're bitter, you can't be funny... Well, I couldn't be funny...

PEDRO

I'm sorry you were bitter.

ABUELA

I could have written jokes for my fiend comics. If I couldn't be at the microphone, maybe my jokes could. But my parents forbade me from being part of the comedy world. Then there was no laughter in the house. Nothing. I lived my life without laughs, and with sadness.

PEDRO

Lo siento, abuela.

ABUELA

A few times, I snuck out to the comedy clubs, but being the obedient daughter I just watched other comics. It was killing me. I just had to get it out in some way. If I couldn't get it out that way, I had to do it with my body.

PEDRO

(horrified)

Oh no, Grandma. Not that!

ABUELA

Get your mind out of the gutter. I didn't do that. I danced disco. It was Latino-parent-acceptable. puppet theater. Finger puppets in disco outfits start dancing to disco music. Abuela sways to the disco music.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Disco dancing became my substitution for standup comedy. She dances.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Then one day, when the DJ's were switching at the booth, I took the microphone. Suddenly Abuela's manner appears youthful. A microphone appears in her hand.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Hey everybody! How's it going? I got something for you. A priest enters a bar. He says to the bartender--- The music cuts out and the disco finger puppets disappear. She returns to reality.

PEDRO

What happened grandma?

ABUELA

I felt guilty doing something my parent's told me not to do. I just stopped... It was also when I knew that without some support, it was meaningless... Art is meaningless without support. She starts to exit.

PEDRO

Abuela...You're trying to tell me something.

ABUELA

You're trying to tell yourself something.

PEDRO

What?

ABUELA

We are the artists of the family. Yeah.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

....I will always come when you need me. Abuela exits. Vato Puppet appears in the puppet theater.

VATO PUPPET

Hey you. I told you not to wear red.

PEDRO

I'm not wearing red. You're color blind.

VATO PUPPET

Shing. I keep forgetting.

(Pause)

So, not that it's any of my business, but there's a weird Chucky thing around here. He says he's with you.

PEDRO

He's not.

VATO PUPPET

Are you sure? He says you made him.

PEDRO

I didn't.

VATO PUPPET

Are you sure?

PEDRO

I am sure.

VATO PUPPET

Okay. See 'ya.

PEDRO

Wait. Can You tell me something?

VATO PUPPET

Shoot. I mean, don't shoot. We got enough of that in the hood.

PEDRO

You think that things that happen, are meant for a reason? A little explanation please.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

Well, strange things are happening to me. I wonder if it's for a reason. Like to figure things out.

VATO PUPPET

Hmmm. Well, things do come across your path for reasons. Maybe for you to evaluate things?

PEDRO

Yeah.

VATO PUPPET

I know that life is just a series of natural and spontaneous changes.

PEDRO

Yeah?

VATO PUPPET

My advice is to not resist them. It only creates sorrow. Let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward, in whatever way they like...Lao Tzu.

PEDRO

What? Whose Lao Tzu?

VATO PUPPET

Ancient Chinese philosopher. That's where I got that from.

PEDRO

Seriously?

VATO PUPPET

Hey, are you making fun of me?

PEDRO

No. I'm not.

VATO PUPPET

You're making fun of me.

PEDRO

I'm not.

VATO PUPPET

I don't appreciate disrespect.

PEDRO

I wasn't disrespecting you. Honest. I don't know. It sounded like ridicule. Vato Puppet sees someone in the distance.

VATO PUPPET

Ah shit. Look whose over there.

PEDRO

Over where?

VATO PUPPET

He thinks I can't see him.

PEDRO

Who?

VATO PUPPET

That guy. You know, he thinks he can wear pink around here. Well, he can. He's a GATO.

PEDRO

What's a gato?

VATO PUPPET

A gay vato. He's cool... Listen, hombre. Not that it's any of my business. I saw your girlfriend.

PEDRO

She's nice.

VATO PUPPET

Sorry, dude. They start like that and then they change. I don't know what happens to them. First they love you, then they want you to get a job. Then they want you home every night. And then you forget who you are, and who your homies are. Then you got to get in your car, and just go. Like I do all the time.

PEDRO

Where do you go?

