

**El Jefe**

**Written by**

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. RODRIGUEZ KITCHEN -- MORNING

We are in a 1920's California bungalow style type home deep in largely Spanish speaking section of East LA. Unlike homes in this style on the West Side, this home has not been remodeled with a Viking fridge, glass tiling and mahogany floors. Otherwise it's in good shape and has a homey, comfortable feel.

Inside lives the RODRIGUEZ FAMILY. Running the house is DELMI RODRIQUEZ, late 50's, sturdy peasant stock - imagine a Jewish mom who's capable of being a professional mover. She dotes on her son, ALFONSO (aka Al), a 30-year-old gardener who now owns and runs his deceased father's landscaping business. Al has a small wisp of hair on the back of his head which runs to above his shoulder. It has grown there from birth (this remaining baby hair is a Latino tradition). Al is the apple of her eye. Much to the chagrin of MARIA, Delmi's attractive (in spite of her hospital scrubs) 26-year-old daughter. No matter how hard this fiercely competitive doctor-in-residence tries to impress her mother, it always falls short. All of this takes place under the superstitious eye of Juana, (age unknown but wrinkled skin and hunched back suggest at least 90) the mother of Delmi's late husband who will most likely never die.

Al's lying underneath the sink. Delmi hovers nearby. Maria is at the kitchen table reading. Juana sits quietly there.

DELMI

It's been leaking all morning. You're such a good son to come over.

AL

I think I found the problem.

Al stands.

AL (CONT'D)

Somebody loosened the pipe under the sink.

DELMI

That's very strange.

AL

With this wrench they left.

DELMI

(to Juana)  
What did you do?

Juana struggles to lift her coffee cup to her lips.

AL

Ma, I know you're upset I moved out,  
but you can't keep doing this.

MARIA

I saw her in the crawl space under  
the house. This "plumbing" issue  
may not be done.

DELMÍ

Okay, I am sorry. It's just hard  
being here alone.

MARIA

Ma! Abuela's here, I'm here. We're  
both in the room.

DELMÍ

(to Al, blowing past)  
But living with Lucia, is this really  
what you want? She's so pushy.

Maria shakes her head exasperated.

AL

Ma, I love Lucia. I want this, too.

DELMÍ

I just don't want you to be controlled  
by a woman.

MARIA

Yes, you should stay here, with your  
mother.

Delmi shoots Maria a look.

MARIA (CONT'D)

That you heard.

Juana approaches Al, and gives him a bottle of wine.

JUANA

(in Spanish, with  
subtitles)  
This is for your new house...  
(wine)  
Pour it on the floor of every room  
so you do not die.

AL

Thank you, Abuela.

Delmi approaches Al, hugs him, then strokes his wisp of hair:

DELMÍ

Just remember, Alfonso, no one can  
love you more than me.

After a beat, Maria pulls Delmi off Al, who smiles but looks slightly shaken.

INT. CITY BUS -- LATER

We see Delmi getting on a city bus. She walks to a seat where a young hood occupies two seats. She waits for him to move his feet. He doesn't.

DELMÍ

(stern, forceful)

Move.

The hood senses who he's dealing with and makes room.

DELMÍ (CONT'D)

The other way.

The hood moves again and gives her the window seat.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS -- LATER

As the bus travels we take in the changing landscape. Mattress Worlds become Duxiana Beds, family owned mercados become Whole Foods, signs go from Spanish to English and Payday Loans become Wells Fargos. The Communion and Quinceanera dresses that hung in shop windows are replaced by the fashionable boutiques of Brentwood. We finally see the well groomed lawns of Brentwood properties.

EXT. TURKUS HOUSE -- MORNING

Typical moderately wealthy Brentwood property. Unlike the Rodriguez residence, this place has had many renovations and much work done to it. In spite of all the care that has gone into it, it somehow seems cold and uninviting.

JOSH (O.S.)

How did we get home last night?

INT. JOSH TURKUS' ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

JOSH TURKUS, 30 years old, rubs the sleep out of his eyes and stares out his bedroom window. Josh has no job, no discernable skills, lives at home and somehow still manages to get laid. How? Because Josh is confident. He could do more, but it's never been asked of him. So right now, he is a "life artist" and his canvas is "getting by". Not the least bit self-conscious, he can stand comfortably in his boxers with his hand down his pants in front of others.

STEPHANIE  
 (still sleepy)  
 Cab.

Josh turns to see a woman, Stephanie, lying in his bed.

JOSH  
 Well, I'm sure my car is... somewhere.

Josh, then, sits down on the bed next to Stephanie.

STEPHANIE  
 You know, I normally don't just go  
 home with guys like this.

JOSH  
 Me neither. Although I came close  
 once.  
 (confessing)  
 Kristen Johnston.

Stephanie laughs. Josh disappears under the covers with her. Delmi, clearly the family's housekeeper, walks into the room with a laundry basket.

DELMI  
 (matter-of-fact)  
 El Jefe? I need the sheets.

Josh and Stephanie freeze in place.

JOSH  
 (from under the sheets)  
 Delmi, this is Stephanie. Stephanie,  
 this is Delmi, my nanny.

Delmi seems unfazed by the situation.

DELMI  
 The machine is running, El Jefe.

JOSH  
 (still under sheets)  
 We're gonna need a minute.

