

ANGELINA'S SECRETO

Written by

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FADE IN:

LIFE WITH MOTHER

BOGOTA COLUMBIA 1964

5 Year old ANGELINA PERALTA sits on her MOTHER'S lap having her hair brushed and braided. She is slender but tall, graceful but strong. Her complexion is fair and smooth. Her lips turn up slightly in the corners as if she is always smiling.

Her mother is plump but graceful. Her Smile is warm. Her demeanor is calm, patient and loving. She is American and English speaking.

INT. PERALTA HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Angelina places both of her tiny hands on her mother's cheeks.

ANGELINA

Momma, what does my name mean?

MOTHER

Mija your name is very special. It means angel.

ANGELINA

Are angels with us forever?

MOTHER

My mother used to say that they are here for a special purpose, and then, just like that, (beat) they disappear.

INT. KITCHEN - 7 YRS LATER - MORNING

Angelina is sitting at the old slightly tilted kitchen table. Her chair is just high enough to allow her feet clearance for swinging them. She swings them slowly in unison.

ANGELINA

Do you think angels eat cherry freezies?

MOTHER

I bet they do. How bout we get
some at the market? We need
tomatoes and milk , too. Let's go!

In a burst of excitement, Angelina jumps to her feet. They exit.

EXT. ROAD TO TOWN PLAZA - DAY

Angelina and her mother walk down the road swinging their arms and laughing.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLAZA MERCADO - DAY

Angelina and her mother are sitting on a bench eating a cherry freeze pop. Angelina's pop has melted all over her hand and down her arm, striping in in sticky red juice.

ANGELINA

Momma, my hands are a mess, look!

She raises her arm proudly showing off the juice streaks. The street becomes silent then screams fill the air. Her Mother grabs her red sticky hand and jumps up, tomatoes and milk in the other arm.

MOTHER

Mija, there is trouble, let's go!

As they rise and look towards the crowd fleeing, shots ring out. The intense glare of the sun shields Angelina's eyes from seeing the bottle of milk explode as a bullet tears through it and her mother's chest. Her mother falls, pulling her down. Their red sticky hands pull apart as they land face down in the dirt. Through a mist of dust, Angelina sees a ribbon of blood wind it's way through a small stream of milk that flows to the street. She reaches across the flowing blood and milk , creating a dam against her arm, and grabs her mother's hand. She is in shock and disoriented. As she tries to focus her vision, everything around her becomes dim and blurred.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I love you, Mija.

Her mother struggles as if to try to get up, but cannot. She looks upward to the sky.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Heaven protect her.

Angelina lapses into unconsciousness as her mother dies.

Police corner the GUNMEN, who open fire with shotguns. The hailstorm of police bullets, drops one of the criminals instantly. The man lies facing away from the camera. The glare of the sun illuminates a halo of dust around his body.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - MORNING

Two NURSES and a DOCTOR stand with an OFFICIAL from Child Services.

Angelina is sleeping in the hospital bed next to them.

The doctor is a robust man in his mid 40's. He is wearing a white medical coat and holding a clip board. The Child Services official is standing with him.

DR. LUCERO
Her X-rays look good. A few minor lacerations. She'll be fine. The trauma of her mother's death will require some therapy. I'll have our staff psychologist, Dr. Amorosa, visit her tomorrow. She has extensive experience in grieving and loss counseling...as for who will pick her up. Have you found any of her relatives?

OFFICIAL
We found only a grandmother. She lives here in Bogota. Her name is Elena De La Puente. We will be visiting her tomorrow. Apparently, she didn't have much contact with the child or her mother.

DR. LUCERO
We will keep her here this week under observation. It'll Give her time with Dr Amorosa and you can make her living arrangements. We'll be in touch.

Angelina rolls over looking out the window. Dr. Lucero notices her stirring and walks to her bed.

DR. LUCERO (CONT'D)

Angelina? I am Dr. Lucero. How do you feel?

ANGELINA

I know my momma is far away. I want to go home now. Please, take me to my home.

DR. LUCERO

We want to watch over you, only for a couple of days. You have some scratches we want to take care of. We can't let you go home alone, but we are talking with your grandmother. You may live with her. Would You like that? We will arrange for someone to take you to your home to get your belongings.

Angelina does not respond.

DR. LUCERO (CONT'D)

(Sighs) I know this is very difficult for you. We are here to help you. There is a very special doctor, her name is Laura Amorosa, she might come see you today. I even hear that she brings puppets to her patients. She's magic.

ANGELINA

If she is magic, she can bring my momma too.

A woman enters the room wearing regular clothing. She is carrying a small bag and a stuffed angel doll.

DR. LUCERO

We were just talking about you. I'm so glad you could come early.

DR. AMOROSA

Yes, well I thought it best not to wait until tomorrow.

DR. LUCERO

Angelina, this is Dr. Amorosa. She does special work with children whose parents are in heaven.

(MORE)

DR. LUCERO (CONT'D)
I'm going to visit some other
patients and leave you two to talk.
Your lunch will be here soon. It's
very good today, so I hope you'll
eat something.

Angelina nods.

Dr. Lucero exits. Angelina stares curiously at the stuffed
angel that Dr. Amorosa is holding. The doctor sets her bag
down, and pulls a chair next to the bed. She sits and holds
up the angel.

DR. AMOROSA
I thought you might like this. Your
name means Angel, and this angel
can be anyone you want it to be.
You can name it whatever you
choose.

ANGELINA
Momma. My momma is an angel now.

DR. AMOROSA
Do you know, angels can be
anywhere, but they prefer to stay
warm and cozy right in your heart.
This is how your momma will always
be with you, and this angel, can
remind you of that. Do you
understand? Let's close our eyes.
I want you to see your big heart ,
and then put your momma there, safe
and warm, where she will always be.

Angelina sits up and hugs the doctor. They are quiet.
Angelina cries on the doctors shoulder. The Doctor places
her hand on her head and comforts her.

A CAFETERIA WORKER brings in a tray of food and sets it on
the bedside table.

DR. AMOROSA (CONT'D)
Mmmmmmmmm, smells good. I see
bananas, cereal, milk orange juice.
You must be hungry.

She gets up and pulls the table over to Angelina. Without
hesitation, Angelina begins to eat.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE -DAY

The Child Services Official is standing on the front porch knocking on a dilapidated screen door. A CHIHUAHUA is barking nervously and jumping, tearing it's claws through the screen.

An old WOMAN wearing red lipstick comes to the door. Except for the lipstick, she appears unkempt.

GRANDMOTHER
Yes, can I help you?