VATO PUPPET

Just anywhere. Jack in the Box, Denny's. Sometimes between the two. Sometimes I go around them. I buy a soda. Go to the other place and get some breakfast. You know, just to get away....

PEDRO

I see.

VATO PUPPET

Just keep on your guard. I will.

VATO PUPPET (CONT'D)

Stick with the one that will be true.

PEDRO

Lao Tzu?

VATO PUPPET

No, me! I just said that.

PEDRO

Oh, okay. Pedro looks around.

VATO PUPPET

What's the matter?

PEDRO

I got stuff to do. I got to pack up the puppets. I'm getting picked up to go home soon.

VATO PUPPET

Okay. Sounds good. See you around.

PEDRO

Yeah. See you around. Vato exits. Pedro continues packing up his puppet stuff. Chola Puppet appears in the puppet theater.

CHOLA PUPPET

You see my man around?

PEDRO

What's he look like?

CHOLA PUPPET

He drives around in a low rider car doing nothin'.

PEDRO

Is he colorblind? He knows his colors. Don't you?

PEDRO (CONT'D)

I mean... Never mind. I think I did see him.

CHOLA PUPPET

Did you talk to him?

PEDRO

Yeah.

CHOLA PUPPET

He acting all sad?

PEDRO

Not sure.

CHOLA PUPPET

Mad?

PEDRO

I can't tell.

CHOLA PUPPET

It's all good. If he's mad, he'll do what I say. And that's how I like it.

PEDRO

Being mad isn't a good way to live.

CHOLA PUPPET

(mocking)

Oh. Oh. And it's bad on your blood pressure, and all that shit.

PEDRO

Well, yeah.

CHOLA PUPPET

I see. You protecting him?

PEDRO

Ah. I hardly know him.

CHOLA PUPPET

Are you protecting him?

PEDRO

I only met him a couple of times.

CHOLA PUPPET

You know what, I got a place to go. Maybe I will see you again, and maybe I won't. Wait. Did I make you mad?

CHOLA PUPPET (CONT'D)

See ya. Chola Puppet exits. Evilito Puppet appears.

EVILITO

Dude. Let me sit on your shoulder.

PEDRO

Why do you have to go on my shoulder?

EVILITO

For one thing, I got weak legs.

PEDRO

No.

EVILITO

Come on.

PEDRO

I don't know what you are, and I don't even know your name.

EVILITO

My name? Is that what it will take to sit on your shoulder?

PEDRO

Dude, I really don't want you near me.

EVILITO

I will tell you my name for a spot on your shoulder.

PEDRO

No.

EVILITO

My name is Sam.

PEDRO

It's not.

EVILITO

Okay.... Merv.

PEDRO

Really? No. Yes, it is.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

I don't believe you.

EVILITO

Okay. You got me.

PEDRO

Thought so. You don't look like a Merv.

EVILITO

All right. My name is Evilito. Silence.

EVILITO (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

PEDRO

The name fits. And it means you're bad.

EVILITO

What makes you say that?

PEDRO

The word evil is in your name.

That was an accident. EVILITO

I don't think so. PEDRO

Really. EVILITO

I think you're bad. PEDRO

How can I be bad, when I am you? EVILITO

What? PEDRO

I am you. EVILITO

No. You're not me. That's... No. I was created by you. PEDRO

What? PEDRO (CONT'D)

I was created by you. EVILITO

No. No. That's not possible. PEDRO

Sorry. You did. EVILITO

I wouldn't create you. I create pandas, and ballerinas for the kids. I don't make you-types. PEDRO

I am a part of you. EVILITO

No, you're not. I don't have any of what makes you YOU, in me. That's impossible. PEDRO

It is possible. EVILITO

PEDRO
I'm a good guy.

EVILITO
Wait a minute. Are you calling me a bad guy?

PEDRO
What's your name?

EVILITO
Evilito.

PEDRO
Well?

EVILITO
It's just a name. It means nothing.

PEDRO
And we had a fight already.

EVILITO
Ah, that was nothing. Lover's spat. No lover's spat!

EVILITO (CONT'D)
Joking around.

PEDRO
We were knocking the crap out of each other until my grandmother came.

EVILITO
It was fun.