Delmi exits. Josh and Stephanie poke their heads out.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
 I know you probably wanna go, but...  
 I'm pretty sure your pants are in  
 the dryer.

INT. TURKUS KITCHEN -- LATER

RICHARD TURKUS, late fifties, a successful doctor stands by the blender carefully slicing bananas into even parts for his ritual morning smoothie.

The kitchen is beautiful and elegant but cold. Not unlike the woman who now enters -- HELEN TURKUS, 32, 9 months pregnant. She's a model of perfection and the second wife every fifty-something Brentwood man dreams of. Richard kisses her hello.

RICHARD  
 (to Helen's belly)  
 How's my little baby? You want a smoothie? You want an appy-n-banini smoothie?

HELEN  
 (gentle but firm)  
 Richard, we agreed. No baby talk when talking to the baby.

RICHARD  
 Right, sorry.

Josh enters and says "morning". Helen and Richard exchange a look. Something's up.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
 Sit down buddy.

Josh sits. Richard joins him at the kitchen table.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
 Joshy, you remember our talk about you moving out? By your birthday?

JOSH  
 Yeah.

RICHARD  
 Well, your birthday was yesterday.

HELEN  
 (beat, to Josh)  
 He's saying you need to go.

RICHARD  
 Helen, I got this.  
 (then, to Josh)  
 You do need to go.

INT. TURKUS HALLWAY -- SAME TIME

Delmi is folding laundry, but stops mid-fold, clearly having heard something intriguing.

JOSH (O.S.)  
 You're kicking me out today?

RICHARD (O.S.)  
 Josh, it's time.

Delmi puts down the laundry and hurries quickly to the kitchen. Her other son needs a home!

INT. TURKUS KITCHEN -- SAME TIME

Josh is making his case to Richard and Helen.

JOSH

Dad, when we said birthday, I thought we meant the whole birthday week. So in my mind, I still had like 5 or 6 more days.

RICHARD

Josh, you're 30 years old, you need to start your life.

JOSH

Start my life? Dad, who has started more lives than me?

RICHARD

Right, your "careers". Ski instructor, band manager, Vitamin D Salesman --

JOSH

The number one vitamin deficiency in this country is Vitamin D. Read the studies, it's a health care nightmare.

Delmi enters.

RICHARD

Which is why I helped you buy all this --

He opens the door to the adjoining garage to indicate stacks of boxes of Vitamin D.

JOSH

Dad, if we lived in Minnesota, those boxes would be sold and your Mercedes would be parked in there. But we live in So-Cal, so unfortunately we get our Vitamin D from the near constant sunshine.

(to room)

We all missed that. All of us.

RICHARD

I'm sorry, Josh.

HELEN

This is for your own good.

JOSH

You know, you have never liked me.  
Even when we were in high school.

Richard and Helen exit. Delmi sits down next to Josh.

JOSH (CONT'D)

I can't believe he's doing this. I mean, yes I've been a little lost, but... I'll find my way, I just need time.

(then)

8 years. Where did it go?

DELMI

Do you remember when you were young and you brought me in for show-and-tell? You said I was your mother.

JOSH

You know, for a couple months I actually thought you were. And I thought my mom was the decorator.

DELMI

El Jefe, you are like a son to me. You should come stay with me.

JOSH

Thank you. But I'll be okay.

Josh gives her a kiss on the head and begins to walk out.

JOSH (CONT'D)

(turning back)

Quite a wrinkle in the birthday week.

Delmi reacts. Things have not gone her way. Yet.

INT. THE LANDSMAN GROUP -- LATER

Josh follows a woman, Stella, through a busy office area. They reach a big corner office. Stella pokes her head in.

STELLA

Mr. Landsman, Mr. Landsman, Josh Turkus is here to see you.

NOEL (O.S.)

Leon, do you know a Josh Turkus?

LEON (O.S.)

I don't know. Wait, maybe... Stella, does he look really gay?

NOEL (O.S.)  
 Yeah, like so gay he wishes he was  
 on top of a dude right now?

Noel and Leon laugh off screen. Stella looks to Josh, "why?"

JOSH  
 (explaining)  
 I've known them for a long time.

INT. NOEL AND LEON'S CORNER OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Noel and Leon, 30, are **identical twin brothers**. Unlike Josh, they have the benefit of having a father with a successful business to insert them into. Bro-hugs are exchanged.

JOSH  
 Like the new office.

LEON  
 Dad gave us our VP stripes.

Noel and Leon jump and do a mid-air shoulder bump, NFL style.

LEON (CONT'D)  
 Hey, awesome time last night.

NOEL  
 Did you find your car?

JOSH  
 Not yet. Listen, I got some bad news. My dad put his foot down. I'm out of the house.

LEON  
 Jesus, on your birthday week?

JOSH  
 Truth is, this has been a long time coming. But I have a favor to ask. Can I stay with you guys for awhile?

NOEL/LEON  
 Ooh, sorry. / We don't have room.

JOSH  
 It's a four bedroom condo.

NOEL  
 Which is filled with a lot of stuff.

LEON  
 Look, even if we had the space, which we don't, wouldn't we just be giving you the easy way out?

NOEL  
It's called "enabling".

JOSH  
Wait, are you serious? Am I really getting a life lesson from you guys?