OFFICIAL
Senora, De La Puente? (She nods) I
am Roberto Chavez. I am with Child
Services, we spoke yesterday on the
phone. May I come in?

GRANDMOTHER
Si, come In, (to the dog) Lupe
silencio.

As he enters he looks around, noticing cobwebs in the corners of the ceiling and dog food on the floor.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
Please, sit down

The man is reluctant to sit on the stained, torn sofa , but sits anyway. He sees ash trays full of cigarettes rimmed with thick red lipstick. The house smells of stale smoke. The walls are dingy from years of cigarette smoke floating in the air.

OFFICIAL
Angelina is recovering nicely. She
is in the care of the best doctors.
We expect her discharge in the next
couple of days. As we discussed,
her mother left a small inheritance
to be dispersed as a stipend in the
event of her death. It isn't much,
but it will cover basic expenses
monthly for the child. Five
thousand pesos a month, will be
paid to you on the first day of
each month.

She does not appear excited about the amount.

If you need anything, you know how to reach us. May I see the room she will sleep in?

GRANDMOTHER
Of course, this way.

She takes him down a hallway and opens the door to a dark, windowless room.

OFFICIAL
No windows?

GRANDMOTHER
This is the warmest room in the house. She can get plenty of sun outside. We have candles for light in the evening. It is lovely here in the evening.

She smiles a forced smile, revealing lipstick on her coffee and nicotine stained teeth.

OFFICIAL
I see. Very well.

The chihuahua follows behind his heels.

GRANDMOTHER
Would you like a biscochito? I make the best.

He takes one, noticing that they smell like cigarette smoke.

They walk to the front door. He stops.

OFFICIAL
Please have the house cleaned up, hmmm?

GRANDMOTHER
Si, very clean. Senor, do you see that picture over there? Did you know that I was once a very famous model?

He looks at a picture of her from the 1920's. She was a picturesque beauty with long, wavy, ebony hair.

OFFICIAL
Ah bonita. Senora, here is my card. We will call you the morning of our arrival. Gracias. Adios.

He exits.

The old woman stands at the screen door holding the dog, as she watches him get into the car.

INT. CAR - DUSK

The official sits in his car looking at the house, jotting down some notes in a file. He starts the engine and drives off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Angelina is sitting up in bed holding a stethoscope over her heart. Dr. Amorosa is sitting with her.

ANGELINA

I can hear my momma in there. She
is singing! Listen!

She hands the doctor the stethoscope.

DR. AMOROSA

I hear her. She has a beautiful
voice!

The doctor notices the time on her watch.

DR. AMOROSA (CONT'D)

My dear, it is time for me to go.
I will be back tomorrow. You get a
good night's sleep.

They hug and the Dr. tucks Angelina in.

A nurse comes in to check Angelina's vital signs.

NURSE

Now that, is a good strong heart
beat!

Angelina and the doctor smile at each other.

DR. AMOROSA

Good night.

Doctor Amorosa exits, and the nurse turns a night light on and the main light off.

Angelina falls asleep tightly holding the angel.

The nurse exits leaving the door open.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Dr. Lucero stands at the door with a nurse and Dr. Amorosa.

DR. LUCERO

I think she's ready to go. I'll have her discharge papers ready for her grandmother to sign. (To Dr. Amorosa) Please submit your report to the head nurse. She'll put it in the file. Thank you.

DR. AMOROSA

Yes. (She shakes his hand) I'd like a few minutes with her before I go.

She sits on the bed, and holds Angelina's hand.

DR. AMOROSA (CONT'D)

Soon you'll be in your new home, with your grandmother. You know, rumor has it, grandmothers make the best cookies.

ANGELINA

One time she made us biscochitos and they tasted like cigarillos.

Angelina grimaces.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

I only met her one time. Her dog es una diablita. Like a raton.

The Dr. laughs and hugs her.

DR. AMOROSA

Remember your angel, your momma is here in your heart. OK? Goodbye Angelina.

Dr. Lucero hands the discharge papers to the nurse.

ANGELINA

Are we going to my house first to get my things?

OFFICIAL

Yes, right now. Are you ready?

She nods and takes his hand.

EXT. PERALTA HOME - DAY

A white car pulls up in front of the Peralta home. Without the sound of her mother's laughter and the scents of her cooking to greet visitors, the home seems abandoned.

The child services worker gets out of the car and opens Angelina's door. He takes her hand and helps her out to the curb. Angelina looks reluctantly at the front door knowing that her mother is no longer alive to open it and greet her.

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

Are you ready to go inside? We can take as much time as you need to get your things.

Angelina nods. She walks to the front door and with the official behind her, opens it.

The sound of a ticking clock echoes throughout the house.

On the mantle, Angelina sees a framed photograph of her mother holding her as a baby, which she quickly gets down. She looks at it adoringly, hugs it and proceeds.

INT. PERALTA LIVING ROOM - DAY

Where might I find a box or something to put your things in? You can bring as much as we can carry and put in the car.

ANGELINA

What will happen to our house?

OFFICIAL

The house will remain in trust for you until you are sixteen years old, or you are married. The house will then be yours.

INT. PERALTA LIVING ROOM - DAY

Angelina walks around collecting belongings and sets them on the sofa. She finds a large trunk and gives it to the man for packing her things.

INT. MOTHERS BEDROOM - DAY

Angelina looks at the pretty things on the dresser. She takes the photographs and her mothers jewelry box. She opens the jewelry box. Inside there is a round gold locket. It holds a picture of Angelina as a baby. She puts it on.

She sets the jewelry box down and looks in the small closet. Her mother's wedding dress is there. The scalloped lace dress is petite and very simple. She sets the dress on the stack she has started on the bed. She adds one of her mothers blankets too the stack. She takes the stack into the living room to the official.

INT. PERALTA LIVING ROOM - DAY

The official is surprised at the size of the stack. Angelina has collected enough to fill the trunk of the car.

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

Are you ready? Let's pack the car
and go meet your grandmother.

Angelina looks sadly at him and agrees.

ANGELINA

Wait. I forgot my room.

The official looks at her in surprise as the trunk will already be full.

She goes into her room and returns with only a blanket and a small music box.

They exit.

OFFICIAL

Angelina? It's time.

Angelina picks up her bag and her angel. She takes the official's hand and walk out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

As they walk through the hospital hallway, Angelina sees a little girl walking hand in hand with her mother and becomes clearly saddened.

The little girl giggles as her mother swings her arm back and forth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAR - DAY

The glare of the sun streams through the passenger window and intensifies glimmer of a tear as it begins to flow out of the corner of Angelina's eye. The car slows to a halt in front of a somewhat depressing looking, gray shack-like house. There are no neighbors for miles.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Several crows pick at a dead rodent laying next to the splintering porch.