PEDRO
No it wasn't! Grandma! How do I get rid of this guy? Abuela appears.

ABUELA
Pour gasoline and light a match.

EVILITO AND PEDRO
No! That's crazy.

ABUELA
It's a joke.

EVILITO AND PEDRO
Oh.

ABUELA
Anyhow. What's the problem?

EVILITO
He's the one with the problem.

ABUELA
Are you bothering, miijo?

EVILITO
Maybe he's bothering me?

PEDRO
He's lying abuela.

ABUELA
Are you lying to me?

EVILITO
If I say, yes, what would happen? the neck, shakes him violently, and throws him off the stage.

EVILITO (CONT'D)
(screams)
Ahhhhh..... Evilito disappears.

ABUELA
Miijo. You'll have to see a priest. That was 'demonio.'
(She crosses herself)

PEDRO
Really?

ABUELA
He's going to keep bothering you until you see a priest.

PEDRO
I think you scared him off.

ABUELA
No, he'll come back. Trust me on this one.

PEDRO
Oh.

ABUELA
You have to promise me you will see a priest.

PEDRO
Okay. He stands there. She stares at him.

Right now. ABUELA

Now? PEDRO

'Horita.' ABUELA

Oh, now... I thought we can talk a bit more. No talking. Go see a priest! PEDRO

Okay. PEDRO (CONT'D)

Now!!! Pedro runs to the other side of the stage. Abuela exits. Lights on a chair, in front of a curtain. Pedro sees it and walks to the chair and sits down. ABUELA

....Forgive me Father, for I have sinned. It has been over a year since my last confession-- A priest opens the curtain. This startles Pedro and he falls of the chair. PEDRO
(does the sign of the cross)

Pedro? FATHER NUNEZ

Yeah? Oh Father Nunez. PEDRO

Pedro. Are you going to confess that you have disappointed your parents by being a puppeteer? FATHER NUNEZ

Ah... Maybe. Other things are happening and my abuela said I had to see you. PEDRO

What's happening? FATHER NUNEZ

Strange things. PEDRO

And your parents? I'm feeling guilty about being a puppeteer. FATHER NUNEZ

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)

We talked about that before.

PEDRO

I know. It's the guilt.

FATHER NUNEZ

Well, knock it off. You'll get an ulcer.

PEDRO

I think I got one.

FATHER NUNEZ

You have to stop worrying. Live life to the fullest.

PEDRO

I can't. I live at home.

FATHER NUNEZ

That doesn't mean you're a failure. Lots of people your age live at home. Sign of the times. It's a tough world.

PEDRO

I don't feel good about it.

FATHER NUNEZ

Get over it.

PEDRO

I don't even have a car.

FATHER NUNEZ

You can Uber. Or Lyft.

PEDRO

My girlfriend drives me around.

FATHER NUNEZ

Josie?

PEDRO

Yeah. She doesn't think I'm weird doing puppet shows.

FATHER NUNEZ

She knows you love it.

PEDRO

She does. Puppets are important to me. It's my art.

FATHER NUNEZ

Yes, I know. Padre?

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)

Yes?

PEDRO

I can't give it up. I can't.

FATHER NUNEZ

I know.

PEDRO

The laughter. The laughter from the children in the audience. It makes me happy to hear them. It does something incredible to me. When I am making the puppet talk, it's like a 'runner's high.' I am in a peaceful zone. I love how the audience can't take their eyes off the puppets. The kids laugh and parents thank me for making their children happy. It's the best, father.

FATHER NUNEZ

That's wonderful.

PEDRO

Then I go home and my parents shake their heads in that disapproving way.

FATHER NUNEZ

That's normal, Pedro. Parents are like that.

PEDRO

What should I do?

FATHER NUNEZ

Keep following your heart.

PEDRO

I don't know.

FATHER NUNEZ

You will find peace.

PEDRO

I will?

FATHER NUNEZ

Yes.

PEDRO

Okay. Good?

PEDRO (CONT'D)

Yeah..... How many 'Hail Mary's' and 'Our Fathers' do I do?

FATHER NUNEZ
Why? You didn't do a sin.

PEDRO
Maybe it can help.

FATHER NUNEZ
Well, how many do you want?