LEON  
Maybe you're part of the problem.  
You're thirty years old, dude.

NOEL  
Why aren't you a VP like we are?

JOSH  
(obvo)  
Because my dad doesn't own a PR firm.

LEON/NOEL  
Whoa! / Here it is.

JOSH  
How many times have I been there for you? How many lies did I back up. When the school wanted a drug test, whose urine did you use? Mine.

LEON  
(are you serious)  
And your urine failed.

JOSH  
But I gave it to you.

NOEL  
J-dog, we're sorry. We can't do it.

LEON  
But we can offer some help...

Leon then presses the intercom button on his office phone.

LEON (CONT'D)  
(into speaker)  
Stella, can you drive around We-Ho and look for a silver Audi A-4?

NOEL  
(into speaker)  
You should hit Hollywood as well.

INT. AL & LUCIA'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Al and LUCIA CONSUELOS, his girlfriend (20's) enter their apartment. Replete with fake nails, big hair and even bigger jewelry, Lucia is a Latino bombshell. She's Delmi's worst nightmare, an independent woman who speaks her own mind.

AL

First messages in the new apartment.

They kiss to commemorate the moment. Al hits the VM button.

VOICE MAIL

You have 9 new messages.

(Delmi's voice)

Alfonso, it's me, just checking in.

I love you very much.

(hits button, Delmi)

Alfonso, it is me again. I was just thinking about when I used to sing

to you as a baby. I miss you.

(hits button, Delmi)

Alfonso, where's the toolbox?

(hits button, Delmi)

I was thinking --

(hit button, Delmi)

It's me --

(hits button, Delmi

singing)

*Quanto ti quiero* --

Lucia turns off the machine.

LUCIA

Sweetie, don't take this the wrong way, your mother needs to get laid.

AL

Lucia --

LUCIA

And not by you.

AL

(winces)

Is there a right way to take that?

Lucia smiles and kisses Al.

INT. DAYS INN HOTEL/FRONT DESK -- LATER

Josh is arguing with a hotel clerk.

JOSH

(holding credit card)

What do you mean canceled?

FRONT DESK WORKER

Canceled as in they don't work and you cannot use them to get a room.

JOSH

(coy)

Put it on the Underhill's bill...

EXT. BAR -- EVENING

Josh is holding his cell phone, clearly contemplating something. Eventually he gives in and dials...

JOSH

(into phone)

Hey, Kristen, it's me Josh... I'm at this bar in Los Feliz and 3rd Rock just came on the TV. Wanted to see what you're up to... Kristen? Kristen?

Josh hangs up and sighs.

INT. RODRIGUEZ APARTMENT -- LATER

Delmi, Maria and Juana are sitting down to eat dinner. Al's chair is empty and it clearly weighs heavily on Delmi's heart.

MARIA

(excited)

So the whole team thought it was arrhythmia, but I knew it was hypotrophic cardio myopathy. Half hour later the patient goes into cardiac arrest and I'm like "yes"! maybe next time you'll listen to me.

DELMI

Alfonso would have loved that story.

MARIA

Here we go...

DELMI

Only yesterday, I remember holding him in my arms... right after I gave birth to him... in the Goldstein's minivan --

MARIA

He's been gone a month, Ma.

DELMI

The wound is still fresh.

(then)

So this patient, tell me...

MARIA

Oh, well we cut him open immediately. I actually massaged his heart.

DELMI

Uh-huh. Is he single? Does he have a good job?

MARIA

Ma.

DELMÍ

The patients, they fill out forms,  
right? You can get a lot of  
information this way.

Sfx: knock at the door

Maria reacts and gets up to answer the door. Juana, seated  
next to Delmi, pours salt on Delmi's arm.

JUANA

(in Spanish, subtitled)  
Your heart will soon be full.

Delmi looks at her mother-in-law, annoyed.

DELMÍ

You are going to clean that up.

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE/ ENTRANCE WAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Maria answers the door. Josh is there with a suitcase.

JOSH

Hi. Maria, right? I'm Josh, your  
mom works at my house? She said I  
could stay here tonight.

DELMÍ (O.S.)

El Jefe, come in!

Just then we hear the sound of powerful stocky legs that  
cannot move fast enough. Then A CRASHING SOUND. Then Delmi  
tumbles into the entry way. Maria goes to help Delmi up.

MARIA

Ma, you okay?

DELMÍ

(getting up, looking  
at Josh)

I am now.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE -- LATER

Juana, Maria and Josh sit at the dinner table. Josh is seated  
in Al's seat. Delmi is walking from the stove to the table,  
happy to serve Josh.

JOSH

Thank you so much. I didn't know  
what I was going to do.

DELMÍ

El Jefe, you are family. Of course  
you can stay.

MARIA

(concerned)

Ma, I don't love the way your leg  
looks.

DELMÍ

(waving her off)

I'm fine.

(then, to Josh)

You will stay in Alfonso's room.

MARIA

Wait, I thought we were saving Al's  
room for Al.

DELMÍ

We are. For when he and Lucia break  
up.

Delmi kisses her fingers and touches a nearby Jesus for luck.

DELMÍ (CONT'D)

But for now, this is easiest.

MARIA

(suspicious)

Okay... Because if that room's up  
for grabs, it's mine.