The Child Services official gets out, reaches into the back seat to retrieve Angelina's suitcase. He walks around and opens her door, and helps her out. She is tightly holding the stuffed angel doll that Dr. Amorosa gave her.

The chihuahua jumps through a hole in the screen and runs to greet them growling in an attempt to sound bigger than she is. Curiously she stops barking and walks along side of the official and Angelina.

The grandmother meets them at the top of the steps looking well groomed and "grandmotherly". She is not wearing her usual siren red lipstick.

GRANDMOTHER

Angie, mija, look at how you've grown! Come give Aguelita a big hug!

Angelina hugs her reluctantly.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Come into your new home. You're so big, you can help Grandma. we'll help each other. Maybe you can help bathe Lupe (the dog).

Angelina walks holding the official's hand.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
This way, and I made your favorite
biscochitos!

Her sticky sweetness strikes Angelina as overkill but she is polite.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
Take as many as you like.

Angelina shyly reaches for one.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
Would you like to see your room?
I'll show you.

ANGELINA
Si, aguelita

They walk down the hall arriving at the dark windowless room. The colors are dark and lifeless. The room is not suited to the needs of a child.

ANGELINA
It's nice, but,....no windows?

GRANDMOTHER
This is the safest and warmest
room in the house

Angelina sets her angel doll on the bed. The small amount of light coming in the door seems to ensconce the angel. She sits on the bed, Lupe jumps up and lays down beside her familiarly.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
Do you remember Lupe? She seems to
remember you.

OFFICIAL
Senora, I will bring her belongings
in. May I put them in her room?

GRANDMOTHER
Yes.

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - DAY

The official makes several trips carrying Angelina's belongings. He sets them on the bed which brightens up the lifeless room a bit.

OFFICIAL

Well, It looks like it's time for me to go and let you get re-acquainted. You Have my card if you need anything. Goodbye, both of you.

He shakes Elena's hand and hugs Angelina.

The man exits.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The man is sitting in his car feeling uneasy. He sighs. He starts engine and drives off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Angelina stands looking out the window as the man disappears down the road. Angelina turns and walks into the kitchen, Lupe following behind her.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Angelina sees her grandmother smoking a long cigarette and looking through a small stack of bills.

ANGELINA

Aguelita ,..where did pappi go?

GRANDMOTHER

One day he disappeared.

ANGELINA

Like angels disappear? Momma said, that.

GRANDMOTHER

No, mija, He ran off with a very young woman. A girl like your momma didn't understand that about him. He was no angel. There are no angels.

(MORE)

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
 Don't believe that silly stuff. If
 angels were real, they wouldn't
 disappear. If pappi was an angel,
 he would have stayed and helped me
 with the house, instead of running
 around with girls.

She coughs a raspy cough. Smoke is filling the kitchen.

ANGELINA
 My name means angel and I am real.
 I can help you in the house.

GRANDMOTHER
 Yes, yes,, and, you can someday
 when you are grown up, you'll see
 that there are no angels. But it's
 good to dream.

A breeze gently swings the door open , clearing some of the
 smoke.

ANGELINA
 I can help you make dinner, Momma
 taught me how.

GRANDMOTHER
 She extinguishes her cigarette in a bowl.
 What can you make? Can you make
 lots Of money appear on the table?

She nods no.

ANGELINA
 Does Lupe eat rice and plantain?

GRANDMOTHER
 Oh, Lupe eats everything. She is
 small but eats like a horse. She
 loves plantain. OK, let's get
 started.

They prepare supper together. Lupe, the dog, sits next to
 Angelina , who is feeding her plantain (bananas).

There is a knock at the door.

GRANDMOTHER
 Why would someone be knocking at
 the door now ?
 (MORE)

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
I better go see who it is. Go put
away things in your room, and I
will get the door.

She walks into the living room. Angelina goes into her room to unpack.

INT. LIVING ROOM

She opens the door to find the County Assessor standing there with a property tax bill in his hand. He is a short husky man with overgrown eyebrows and a moustache. His teeth are stained and uneven. His complexion is ruddy from years of alcohol consumption, and slightly shiny. He is dressed in a grey suit.

ASSESSOR
Senora De LaPuente, my name is Senor
Domingo. I am the new County
Assessor. May I come in?

The man is a husky and unshaven. There is a sinister air about him.

She is hesitant, but opens the door and lets him in.

ASSESSOR (CONT'D)
As you know, this bill is very much
past due. These taxes have not
been paid in over a year. I'd be
willing to arrange some sort of
payment plan for you.

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - DAY

Angelina puts her mother's blanket on her bed and sets the pictures and jewelry box on her dresser. She hears her grandmother calling her.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)
Angelina, Mija, come here, please!

She puts her mother's wedding dress into a dresser drawer and goes into the living room.

Angelina enters with Lupe following. Lupe growls at the man.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

This is my grand daughter Angelina.
She lives here with me now.

She looks wryly at Angelina.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Angie, take Lupe in the kitchen and
get out the pollo. I will be done
here in a minute.

The man eyeballs Angelina. She averts her eyes away from him.

ASSESSOR

She is pretty, like her mother.
Tragic how she died. So pretty. It
looks like you're busy. I will
leave this with you. I'm sure we
can work something out.

He hands her the tax bill. He is heavily perspiring. Gets a handkerchief from his pocket to wipe his brow.

GRANDMOTHER

Can you give me a couple of days?
This is a lot of money.

ASSESSOR

Today is Wednesday. I'll be back
Friday. Senora, I would hate to
see you lose the property,
especially now that you have your
precious grand daughter here. See
you Friday.

He exits. Lupe is barking nervously.

Elena slams the door behind the man and walks back into the kitchen.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The assessor gets into his black Thunderbird and drives away.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

She enters to find the table set and food on the plates.

GRANDMOTHER
How did you do this?

ANGELINA
Momma said that when you cook it
all together, it's better and
faster.

GRANDMOTHER
(Sighs and shakes her head) No, No,
no. This can't be cooked all the
way.

She takes a bite, spits it into the sink.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
The rice is hard and the chicken is
raw. Do you like raw chicken? I
don't. It could kill us. Well not
me because I'm bigger than you are.

She is putting the food back into the pan to cook.

ANGELINA
Who was that man who was here? He
looked at me funny. Is he your
friend?

GRANDMOTHER
No,.he is nobody's friend. He
takes everybody's money. That's
why he is rich.

She stirs the food and serves it onto plates.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
There, now the chicken is cooked
all the way. Let's eat.