PEDRO
Maybe a half a dozen of each.

FATHER NUNEZ
I was going to say two of each. You want a dozen each, then go for it.

PEDRO
Alright. That's good, then. Right?

FATHER NUNEZ
Yes, of course.

PEDRO
Father? Father Nunez gets a text.

FATHER NUNEZ
Just a minute, this is important. Father Nunez looks at his cellphone, and laughs at the message.

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)
Oh, sorry. Continue.

PEDRO
It's okay.

FATHER NUNEZ
No, go ahead. Ask me another question.

PEDRO
I just feel it's wrong what I'm putting my parents through. Live your life, Pedro. It's your life.

PEDRO (CONT'D)
Is puppetry the right part of my life?

FATHER NUNEZ
It's what makes you happy, right?

PEDRO
Yes.

FATHER NUNEZ

Then, that's what you do. Always choose happiness.

PEDRO

Okay.

FATHER NUNEZ

Remember that. Pedro sees Evilito. Evilito sneers at Pedro and disappears.

PEDRO

Father.

FATHER NUNEZ

Yes, my son.

PEDRO

I think I am possessed.

FATHER NUNEZ

We all are. Father Nunez looks at his cellphone again.

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)

Oops. Got to go. He does the sign of the cross on Pedro.

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)

In the name of the father, the son, and the holy ghost, Amen. Go in peace, my son.

PEDRO

Thank you father. You're welcomed. Pedro starts to leave.

FATHER NUNEZ

Wait a sec. What're you doing you later on?

PEDRO

Excuse me?

FATHER NUNEZ

I have an artistic side.

PEDRO

You do?

FATHER NUNEZ

Yes. I get rid of the collar and... Father Nunez pulls off his collar and puts on a gold chain that says 'DISCO' and puts on sunglasses.

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)

--I dance. He poses in a disco stance.

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)
Just call me Disco priest.

PEDRO
Father.

FATHER NUNEZ
What's the matter?

PEDRO
Disco?

FATHER NUNEZ
It's my art.

PEDRO
My abuela said she danced disco in her youth.

FATHER NUNEZ
It's the best. It's coming back and there's a club that has
disco night. Wait, are you allowed to do that?

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)
Sure. Why not?

PEDRO
I thought you had to restrict certain things.

FATHER NUNEZ
Restrict? Life is a bore if you restrict. Okay, there's
things we aren't supposed to do, but we do it, anyway.

PEDRO
What does the congregation say about this?

FATHER NUNEZ
They're fine with it. They sometimes join me. Dancing is good
for the soul.

PEDRO
Good for the soul?

FATHER NUNEZ
Tremendously good for the soul. Father Nunez does some dance
moves.

FATHER NUNEZ (CONT'D)
If you're not too busy, meet me at Disco Cahuenga. He dances
off. Josie enters.

JOSIE

Pedro. Are you ready?

PEDRO

Oh, sorry.

JOSIE

I thought you'd be ready to go by now.

PEDRO

Ah. I, I. Well, things have been coming up.

JOSIE

Coming up? What do you mean? Like what? What's going on? Are you sure this place isn't haunted?

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Are you messing me with me?

PEDRO

I'm serious. I'm seeing weird shit. Josie puts her hand on Pedro's head.

JOSIE

It's not hot.

PEDRO

See.

JOSIE

You got to take your temperature to make sure. Look, let me help you get everything packed, and you go home and go to bed. Forget about dinner. I'll bring you chicken soup.

PEDRO

Josie.

JOSIE

Yeah?

PEDRO

I'm not going to be able to do a show here.

JOSIE

What? You're crazy. It's a great location.

PEDRO

I can't do it.

JOSIE

You giving up your puppets? You must really be sick.

PEDRO

I'm starting to do some thinking.

JOSIE

You're stressed out. That's what parents do to their kids sometimes.... You got to relax.

PEDRO

It first started with me hearing things. Now I'm seeing strange puppets. Puppets I've never seen before.

JOSIE

Yeah, you have a fever. I'm helping you pack. I just have to do some thinking.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

You're serious?

PEDRO

Come back later. I'll do my thinking while packing... Maybe it's the last time I pack.