DELMÍ

Of course. This is just for tonight.

Juana touches Josh's hands and says something to him IN  
SPANISH. Josh looks around unsure of what she said.

MARIA

She said your hands are soft, like a  
woman's.

JOSH

(carefully enunciating)

Yours are strong. And wise.

Juana pours salt on Josh's arm.

MARIA

She's very superstitious. It's a  
good thing.

JOSH

(to Juana)

Thank you.

Sfx: the front door opens

AL (O.S.)  
Hey guys!

DELMI  
(excited)  
Alfonso!

AL (O.S.)  
Lucia and I are here.

DELMI  
(deflated)  
Ohhh, hi...

Al enters the kitchen area with Lucia.

AL/ LUCIA  
Hey Ma. / Hey everyone.

Al kisses his mother hello.

JOSH  
Al? How long has it been? Geez,  
how are you?

Josh instinctively hugs Al.

AL  
(a little wary)  
Good, I've been good.

JOSH  
I got kicked out of my house. Your  
mom's letting me stay here.

MARIA  
(this will hurt)  
In your room.

AL  
What?

JOSH  
(noticing)  
Hey, that's my old leather jacket!  
It looks good on you. How soft is  
this? It's like butter.

AL  
(confused)  
Mom, this was a Christmas present.

DELMI  
(deflecting)  
Lucia, have you met El Jefe?

AL  
(annoyed)  
You put it in a box, Ma.

JOSH  
Maybe I'm wrong, I had a lot of them.

LUCIA  
Okay, we were really just stopping  
by to say hello. We're going now.

Al takes in the situation. This is not the house he left.

AL  
Yeah, I guess we'll be going.

Lucia begins to pull Al.

JOSH  
Alright, stop by, let's catch up.

AL  
We'll see. I'm kinda busy.

JOSH  
All good. I got nothing but time.

As Lucia pulls Al out of the room, Al hears:

JOSH (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Is that flan? Oh my god, I'm in  
heaven.

Al reacts as he exits, someone has taken his place.

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE/AL'S OLD BEDROOM -- EARLY EARLY MORNING

Some would say still night. But not for Al who is up for work. And waking a confused Josh.

AL  
(shaking Josh)  
Josh. Josh. Wake up.

Josh startles awake.

JOSH  
What's happening? What's going on?

AL  
No free rides. This isn't Bel Air.  
You're coming to work for me.

JOSH  
I'm from Brentwood.

Josh turns to go back to sleep.

AL  
(smiles)  
Well, when I'm done with you you're  
going to wish you were back there.

Al rips the cover off Josh.

AL (CONT'D)  
Let's move!

JOSH  
(beat, then)  
I'm guessing you like Army movies.

EXT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE -- LATER

Still early morning. It's cold. Especially for Josh who's wearing a tee shirt and shorts. Al and Josh approach Al's pick-up truck where several workers wait for them.

JOSH  
You have a heater in there, right?

AL  
Of course.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Al smiles in his rearview at Josh who is not next to him in the warm confines of the cab.

He is seated in the bed of the truck freezing his ass off with several other guys including GUILLERMO and RAMON, both in their 50's and ARTURO, 19. Josh tries to break the ice.

JOSH  
(offering hand)  
I'm Josh.

Ramon stares at Josh's hand but does not offer his in kind.

GUILLERMO  
Ramon no like the germs. Very afraid.

Ramon sticks his hands deep inside his pockets. Josh takes a look around the bed of the truck. It's filthy.

JOSH  
He must have a hard time.

GUILLERMO  
Zoloft.

Josh nods, getting it.

EXT. GARDEN CENTER -- LATER

Al's truck pulls into the loading area of the large landscaping hub - imagine Armstrong's. Al, like other small landscaping companies, has an office back here. Al parks and everyone begins getting out.

AL  
Okay, guys, start loading up. I have some paperwork to do.

INT. GARDEN CENTER -- MOMENTS LATER

The place is the mecca of gardening. Miles and miles of plants and flowers as well as fencing, fountains, gravel, sod - anything and everything a landscaper or gardener could want or need. Josh and Guillermo walk with large bags of soil on their shoulders. Guillermo stops.

GUILLERMO  
(whisper)  
I want to show you something.

Guillermo puts down his bag, as does Josh. He approaches a collection of bamboo plants and then parts it to reveal something inside. Hidden amongst the bamboo, is a small marijuana plant with purple crystallized buds hanging from its branches.

JOSH  
Is that --

GUILLERMO

Shh. It's a new strand. I work for five years to make her.

Guillermo gently strokes the buds. It's clear to Josh, that he's watching a man who, like the great wine-makers of the world, is fueled by a deep well of passion. A small tear drops from the corner of his eye onto the leaf of the plant.

GUILLERMO (CONT'D)

She is the closest I come to God.

Beat.

JOSH

So when do we smoke it?

GUILLERMO

(softly)

Tomorrow.

INT. AL'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

The office is small but immaculate, as Al is clearly very organized. Al is at his desk. Lucia is going over some numbers with him.

LUCIA

Looking at this, it seems like you could afford to get another truck.

Josh enters.

JOSH

The truck's loaded. Hey Lucia, I didn't know you work here.

AL

She does my books. That's how we met.

LUCIA

I also have a business called "Tiny Tease" Fashion for pre-teens. It's never too early to be sexy.