They sit and the rustic pine table and eat. Angelina seems
comforted by the meal.

The dog jumps onto Elena's lap and up onto the table , begins
eating off of Elena's plate. She seems unaffected. Angelina
laughs.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
After dinner, you can get a nice
warm bath, and go to bed. I put
extra blankets on the bed. Lupe
will sleep in there with you.
There is a candle on the table if
you need some light.

ANGELINA

I like Lupe. I used to think she
was scary. But she's not scary

Lupe is seated on the table quietly.

Angelina finishes eating. She puts her plate in the sink and
rinses it.

GRANDMOTHER

Would you help grandma wash the
dishes? It is so nice that you are
her. We can help each other.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Outside the wind picks up speed knocking trees around,
swirling dust and blows the porch door open.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Angelina and her grandmother notice the wind hasten.

GRANDMOTHER

The wind is strong. Angie, please
go and close the door.

Angelina rises, Lupe follows.

She exits the kitchen and walks to the front door.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Angelina steps outside, looks around. The wind whips her hair
around. She notices that a plant had fallen over.

As she bends to pick it up, she sees a black car behind the
trees in the distance. It is too dark to see who the driver
is.

Lupe barks.

Angelina closes the door, and runs to kitchen.

Grandmother is beginning to wash the dishes.

ANGELINA

Lita, a car, there is a car behind
the trees! Come see!

She sets the dishes down in the water, wipes her hands on her dress and follows Angelina outside.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

GRANDMOTHER
I don't see anything.

Angelina points to the area behind two Sapodilla trees. The trees are not very full, so it is easy to see the car.

ANGELINA
See? There!

The car speeds away.

Grandmother now sees the car.

GRANDMOTHER
Young punks! They are always on other peoples property causing trouble.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Inside the black Thunderbird we see the County Assessor. He is driving, while drinking from a bottle of whisky.

He turns the radio knob, increases the volume.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Angelina and her grandmother go back inside the house.

ANGELINA
Who was that, in the car?

GRANDMOTHER
It was probably just a traveller looking around. Let's go clean the dishes and go to sleep, huh?

ANGELINA
(She nods) "Si Aguelita

Grandmother washes the dishes while Angelina dries them.

GRANDMOTHER
All done, (yawning), it's time to sleep. Tomorrow is going to be a long day. Go get your pajamas on.

Angelina approaches the grandmother to hug her. Grandmother avoids the hug, turns and picks up Lupe. They walk to Angelina's room.

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Angelina opens her bag, pulls out pajamas.

Her grandmother lights the candle that is on the dresser. She walks over and picks up the stuffed angel from the bed.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)
Dios mio, I need an angel too. She
is pretty, where did you get her?

ANGELINA
Dr. Amorosa gave her to me at the
hospital. She said it will remind
me that Momma is always in my
heart, safe and warm.

Angelina gets her pajamas on and climbs into bed, pulling up the old dingy wool blankets.

Grandmother hands her the angel.

GRANDMOTHER
Sleep well. Tomorrow is Friday.

Angelina falls asleep holding the angel. Lupe jumps onto the foot of the bed and lays down.

Grandmother exits leaving the door opened only slightly.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NEXT DAY - ANGELINA'S BEDROOM

Angelina yawns and rolls over. She sits up and hears talking in the kitchen. She stays in bed.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The grandmother is seated at the table wearing a black tunic dress. Her lips are heavily coated in siren red lipstick that is feathering down past her lip line in the wrinkles around her lips. She is smoking a long cigarette in a gold filter.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING (CONT'D)

Seated across from Angelina's grandmother is the assessor. He sits in his slightly wrinkled suit, scratching his shiny balding head. They are looking over the past due tax bill.

ASSESSOR

I do understand how difficult this is Ms. De La Puente. There is a way to satisfy this debt.
(Whispering) It can be our secret.
You keep your house. You pay me no money. I am a reasonable man."

He grins , revealing a gold tooth. The kitchen is filling with smoke. He runs his hand through his thinning, greasy hair.

ASSESSOR (CONT'D)

All I require , is time alone with Angelina. I won't hurt her. No one will know. You keep your house. Easy, really. She is beautiful, just like her mother. Dios mio.

The grandmother fidgets nervously with she papers she is holding.

Lupe enters, growls passing the man's feet, sits near the grandmother. She puffs heavily on her cigarette, which is now down to the butt. Her nicotine stained hands tremble slightly as she agrees to the offer.

GRANDMOTHER

When?

She extinguishes her cigarette.

ASSESSOR

Now. That will give you plenty of time to go to the market. Don't worry, I'll take care of her. Ill help her wake up and get dressed.

GRANDMOTHER

When should I come back?

ASSESSOR

Four hours should give us plenty of time to get acquainted.

The grandmother picks up her bag, nods at him. She walks to the front door glancing down the hall at Angelina's room. She exits through the front door.

INT. ANGELINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Angelina stirs but is still sleeping. Beneath the door a shadow enters, lengthening as the door opens. The assessor enters quietly. He removes his jacket and belt.

Angelina startles as his belt buckle hits the cold ceramic tile floor. She rolls over as he sits next to her on the bed. She tries to sit up and yell out for her grandmother, but is silenced by his fat, dirty, hand, covering her mouth.

She writhes as she tries to fight him off, but gives in to exhaust, crying.

ASSESSOR (CONT'D)

If you don't fight me, you'll like me. But it excites me that you are a wild beautiful woman, just like your mother. I had fun with her too. Tragic that she married your father instead of me.....so sorry it had to END the way it did. Ah, but I have something sweeter now. I have you.

Still with his hand over her mouth, he pulls her nightgown up. His heavy, sweaty body collapses on top of her. He Rolls off of her and is motionless beside her. She stops moving. She stops crying. The angel falls off of her bed and onto the floor.

For some unknown reason, he did not penetrate her, but the experience is traumatic, nonetheless.

Thinking that he has fallen asleep, she attempts to climb over him. As she tries to stand, he pulls her down and sits up. He grabs her pulls her against him.

ASSESSOR (CONT'D)

(Whispering)Do you hear the wind?
It is very cold. I'm sure you want to be warm, not sleeping on the streets. You'll keep our secret, won't you?

Angelina is silent. She remembers the silence as she lay numb on the ground beside her dying mother.

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The assessor in putting his jacket on. Grandmother returns. Sets her bags down.

GRANDMOTHER

So we are even. You got what you wanted. Now go. Leave my property.

ASSESSOR

Go? Certainly. But we are not even. That was only the beginning of many installments. I will be back tomorrow at the same time. Make a long shopping list.

The front door swings open. Lupe barks.