JOSIE

Pedro.

PEDRO

It just might be. I just want to be alone with my puppets, maybe for the last time.

JOSIE

I can't believe it. This is not you. Maybe something is here. You're acting different.

PEDRO

Maybe I'm in the middle of a big decision.

JOSIE

Pedro. This is sad.

PEDRO

It is. Come back later. I'll get everything all packed and we can go.

JOSIE

Alright. Josie stares at him.

PEDRO

It's okay.

JOSIE

Maybe the puppets are getting to you.

PEDRO

Some are. She exits. Pedro picks up programs from the last show and puts them in the trash. He continues packing. puppet. Puts it on his hand and looks at it. Evilito appears in the puppet theater.

EVILITO

Hello.

PEDRO

(annoyed)

I don't want you here.

EVILITO

But I am here.

PEDRO

Listen. I think---

EVILITO

You think?

PEDRO

Yes I think. Chola Puppet appears in the puppet theater.

CHOLA PUPPET

He don't think anything. Am I right?

PEDRO

No, you're wrong. I do think.

CHOLA PUPPET

You better not cross me. Vato Puppet appears in the puppet theater. He has a piece of lettuce sticking out of his mouth and is wearing Paco the Taco's sombrero.

VATO PUPPET

Hey, I saw a taco and ate it. It was good. Sorry if I ate your lunch.

PEDRO

That was not my lunch. Tasted like a lengua taco.

CHOLA PUPPET

Are you sure it wasn't pollo? That's the most common.

VATO PUPPET

No, it was lengua.

CHOLA PUPPET

Do you know the difference between pollo and lengua?

I'm pretty sure I do. VATO PUPPET

Are you sure, puerco? CHOLA PUPPET

Hey! Don't call me names. If you want to know, I rather have shrimp tacos. VATO PUPPET

Stop it. PEDRO

Say what? CHOLA PUPPET

Stop. All of you listen. I finally figured it out. I know who you all are. PEDRO

Who are we, vato? VATO PUPPET

Yeah, who are we? CHOLA PUPPET

You're guilt. PEDRO

VATO PUPPET/CHOLA

Guilt? PUPPET/EVILITO PUPPET

Yes. Guilt. PEDRO

I can see that. EVILITO

You're the guilt that is causing me to make a big decision. What decision is that? PEDRO

What to do with my life. PEDRO (CONT'D)

Your life is your life. VATO PUPPET

PEDRO
But people interfere with it.

CHOLA PUPPET
Like your parents?

EVILITO
Low blow.

PEDRO
And you all.

VATO PUPPET
Whoa.

PEDRO
I have to do what's right for me.

CHOLA PUPPET
Oh, yeah?

PEDRO
Yeah.

CHOLA PUPPET
Pero cabron, you need to be certain about this. You can't have regrets. You got to be ready now. To make the decision of your life. Doesn't that scare you?

EVILITO
Think of the rejection.

VATO PUPPET
Think of Lao Tzu.

CHOLA PUPPET
What?

VATO PUPPET
Bro, you got to follow your path. You know it.

CHOLA PUPPET
Ha, he won't follow that path. It's a stupid path. A man his age with a panda puppet? This panda puppet says a lot about life.

CHOLA PUPPET (CONT'D)
Oh really?

PEDRO
Yes, it does. I made it to make people happy.

EVILITO
You made us, too.

PEDRO
No, I didn't.

VATO PUPPET
Got an idea, bro. Make a puppet of the Chinese philosopher
Lao Tzu.

CHOLA PUPPET
Shut the fuck up.

EVILITO
Peter, you got it all confused.

PEDRO
No, you're confused. You're part Chucky, part calavera, and
part Kermit.

EVILITO
But that's how you made me.

PEDRO
I keep telling you, I did not make you!

EVILITO
Yes, you did.

VATO PUPPET
You made me, too. To remind you of your home boys.

CHOLA PUPPET
I was made in Michigan by Mark Saltzman.

PEDRO
Stop! Anyhow, it doesn't matter. You all have to go.

CHOLA PUPPET
Go where, cabron?

PEDRO
Somewhere. Dude, you having a crisis?