JOSH

(then noticing)

You get that shirt from your mom?

AL

Yeah, why?

JOSH

No reason.

Al sighs annoyed and gets up.

AL  
Be in the truck in 5 minutes.

Josh notices something sticking out of Al's shirt.

JOSH  
You got something hanging out here.

He goes to remove it, but it's connected to Al's scalp.  
It's his wisp of hair.

AL  
(reacting)  
Ow! That's my hair.

JOSH  
Sorry. I -- sorry.

Al exits.

LUCIA  
That's his baby hair.

JOSH  
What?

LUCIA  
It's a thing some Latino moms do. A  
wisp of baby hair they never cut.

JOSH  
He's had that since he was a baby?

LUCIA  
These bitties and their boys. Don't  
get me started. It's taken me forever  
to get him to move out. I basically  
said it's your mother or this.  
(indicates her body)  
It took him a week to decide.

JOSH  
A week?

LUCIA  
(gesturing)  
I mean, take a close look at what he  
almost missed out on? This ass, is  
it not shaped like a heart? These  
breasts, do they not demand your  
eyes' attention? These curves, were  
they not molded by God's hands?

Beat.

AL (O.S.)  
Josh!

JOSH

I gotta go. Let me just say, I get your point.

LUCIA

Thank you. It feels good to be validated.

Josh heads out.

EXT. BRENTWOOD HOME -- LATER

Al's pick-up pulls up to the curb. Workers get out of the cab and the bed. Josh puts his hand on Ramon while getting out. Ramon quickly takes out some Purel and de-germs.

JOSH

Sorry, dude.

Josh takes in the neighborhood.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Jesus, I spent some time on this street.

(nostalgic)

Lot of memories.

AL

Lay this manure along the sidewalk.

Montage: Al enjoys directing Josh. Josh messes up simple tasks. Al happily points out Josh's mistakes and makes him do things again. And again. Josh struggles blowing leaves, carrying fertilizer, digging holes. Eventually, Al approaches Josh kneeling in front of a young sapling. It looks as if Al has beaten Josh, who is exhausted, ready to quit.

AL (CONT'D)

It's not so easy, is it?

Josh opens his eyes and looks up at Al. There's a look of utter transcendence on his face.

JOSH

(wonderment)

Al, for 30 years I don't think I can point to one thing I've accomplished. One thing that had any significance. But today, I planted a tree. With my own hands. I saw it through from beginning to end. And no matter what, fifty years from now this tree will still be here.

Beat. This is not the reaction Al was hoping for and his smiles quickly fades.

AL  
(still trying)  
Yeah, well, you have nine more.

JOSH  
(sincerely)  
Thank you.

Frustrated that he hasn't broken Josh, Al exits.

INT. RODRIGUEZ KITCHEN -- LATER

Delmi, Josh, Maria and Juana are seated around the kitchen table after dinner.

JOSH  
That meal was delicious.

Everyone begins clearing. Josh looks at his watch.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
Maybe a little music?

He goes to the radio which is a high on kitchen shelf. He looks at it for a beat.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
Could someone turn it on? I can't lift my arms above my head.

Maria goes to turn it on.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
Work was...physical.

MARIA  
It's not so tough on the Westside is it?

JOSH  
Sounds like someone's never been to the Barney's Co-op sale.

Maria laughs.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
Put on Metropolis on NPR.

Sfx: Latin American music.

Josh bops his head to the music.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
The DJ's name is Jason Bentley.  
He's awesome.

DELMÍ

Ooh, El Jefe. I like this.

JOSH

My dad got me a meeting with him to work on his show.

(then)

I showed up the wrong day.

Delmi starts to move a little.

MARIA

Ma, your leg looks worse than yesterday. It's black and blue.

DELMÍ

It's fine!

Delmi suddenly grabs Maria and starts to dance a little.

DELMÍ (CONT'D)

Dance lessons are a great way to meet men.

MARIA

Not straight men.

Josh watches Delmi and Maria. He can't help but be moved by their obvious affection for each other. He then offers his hand to Juana. Juana takes it, closes her eyes:

JUANA

Que dios lo bendiga.

Juana spits in his hand and then wraps it around hers. Josh looks down, decides to go with it, and soon Josh and this tiny, ancient woman are dancing too.

INT. AL & LUCIA'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Lucia is cooking as Al stands nearby with an open beer.

AL

...and then he's standing over the plant with that stupid look on his face.

(imitating Josh)

"Thank you". And Ramon's hanging on every word the guy says. Ramon doesn't even speak English.

LUCIA

(tired of this)

Uh-huh.

AL

I mean, this guy has been handed everything in his life, and what happens when his dad finally wises up and kicks him out? My mother takes him in.

LUCIA

That's what's going on here. You're jealous of him and your mother.

AL

I'm just worried about her. I know she seems tough, but she's very fragile in a way. I'm not jealous.  
(then)  
I'm definitely not jealous.

Lucia puts down her spoon.

LUCIA

You are so focused on your mother's love for this man that you miss the real threat. Me! We were alone in your office today. I felt him undressing me, caressing me with his eyes! I know when a man wants, when he desires, and this Josh, he wants me. That's what you should be threatened by!

AL

(does not like this)  
So you think my mother loves him.