ASSESSOR (CONT'D)

Ah, my cue to exit? Thank you for your hospitality.

He exits. Grandmother walks down the hall to Angelina's room.

Angelina is sitting in the corner between the bed and the wall, holding the angel and rocking back and forth. She is silent and expressionless.

GRANDMOTHER

You haven't been hiding in here all day, have you? Angelina? Are you OK? Are you sick? Let me fix you something to eat. You'll feel better.

Angelina does not respond. Her grandmother exits as she stares at the wall.

She returns and sets the tray in front of Angelina up on the bed.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Here. Eat.

Angelina slides the tray off of the bed. Lupe eats the food.

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Angelina! If you must act like this, maybe you should not eat until tomorrow. You have no idea what I am sacrificing for you! I hope you come to your senses.

(MORE)

GRANDMOTHER (CONT'D)

Don't waste my time with these
attention getting games. Just like
your mother was!

She closes the door. Angelina climbs up into bed and gets under the blankets crying.

The angel is at the foot of her bed. The wind outside causes the front gate to swing back and forth hitting her bedroom wall.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Grandmother is sitting at the kitchen table. She pours herself a glass of sangria, puts her feet up and lights a cigarette.

She admires an old black and white photograph of herself as she sips her wine.

She takes her wine and cigarette into the living room. She turns on the radio and sits on the sofa. She takes a long drag off of the cigarette, extinguishes it and lays back on the sofa holding her wine. She guzzles it and falls asleep with a dribble running down the side of her mouth onto her dress.

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - MORNING

Angelina wakes but does not get out of bed. Lupe is trying to get her attention but she is non-responsive.

Her grandmother pushes the door open.

GRANDMOTHER

Are you better today? Do you want
to talk about something? I can't
allow this brooding. If I didn't
need the money so much, I'd have to
think about putting you in one of
those special places. I don't
understand you. I am bringing you
some food and I expect you to eat.
I won't have you be skinny, so
people will think I don't take
care of you.

As the grandmother exits the room, there is a knock at the front door. She straightens her hair, checks herself in the mirror and opens the door.

She opens the door. There is a tall ruggedly handsome man in his early forties. His dark eyes are deeply set atop high sculpted cheekbones. He is wearing a pinstripe suit. He takes his hat off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

EDUARDO

Senora, hola. My name is Eduardo Castillo. I am from the County Assessors office. I am here to discuss you past due taxes.

GRANDMOTHER

Pardone. It Is being taken care of. Senor Domingo has made arrangements with me to pay it off. I expect him here today.

EDUARDO

Yes, but he has become very ill and won't be here anymore. I am prepared to make you an offer that you can't refuse. Please , may I?

He enters. Lupe approaches him but does not bark. They sit on the sofa.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

I am a very wealthy man. I Would like to buy all of the time in a day, with Angelina. No one else with her. Only me. I will pay you fifty million Pesos. You will never be without money again. No more taxes.

She is stunned and accepts without hesitation.

GRANDMOTHER

She is beautiful, my Angelina, no? She will be very nice to you.

EDUARDO

If you agree, sign this contract, and your problems are all over.

GRANDMOTHER

That is a deal I can't refuse. Yes, of course. It will be our secret. Gracias.

She grabs the paper anxiously out of his hand and signs it. Eduardo signs it too.

EDUARDO

You are welcome. If you have something to do, I would like to see the girl. Here is your money , all in advance, Fifty million.

The grandmother trembles as she takes the money.

GRANDMOTHER

I will be back later , in two hours.

EDUARDO

Make it, two weeks from now. I think I've paid for it. You can afford the finest hotel, Senora. Pack a few things, and go. I will take care of Angelina.

GRANDMOTHER

I'll hurry, and get a bag.

As she packs, Eduardo goes to Angelina's room.

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - DAY

Below the door, she sees the shadow of his shoes. Frightened, she hides under her bed. The door opens. She watches his shiny black shoes cross past her bed and stop in front of the chair. He sits.

She waits quietly and curiously. She expects him to approach her and grab her. He just sits.

She peeks out from under her bed. She sees a face that wears a sordid past but that has been softened by pain and time. His eyes are dark and soothing. She is puzzled by the lack of threat. He smiles at her.

EDUARDO

Hello. My name is Eduardo Castillo. I am a friend of your mother's. Don't worry. I will never hurt you.

(MORE)

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

I'm not coming under there, so it would be nice if you could come out here. My feet are too big. They won't fit under there.

Angelina smiles. He bends his head sideways and smiles at her.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Hi. I see an angel.
It is no ordinary angel. This angel has seen a lot of bad things and bad people. He's also seen a lot of very special people, like you.

ANGELINA

(From under the bed, she peeks out)
My angel isn't a boy, it's a girl.
I don't think boys can be angels.

EDUARDO

Why can't boys be angels?

She is laying on the floor with her face in her hands.

ANGELINA

Boys and men are mean.

EDUARDO

Do you think I am mean? I'm a man

ANGELINA

But you're not an angel. Angels have great big wings!

EDUARDO

Hmmmm, good point. But I'm nice.

ANGELINA

Lupe didn't bark at you. Where's my grandma?

EDUARDO

Oh, she'll be back in a while and she asked me to stay with you. Would that be alright, with you?

She crawls out, sees his warm smile and clear green eyes, that appear dark in dim light. She is comfortable instantly. She sits on the bed. He hands her the angel.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

You must be hungry. I am too. Why don't we fix something to eat? Or better, you get dressed and clean up, I'll make dinner. I'm an old pro, trust me, I've cooked for many children.

ANGELINA

You have many children?

EDUARDO

I have friends with children and children in my family.

ANGELINA

You said that you are a friend of my momma's. My momma is far away with angels. How can you be her friend?

EDUARDO

Well, good friends are friends forever. Even when they are gone, they stay in your heart.

ANGELINA

That's what Dr. Amorosa said. She gave me the angel.

EDUARDO

Yes, I know.

ANGELINA

How do you know?

EDUARDO

You told me. Dr. Amorosa sounds a bit like an angel.

ANGELINA

No, she's just a nice doctor. O.k., I am hungry, so I will go clean up. The refri is in the kitchen. Do you have a refri? Where is your house?

EDUARDO

Let's eat and then I will answer all of your questions. Deal?

She extends her hand. They shake.

ANGELINA

Deal

Angelina gets up. She gets a dress out of the dresser drawer and goes into the bathroom, taking the angel toy with her.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Eduardo has the table set and is putting food on the plates.

He drops some food on the floor for Lupe.

Angelina enters carrying the angel. Her black hair is pulled back

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

How did you do that so fast? If the chicken is raw, it could kill you.