PEDRO (CONT'D)
I am. I have to make a big decision.

CHOLA PUPPET
A decision of your life.

PEDRO

Yes.

CHOLA PUPPET

Well, make it soon. Your parents have had enough of your toys.

PEDRO

They're not toys! Pedro kicks a box towards the puppet theater.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

Before anything, you all have to get in this box.

CHOLA PUPPET

What the hell?

EVILITO

Why the box?

PEDRO

Get in the box!

VATO PUPPET

Aye Cabron. Ya me voy! Vato Puppet exits.

PEDRO

Both of you, get in the box!

CHOLA PUPPET
(whines)

Whyyyyyyyyyyyyyy?

PEDRO

Because, I know what's going on here.

CHOLA PUPPET

What's going on? You want to make a decision for me. But, I'm the one that needs to make it.

CHOLA PUPPET (CONT'D)

But you can't. That's why we're here.

EVILITO

What decision, Pedro?

PEDRO

What to do with my life!

CHOLA PUPPET

You need a chill-pill.

PEDRO

I can't have parents giving me that look their son is a loser. I won't accept that anymore.

EVILITO

Then what are you going to do?

CHOLA PUPPET

Yeah, what are you going to do?

PEDRO

I'm tired of Latino guilt for wanting to be a puppeteer.

EVILITO

You can do it part-time.

PEDRO

If I have to do it part-time, so be it.

CHOLA PUPPET

Is that what you're going to do? Part-time?

PEDRO

I don't know. But, if I do, that's up to me. Wait a minute. You're trying to make decisions for me.

CHOLA PUPPET

Maybe.

PEDRO

You have to get in the box.

CHOLA PUPPET

If you ask me, you'll be living in your parents' basement for a long time if you make the wrong decision. Doesn't that matter to you? Don't you want to be a man, and just get a job so you can make car payments. Have insurance and your own apartment... Don't you want to be a man?

(melting)

Yes.

EVILITO

Then you better think about this. The decision you make now is forever.

CHOLA PUPPET

Yeah, really think about it. Pedro stands still and hears an echo in his head "think about it, think about it, think about it." He then regains his strength.

PEDRO

Get in the box! He kicks the box violently. The puppets duck back in the puppet theater. Chola puppet comes back out and Pedro slugs her in the face. She goes down into the puppet theater.

PEDRO (CONT'D)
(frustrated)

Ahhhh. Pedro, in a total breakdown, falls in a heap to the floor shaking his box of puppets in frustration then falls over them. He lays there. In an emotional mess, he's given up. Vato Puppet appears.

VATO PUPPET

Hanging it up?

PEDRO

...yeah. I'm going to hang it up. Silence. Pedro gains control of himself and stands up. He picks up the mess he made with the boxes and puppets. Pedro sees Latina Ballerina Puppet on the floor. He takes a long moment, then goes to pick her up. He looks at her sweetly and in some odd way, this puppet looks deeply into his soul. Magic happens. The ballerina puppet appears to reach for him. Pedro responds by hugging her. We hear peaceful music.

PEDRO (CONT'D)

I won't leave you. I won't leave you. After some precious moments, Pedro hears the door open and Josie enters. The music stops. The ballerina puppet goes back to normal.

JOSIE

Hi.

PEDRO

Hi.

JOSIE

Something happened to you.

PEDRO

What do you mean?

JOSIE

You don't look sweaty like you did. I don't?

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Yeah. You look different.

PEDRO

I do? Like how?

JOSIE
Like... some confidence got into you.

PEDRO
Really?

JOSIE
Yeah. What happened while I was gone?

PEDRO
All sorts of stuff.

JOSIE
Really?

PEDRO
Yeah.
(silence)

JOSIE
So, what's it going to be?

PEDRO
With my puppets?

JOSIE
Yeah.

PEDRO
I'll tell you in the car.

JOSIE
(smiles)
Sure. Josie sees the Latina Ballerina puppet.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
Can I carry her to the car?

PEDRO
Yeah, I'll bring the rest. She exits.

and starts to walk out. He
stops, looks around the
theater.

PEDRO (CONT'D)
(smiles)
I'm going to be all right. I'm going to be all right.

LIGHTS OUT

End of play