Lucia walks off, frustrated.

LUCIA

(calling back)  
What if I'd been telling the truth?!

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

The music is louder. A few neighbors are over and even more people are dancing. The radio has been replaced by a few friends with guitars - an ad hoc mariachi band. For all intents and purposes, it's a party. Many people are dancing and switching partners. At one point Josh and Maria dance for a moment. As they do, both become very aware of some kind electricity that neither one seems ready to deal with. Luckily, the phone rings.

JOSH/MARIA

I'll get that. / Good idea.

Josh answers.

JOSH  
Casa de Rodriguez - que paso?

AL (O.S.)  
Josh?

JOSH  
Al! What's up?  
(to someone)  
Beer me.

A beer goes flying past Josh, who cannot raise his arm to catch it.

Sfx: bottle crash

INT. AL & LUCIA'S APARTMENT -- SAME TIME

AL  
What's going on? Is my mom there?

DELMI (O.S.)  
El Jefe, put the phone down! Dance with me!

JOSH (O.S.)  
Listen, I gotta go. Come on over.

Josh hangs up. Al holds on to the phone as we hear the dial tone. He looks annoyed. What the hell is going on there? After a beat, Lucia walks out in a sexy negligee.

LUCIA  
Does your mother wear this?

AL  
(annoyed)  
They're dancing. They're dancing.

Lucia turns on her heels and marches out of the room.

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE -- SAME TIME

Josh is dancing with Delmi.

JOSH  
Delmi, I can't thank you enough for taking me in.

The music slows down. Delmi continues to hold on to Josh and hugs him like a son.

DELMI  
You know, you are welcome to stay here as long as you like.

Josh looks around at his environment. All the life and vitality. It's not only his only option, it seems like a pretty good one.

JOSH

I think I'll take you up on that.

DELMI

Great! Al's room will be your room!

Maria who has returned, hears this.

MARIA

What? I'm supposed to get Al's room!

JOSH

I'm more than happy to take any room.

DELMI

This is easier. No furniture to move, no walls to repaint --

MARIA

Oh my god, I can't win with you!

DELMI

Maria -

MARIA

I graduated college, I went to med-school, I got published in the New England Journal Of Medicine, but I'll never get the big room!

DELMI

(confused)

Sweetie, the boys get the big room.

MARIA

See that's it! It's always about the boys! Maybe if I had a husband, maybe then I'd get the big room! I should just go out and get married right now, because that's all you seem to care about anyway!

DELMI

I am proud of you for who you are.

(then, can't help herself)

Are you seeing someone?

MARIA

Oh my god. If that's what you want, that's what you'll get.

Maria storms off.

DELMI

Girls can be so moody. You and  
Alfonso, you don't act like that.

EXT. STREET/AL'S TRUCK -- MORNING

Josh is riding in the back of Al's truck with a bunch of co-workers. The truck stops short at a RED LIGHT.

NOEL (O.S.)

Josh?

Josh looks to see Noel and Leon in a BMW convertible idling right next to them. They're clearly surprised to see him.

JOSH

Hey.

LEON

What are you doing?

JOSH

I'm going to work.

NOEL

(oddly threatened)

What do you mean you're going to  
work?

Al drives to the NEXT RED LIGHT. The BMW pulls up alongside.

LEON

(annoyed)

Is this because we wouldn't let you  
live with us?

NOEL

If you're trying to make us feel  
bad, that's totally lame.

JOSH

Make you feel bad -- what are you  
talking about?

Al drives and stops at ANOTHER LIGHT. The BMW stops again.

LEON

Look, we talked about it. It's cool.

NOEL

Yeah, we're friends, stuff's gonna  
happen. It's fine.

LEON

Call us later. We're hittin' Dom's.

The BMW speeds off as Al's truck slowly moves forward and Josh turns to a co-worker.

JOSH  
Guillermo, am I crazy, or did that  
make no sense?

Guillermo does not react.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
Guillermo? Guillermo?

GUILLERMO  
I am... so small.

ARTURO  
He harvested.

GUILLERMO  
(to Josh)  
When we get to work, will you put me  
in your pocket?

Josh nods yes, as Guillermo stares out onto the vast street.

EXT. WORK SITE -- LATER

Josh is digging with Arturo and Garcia. Another worker Mateo is with them. Guillermo re-sods the same patch over and over. Al, close to his breaking point with Josh, can't help but listen, in as Josh talks to the others.

GARCIA  
Hosh, Arturo tells me that you are a  
video game champion?

JOSH  
(to Arturo)  
Donkey Kong, Jr. Twin Galaxies leader  
board. I'm on there. See when I  
find the right thing, I can be very  
successful. I just have a hard time  
deciding.

GARCIA  
This is what your father does not  
understand.

JOSH  
Exactly.  
(then)  
A-dog. Rake me.

Arturo hands him a rake.

ARTURO  
So who were those guys in the beemer?

JOSH

These joker friends of mine. You would not believe the way these guys have it made.

Al overhears this. He can't hold his tongue anymore.

AL

(are you kidding)  
Those guys have it made?

JOSH

Yeah. Their dad gave them VP jobs at this major marketing firm. They're like set.

AL

Cause you've had it really hard.

JOSH

Harder than those guys.

AL

Really. Cause from where I'm standing, your father's given you everything.