EDUARDO

Oh, it's done. Do you like savoyas? (Onions)

She grimaces.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Didn't think so, so I gave them to Lupe. Please sit, and join me for lunch.

They both sit at the table.

ANGELINA

You said you were going to answer all of my questions. Where is your house?

EDUARDO

My house is in a beautiful place on a hill. I will be here for a while with you, though. I will help you with any thing you need. Your grandmother asked me to do it, and since I am an old friend of your mother's, I said of course. I noticed, that your room has no light from a window. That is no good. When we are done eating, we will fix that.

ANGELINA

Are you going to cut a hole in the wall and make a window?

EDUARDO

Oh, no, I have a much better idea. Tomorrow, we can go to the Mercado and you can pick out all your favorite foods. Even cherry freezies. I think you need warm blankets that are pretty, not those dingy old saddle blankets.

ANGELINA

How did you know that I like those?! Freezies?

EDUARDO

Everyone likes those.

ANGELINA

When will my grandmother come back?

EDUARDO

Well I thought she needed a vacation, so I gave her one. I sent her to a nice place where old ladies go to get pretty and nicer. She will be gone for a couple weeks

ANGELINA

It's not going to work. She is very mean. I don't want her to come back. Maybe she could have your house and you can live here.

EDUARDO

I thought you said boys and men are mean She is neither a boy or a man."

(Her eyes begin to tear up)

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Is my cooking that bad?

ANGELINA

That bad man tried to hurt me. He said I (pause) I would sleep on the streets if I told anyone.

He walks over to her and kneels next to her. He holds her hand .

EDUARDO

He can never hurt you. He will
never be back. I promise you that.
Your grandmother will never be mean
to you again. You are safe now.

She throws her arms around him and cries. He wraps his arms
around her. They sit in silence and comfort as the sound
howling wind bows to sunlight flooding the house.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Let's finishing eating, huh? Then,
we have some redecorating to do in
your room.

She smiles curiously through tear stained cheeks. She
finishes eating and rinses her plate off.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Why don't you go grab your bag and
bring it here. Put all of your
things in it. I'll be just a few
minutes. You sit tight

She is puzzled but agrees. She exits kitchen.

INT, BEDROOM - DAY

Angelina is putting her clothes into an old duffle bag.

She hears clanging around down the hall in the grandmother's
bedroom.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

She quietly walks down the hallway with her bag. She stops
as a gold cigarette filter lands on the tile and rolls
midway down the hall. She hears Eduardo inside the
grandmother's bedroom.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Just a minute! Almost ready! O.K.,
come in!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Her jaw drops in amazement. The room is colorful, bright and
sunny. The bedding has been changed to indicate no
reminiscence of the grandmother's occupancy.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Here, put your things on your bed.
Look at all this sunlight coming in
YOUR window. Welcome to your new
room. Your mother's blanket is
beautiful on this bed.

ANGELINA

Aguelita is going to be very upset.

EDUARDO

(Interrupting) No, She prefers the
warmest room in the house. With no
window, she will be warmer. Older
people have thin skin, they get
cold easy.

She smiles. Reluctantly sets her bag on the bed.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

I have very thin skin too, so I
will sleep in your old room. Since
I am a man, I prefer the dark
colors, too. What other things
would you like in here? A cow? A
swimming pool, perhaps? A circus!?

His attempt to stimulate her imagination and laughter is
successful.

As she is laughing, he looks out the window. He sees a black
car in the distance behind the sapodilla tree. It is the
assessor.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

You know, I forgot something very
special. I need you to close your
eyes and keep counting until I come
back.

She sits on the bed with Lupe and tightly closes her eyes,
counting in Spanish. Eduardo exits.

EXT. AFTERNOON - BEHIND TREE

Senor Domingo, the assessor is sitting in his car drinking a
flask of whisky. He finishes it and tosses it out the
window.

He looks to his left, to see Eduardo leaning into the
drivers side window.

INT . BLACK T-BIRD - AFTERNOON

Eduardo holds up the flask of alcohol. The assessor startles and scoots over.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
HMMMM. Does this belong to you?
It must. It isn't mine. What are
you doing here? Oh let me guess,
you lost this and you came to find
it.

The assessor is silent, not knowing what Eduardo will do next.

ASSESSOR
I am here about a business matter.

EDUARDO
I see. And you make it your
business to spy on women and little
girls from behind trees?

He reaches in with his arm across the assessors neck, holding him against the back seat.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Do you make it our business to hurt
little girls, huh!?

The assessor is trembling and perspiring.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Well we have one thing in common.
We are here on a business matter.
My business is protecting Angelina.
Do you understand me?

He nods yes as he gasps.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
I thought so.

He drops the empty flask onto the seat, and then, reaches into his pocket, pulls out a wad of money, sets in on the assessor's lap.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
There is your complete payment of
the taxes. You have no more
business here. I too am a
reasonable man. I could hurt you,
but I'm a better man than that.
(MORE)

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

So, I'm going to let you think
about how, lucky you are, and leave
now. If I see you here again, I
might not be so (beat) reasonable.

The assessor starts the engine and as Eduardo steps back, the wheels spin on the loose dirt and he drives away. Eduardo watches him disappear over the horizon.

INT. ANGELINA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

She is still sitting on the bed counting. Not being educated and having lost track, she is back at 101.

ANGELINA

cien uno, dos.

Eduardo appears in the doorway.

EDUARDO

I thought I lost something outside.
I found it.

He holds up a book.

ANGELINA

You lost a book ? Outside?

EDUARDO

It was actually in my bag. It's a
book that I'd like for us to read
together.

ANGELINA

I can't read. I don't know how.

EDUARDO

That's no problem. I'll teach you.

ANGELINA

Sometimes I just read the
pictures.

EDUARDO

There are no pictures in this book,
but you can make pictures with
words. First you must learn all of
the sounds the letters make. You
put them together and make words.

Angelina looks curiously at the pages.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
I will read it to you first, and
then, we will read it together, and
one day, you can read it to me.
Fair?

He gestures for her to sit next to him on the bed. He puts the bok in her lap.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Let's start here, on the first
page.

She leans against him as he begins to read.

As he reads, she drifts to sleep. She drops her head into his lap.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
And, his mission was to protect
her. He vowed never to hurt anyone
again. It was all part of the
deal.

He closes the book. Puts his hand on her head and smiles , contentedly. He picks her up, lays her on the bed and covers her. Lupe jumps on the bed beside her.

Eduardo gets up, puts the book on the night stand and exits, leaving the door open.