JOSH

I just got thrown out of my house.

AL

I worked everyday of my life. Side by side with my father. Up until the day he died. From work.

ARTURO

But your dad did give you this business.

AL

What's that?

ARTURO

My dad didn't have a business to give me. I had to find a job for myself.

AL

Yeah, but --

ARTURO

Getting a business, Al, that's a huge advantage.

JOSH

This is interesting.

MATEO

(to Arturo)

But you were born here. I had to sneak into this country. I had to smuggle myself inside a cargo ship filled with cattle.

AL

Everyone's missing the point.

RAMON

(in Spanish, subtitled)

I prayed for a ship. No ship came. I had to crawl! And carry my sister! My shoes worn out from the journey.

GARCIA

You had shoes?!

JOSH

(to Al)

It sounds like it's all about perspective. Who's to say who had it easier?

AL

You know what, you're fired.

JOSH

What? Why?

AL

Because I've had enough. Because I want to, because I can. Because I'm El Jefe! I'm the boss!

Al walks off, leaving a stunned Josh. A shirtless Guillermo walks up to Josh.

GUILLERMO

We are all El Jefe.

Feeling the universe, Guillermo begins to dance.

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE -- LATER

Delmi, Juana and Lucia prepare a family dinner meal. Delmi walks up behind Lucia, who is cutting vegetables.

DELMI

That's how you cut them?

LUCIA

(annoyed, holding  
knife)

I can cut them differently.

DELMI

No, no, it's already done. We'll  
chew through them.

Delmi turns and Lucia mimes knifing her. Juana nods "yes".

Sfx: door opens

Al enters with steam. Josh trails behind.

DELMI (CONT'D)

Alfonso, Josh, come in. We have a  
wonderful meal for you. Lucia has  
made very large vegetables for us.

Lucia rolls her eyes.

AL

We need to talk. This guy needs to  
go.

JOSH

Al just fired me from Rodriguez  
landscaping. Apparently being one  
of the crews best tree planters isn't  
of value.

AL

Mom, I know you've taken care of him  
since he was a baby, and you've got  
a big heart. The guy took advantage  
of his own father for 30 years and  
I'm not about to let him do that  
here.

JOSH

You are ridiculous. Why are you so  
threatened by me?

DELMI

Let's go talk about this in El Jefe's  
room.

AL

El Jefe's room?? That's my room!

JOSH

Not anymore. Wanna see my Dave Matthews poster? I just put it up.

AL

(to Delmi)

What if something happens to me and Lucia? Where am I supposed to go?

LUCIA

What?!

AL

Baby, I'm just saying, no one knows what the future holds.

Just then Maria comes in with REUBEN, a Hassidic Jew.

MARIA

Hi everyone I'd like you to meet Reuben. I met him outside his temple.

REUBEN

(a little confused)

I was told there was some interest in Kaballah.

DELMI

Not now Maria!

AL

Ma, you're not thinking this through!

LUCIA

Why don't you just move in now?!

JOSH

(to Al, re: Delmi)

Ramon and Guillermo are right! You're a very insecure person!

AL

(to Delmi)

He can't be here!

REUBEN

You know the messiah is coming.

DELMI

(to Al and Josh)

There's room for everyone!

MARIA

Reuben and I will be in my room!

LUCIA

Ahhhh!

Lucia suddenly pulls a pair of scissors from the butcher block and **CUTS OFF AL'S BABY HAIR**. Everyone is STUNNED.

AL

What did you do?!

DELMI

Dios mio!

Juana grabs what looks like an "aspersorium and aspergillum" - the bowl and scepter used to sprinkle holy water in church and proceeds to spray it at Lucia and chants a prayer.

DELMI (CONT'D)

My baby's hair! My baby's hair!

Juana chants more, trying to rid Lucia of the devil. Josh picks up his phone to read an incoming text.

LUCIA

You don't deserve these breasts!

The chaos of screams are interrupted by Josh holding his cell phone.

JOSH

Can I have a ride to the hospital?

Everyone stops.

JOSH (CONT'D)

I've got a baby brother.

Beat. No one knows what to make of this news. Except Reuben. Who leaps to his feet:

REUBEN

Mazel tov!

INT. HOSPITAL/MATERNITY WARD -- LATER

Al, Delmi and Maria look through the glass at the infant Turkus. Delmi is beaming.

DELMI

Look how cute. He is perfect.

MARIA

Yeah, Ma, your leg is not good. I think it's time for an x-ray.

DELMI

Enough of that already.

(MORE)

DELMI (CONT'D)

It's about the baby now. El Rey  
Poquito - the Little King.

AL

Really Ma? We're gonna do this again?

Josh sidles up, carrying a stuffed bear-in-a-wheelchair,  
clearly bought at the hospital gift shop.

JOSH

They didn't have a huge selection.  
This was the only "stuffed" anything.  
It was this or some elbow wrap.

DELMI

El Rey will love it.

(noticing)

His arms are moving. He is swaddled  
too loosely. This will not do.

Delmi knocks on the window and demands to go in. The nurses  
say no. Delmi eyes them with intense rage. Maria puts her  
hands on Delmi's shoulder.

MARIA

Come on, Ma. I can get you in.

DELMI

You can?

MARIA

Yeah. I'm a doctor. But right after,  
we're having your leg x-rayed.