INT. EDUARDO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eduardo gets into bed. As he lays there he re-experiences violent visual images of his past as killer. He sees how he was when he WAS ALIVE. He sees his struggle with the assessor. He knows he cannot kill the assessor. He is prohibited from causing harm to anyone as restitution for his previous life of crime.

He falls asleep having contrasting visions including his vow to change. He sees Angelina falling and her mother being killed by HIS BULLET.

The wind whirls through the house as the front door opens.

Eduardo wakes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

He goes to the front door

EXT. FRONT DOOR/PORCH - NIGHT

As he opens the door he sees the assessor pull away in his Thunderbird. He breathes the night air in deeply in an effort to control his thoughts. He walks back inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

He lays on the sofa, covers up and falls asleep.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING - ONE WEEK LATER

Angelina sits next to Lupe. Eduardo enters carrying a book.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Good morning. Today, I thought we would practice some sounds and some words.

Together they begin sounding out letters and then words. Angelina has caught on very quickly and can read slowly.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

You are really very good at this. You can read. Would you read this part to me?

He points to the page. She slowly reads it.

ANGELINA

They sailed across the sea from America. Like my Momma and Pappi came here before I was born. My father was killed. She did not tell me why he died.

Eduardo hands a picture to Angelina.

EDUARDO

This is a picture of your mother and father together when you were in your mother's stomach. They looked very happy. They knew you were coming. And now, they are very proud of you.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Do you know what tomorrow is?

She nods no.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
It is your birthday! What would
like to do? We can go anywhere you
like.

ANGELINA
Anywhere?

He nods.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)
I wish to go to the sea. I want to
swim! Like a fish! My mother took
me to the sea once. She carried me
into the water on her shoulders. I
wish she could go with us.

EDUARDO
She is in your heart, so she is
going with us. We can take lunch
and stay there until the sun sets.
If that sounds good, we'll make it
a plan.

There is a knock at the door.

They both go to the door. They open it to see a short , thin
man holding a telegram. Angelina grabs it.

ANGELINA
I want to read it.

She is silent as she reads it.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)
Grandmother is very sick. She asks
for us to go to her. She said she
will not be coming back. She is in
the infirmiria, with fever.

He takes the telegram, reads it.

EDUARDO
Let's go today. Tomorrow is your
birthday and we are going to the
sea. Get your shoes and jacket,
and we'll go.

ANGELINA
She is dying?

EDUARDO
Yes, she is. But I will be here
for as long as you need me to be.
You will not be alone.

He hands the courier some money.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Gracias, Senor.

COURIER
De nada.

The man turns and exits, getting into an old military jeep.
Eduardo and Angelina exit the house.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

They get into the old car that is slow to start.

INT. CAR - DAY

Angelina sits leaning against Eduardo.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The hospital is a small single story building. Outside an
ambulance rushes up. Angelina watch as a person is rushed in
on a stretcher.

They enter the front desk area.

INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION DESK - DAY

There is an old nurse sitting there powdering her nose.

EDUARDO
Buenos dias. We are here to visit,
Senora De LaPuente. Can you direct
us to her room?

NURSE
I need your name for the guest
log.

EDUARDO
Eduardo Castillo.

NURSE

She is down the hall and to the
left, in room twelve.

EDUARDO

Gracias.

They walk down the hall to the room and enter.

The grandmother is awake and laying on her back. She is
pale and grey on color. Her cheekbones are concaved and she
is coughing.

They approach her slowly. Angelina sits on chair as Eduardo
goes close to her.

The old woman gestures for him to come closer. He bends
towards her. She whispers into his ear.

GRANDMOTHER

I am so sorry. Por todos.
Forgive me. I am broken. The
contract, destroy it. I never meant
her harm.

He whispers so that Angelina cannot hear what he is saying.

EDUARDO

There never was a real contract. I
didn't touch her. I am here only
to protect her. I vowed to her
mother that I would.

GRANDMOTHER

You will stay with her?

EDUARDO

Until she is old enough to move on.
When she is a woman, I will go.

The woman motions for Angelina to approach but she refuses.

GRANDMOTHER

Am I dying?

EDUARDO

Yes.

He takes her hand. She smiles peacefully at him and closes
her eyes.

Eduardo lets go of her hand. A nurse comes in, checking her
pulse. She looks at him. Nods.

He takes Angelina's hand and they leave the room.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Eduardo and Angelina sit on the edge of the fountain.

He leans over the water.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Do you see that? That is the face
of an angel. Her name is Angelina.

From behind her, he projects his hands outward from her body, spreading his fingers like wings. The image in the water is distorted, appearing like wings.

She laughs.

For a moment, she sees her mother's reflection.

She puts her hand in the water. The image reaches towards her. They touch hands. The image vanishes.

ANGELINA
Can we go to the sea now?

EDUARDO
It is getting cold. Let's go
tomorrow. You are shivering.

He puts his arms around her.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Let's get you home and warm. Lupe
will be happy to see you. I can
make sopa and tortillas. Sound
good?

She agrees. They walk to the car.

ANGELINA
I saw my mother in the fountain.

EDUARDO
You will always be able to see her.

ANGELINA
She disappeared. She said Angels
do that. She told me that I will
be a woman when I am thirteen.
That is tomorrow. I am a grown up
tomorrow.

EDUARDO
Yes. Yes you are.

ANGELINA
I could drive a car!

EDUARDO
I could teach you. Not now, but
very soon. Lets go home, eat and
get warm.

It begins to thunder and rain. They run laughing to the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

Eduardo tries to start the engine. It will not start. He looks up to the sky. He sees a bolt of lightning. He tries again. It starts.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
We got lucky. I thought we would
be stuck. You are magic. Did you
do that?

She laughs.

ANGELINA
If I was magic, momma would be
here, and we would have a big
house. I would have six horses, a
dog and an elephant.

The rain gets harder. The windshield wiper has a loose blade of black rubber that flips back and forth like a metronome.

Angelina is sticking her tongue out the window catching raindrops.

As they approach the house, Eduardo senses that something is wrong. They see the front door open.

INT. HOUSE - DUSK

When they enter, the house is in disarray. There is an empty whisky flask on the floor.

Eduardo is tense but hides it from Angelina. He knows it was the assessor's whisky bottle.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)
What happened?

Eduardo checks the rooms.

EDUARDO
It was probably some wild teens
looking for a hideout. No damage
done.

He closes the door.

Angelina comes out of the bedroom shocked, crying.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Are you hungry? What's wrong?

Angelina pulls him to look in the bedroom. He follows her to the bedroom.

ANGELINA
(Sobbing) They killed Lupe.