Delmi stares at Maria, she means business.

DELMI

Okay. But you'll see it's nothing.

Maria takes Delmi into the nursery. Once inside, we hear  
her barking out orders. El Rey will be re-swaddled. Richard  
walks up, beaming like the proud father he is.

JOSH

Heyyy!

They hug. In the background and throughout the scene, we  
see Delmi bossing around nurses.

RICHARD

Good to see you Al.

AL

Congratulations.

RICHARD

Thank you, thank you.

JOSH

I'm so excited dad. And I know I'm not living at home, but I'm going to be here for you and Helen and -- hey what's his name anyway?

RICHARD

(stalling)

What's his name? Of course, you don't know his name. I think you're really going to like this.

JOSH

Okay...

RICHARD

His name is... Josh.

JOSH

(stunned)

What?

RICHARD

Seems like an honor, no?

JOSH

(wtf)

Well, no. I'm Josh.

RICHARD

(deep breath)

Look buddy, here's the deal. I'd been hoping to talk Helen off of this, but long story short, she has had a thing for this name that we are going to have to roll with.

AL

(looking for an escape)

I should probably find my mom.

JOSH

It's hard not to feel replaced. I've been thrown out of the house, someone else has taken my name. I'm assuming living in my room.

RICHARD

Josh is not replacing you, Josh. Your room is going to be a yoga studio. It's very important that Helen get her body back. You know how important her body is to her.

JOSH

Yes, I remember from high school...

AL

You knew your step-mom in high school?

JOSH

Everybody knew her. Because everybody had sex with her.

RICHARD

Whoa, whoa! We're not going to do that now, are we?

JOSH

I'm sorry, Dad, it's just this is a lot to take.

RICHARD

I know, I know. And I am going to make it up to you. What if, next summer, you and I visited every ballpark in America?

JOSH

Dad, what are you talking about?

RICHARD

I don't know. Look, I'm caught. I just want things to be okay between us. Tell me, they're okay.  
(sincere)  
Please.

Josh looks at his dad. Who's taking care of whom now?

JOSH

(sighs)  
Everything's okay, Dad.

Richard breathes a sigh of relief.

RICHARD

I'm going to go see if Delmi will let me hold the baby.

Richard exits. Al looks at Josh, who is devastated.

INT. RODRIGUEZ HOUSE -- LATER

Everyone except Delmi is there. They all want to make Josh feel better, but they don't quite know how.

AL

For what it's worth, he's kind of an ugly baby.

JOSH

I just don't understand. There are so many names.

MARIA

You're the first one, though.

LUCIA

Yeah, it's like in movies, the sequel is never better.

JUANA

(in Spanish, subtitled)

All my sisters were named Juana. It was easier for my mother. She suffered from dementia.

Delmi walks in from the other room with a cast on her leg.

AL

Mom, where's your cane?

DELMI

I don't need one.

MARIA

I can't believe you've been walking around for days with a broken leg. You danced, you were lifting things...

DELMI

I still think it's nothing.

(then, to Josh)

I want you to know, you're the only Josh in our family.

Josh smiles.

AL

Listen man, I owe you an apology. I always thought you had it all, but I didn't know the whole story. I mean your family is whacked.

JOSH

Aren't they?

AL

And the truth is maybe I've been a little more blessed than I realized.

He takes Lucia's hand.

AL (CONT'D)

(to Lucia)

Especially now.

She smiles and gives Al a kiss. Delmi sighs in acceptance.

AL (CONT'D)

(to Josh)

I got no problem with you being here right now. And you have a job with me, if you want it.

JOSH

Thanks, man.

DELMI

(to Josh)

You can have Maria's room.

(to Maria)

Once we move your stuff to the big room.

MARIA

Thanks Ma.

JUANA

(in spanish, subtitled)

I will go break an egg on the floor.

DELMI

(to Maria)

Maybe I don't tell you enough, but I'm proud of you.

Maria smiles.

DELMI (CONT'D)

And if you want to be alone for the rest of your life, that's fine with me.

As everyone begins walking to the kitchen:

DELMI (CONT'D)

(upbeat)

Lucia come here!

Lucia does.

DELMI (CONT'D)

Don't be fooled by the good cheer. I'm watching you.

LUCIA

(mouthing)

Bring. It. On.

As Al approaches, both women put on "smiles".

AL  
 (seeing them together)  
 Now this makes me happy.

Al walks off with Lucia. Josh approaches Delmi.

JOSH  
 I don't know what I'd do without  
 you.

DELMI  
 Welcome home.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RODRIGUEZ KITCHEN/DINING AREA -- LATER

We hear music as we see the family at dinner. It's the first real family meal Josh has ever had and he's savoring every moment of it. We see Al and Lucia be affectionate with each other. We see Maria talking and Delmi hanging on her every word. And we see Josh communicating with Juana. But their conversation is cut short when she appears to choke on something. Juana coughs.

AL  
 Abuela, are you okay?

MARIA  
 She's choking.

Josh quickly pats her soundly on the back, and out pops a largely cut vegetable.

DELMI  
 It was one of Lucia's vegetables.  
 Thank God El Jefe is here.

Lucia and Al can't help but wince slightly at this, but the music continues, as does the good cheer...

Fade out.

END OF SHOW