INT. BEDROOM - DUSK

Lupe the dog is dead. She is drops beside Lupe. He kneels down. He places his hand on lupe.

EDUARDO
The intruders didn't hurt her. She
was old. It was time.

He picks up and cradles the dog. Takes her outside by the tree.

EXT. HOUSE BY TREE - DUSK

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
We will give her a funeral and send
her to heaven.

ANGELINA
My momma didn't have a funeral.
Did she go? To...Heaven?

EDUARDO
Yes she did. Let's go pick some
flowers. Hmmmmmm?

On the side of the house near a small stream, they find Columbian Orchids and pick a few for the grave.

Eduardo digs a grave . They bury the dog, and they place flowers atop the mound of dirt.

Angelina begins running towards the house.

ANGELINA
Wait, I forgot something! I'll be
right back!

Eduardo sits in the setting sun looking to the sky.

INT. ANGELINA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

As she enters the house, she hears a shuffling sound. She stops for a moment and proceeds. She picks the angel up off of her bed and runs outside.

EXT. HOUSE BY TREE - NIGHT

Angelina hurries to Eduardo.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)
I want to put this on her grave
until tomorrow

EDUARDO
She likes that. I'm sure she
knows.

He puts his arm around her and they go inside.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT.

Eduardo lights candles in each room.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

They sit at the table. Eduardo gets up to heat water for tea.

ANGELINA
My birthday tomorrow. It won't be
the same without Lupe.

EDUARDO
But she would want you to have fun.
Imagine her here.

EDUARDO
I hope you like my soup. Here is
some nice warm tea.

ANGELINA

Gracias. When we go to the sea,
can we find shells? My mother used
to have many. She had a necklace
with a curly shell that she wore
for special occasions.

EDUARDO

Maybe we will find one. We can
have it made into a beautiful
necklace for you for your birthday.
It will be a gift from me to you.

ANGELINA

I would love it! Is your mother
alive?

EDUARDO

She died when I was very young.
No one told me why. One day, I
saw her, the next day she was gone.

ANGELINA

Don't you miss her?

EDUARDO

Very much. She was kind and
beautiful, like your mother.

ANGELINA

I am very sleepy. I will go to
sleep a child, and wake, a lady!

EDUARDO

Yes, you will.

ANGELINA

I will get my bath and go to sleep!

She kisses him on the cheek and runs down the hall to the
bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Angelina is in a bubble bath. The old claw foot tub is
filled to the top. She sings an old Spanish song. There is
a large closet door out of her view as she faces away
singing.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eduardo is peeling potatoes into a large pot.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Through a crack in the closet door we see Angelina in the tub. Bubbles hide her body.

She submerges herself under the bubbles. The closet door opens. When she emerges, the assessor is at the side of the tub with a gun pointed at her. He whispers for her to climb out. The water is slowly running but he does not notice it.

ASSESSOR

A nice surprise. But, you knew I
would be back for you. Oh so
beautiful.

He watches her get out of the tub as he keeps the revolver aim at her. She is crying. He backs up motioning for her to follow him.

ASSESSOR (CONT'D)

Scream, and I will kill you.

He does not see water running towards the door. He begins pulling his pants open.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eduardo senses something wrong and stops peeling potatoes. He walks and looks down the hall carrying the knife. The hall is dark. He walks further to investigate and steps in water seeping out from under the door. He quietly opens the bathroom door.

Eduardo sneaks up on the assessor, and plunges the blade of the knife into his back.

The assessor drops the gun and falls to the ground.

Eduardo grabs a towel and wraps it around Angelina.

She is crying and wraps her arms around him.

EDUARDO

It's OK. You're OK.

He sheds a tear as she clings to him. He carries her room and sets her on her bed.

INT. ANGELINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Angelina is sitting on the bed wrapped in a towel and shivering.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Let's get you some warm clothes.
He is dead. He can't hurt you now.

He opens the dresser drawer , pulls out some clothes and hands them to her. He looks away while she gets dressed.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Let's get you out of here. I want
you to wait in the living room for
me. I will get your things.

They exit and go into the living room. He sets Angelina on the sofa.

He hurries down the hall to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eduardo puts the body of the assessor into the bathtub. He puts the gun in his hand. He exits the bathroom and closes the door.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Let's go. I want to put you in the
car.

Angelina takes his hand. They go outside. He helps Angelina into the car.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

He runs inside. He returns with a small trunk, Angelina and her bag. Angelina is on the front seat of the car.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
There is something I must do. I
will be back quickly.

Angelina nods and lays down on the seat.

Eduardo closes the door and goes back into the house.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

He sprinkles a can of gasoline in the bathroom and throughout the house. He goes to the porch.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

He sprinkles gasoline around the porch. He lights a match and drops it. He runs to the car.

He remembers Angelina's angel on Lupes grave beside the tree. He grabs it, runs to car. He starts it and pulls away.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Eduardo watches in the rearview mirror as the house becomes engulfed in flames.

He puts the stuffed angel on her lap.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

He is dead. He cannot hurt you
ever again. We are leaving now. We
are leaving. We'll go to a warm
safe place.

She stares out the window. They drive in silence for a while.

ANGELINA

Why are there bad people?

EDUARDO

There are just some bad people in
the world and we will never
understand why. I am sure that in
the end, they pay for their crimes,
one way or another.

In the distance they see a sign that reads, Residencia De Factoria.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

I wonder if we could stay there?

They drive closer and park.

EXT. RESIDENCIA - NIGHT

The building has a SECURITY GUARD outside. The structure appears to have many units or apartments.

Eduardo steps out to talk to the guard.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Hola, Senor. My daughter and I have driven very far. Are there a couple of beds we can sleep in? I will gladly pay for them.

SECURITY GUARD

La senora de la casa is en suenos (sleeping). But I will check with her. Wait a moment. I'll be back.

He walks around the corner.

EXT. QUARTERS OF SENORA RUIZ - NIGHT

The security guard knocks on the door. A tall thin, medium complected WOMAN opens the door. She is in her mid-thirties.

SENORA RUIZ

Hola. Can I help you?

She pulls her long black hair away from her face revealing beauty similar to Angelina's mother.

SECURITY GUARD

There is a man and his daughter who need a place to sleep. They are at the front door.

SENORA RUIZ

I'll come talk to them.

She ties her robe closed, puts on slippers and closes the door.

They walk to the front gate.

Eduardo is standing there while Angelina waits in the car.

SENORA RUIZ (CONT'D)

Hi. I understand you need a room. This is not a hotel, but I can let you stay. This is a work residence for young women. They work in the factory and live here. One of the women just moved away. You could have her room. Where is your daughter?

EDUARDO

Uh, she is in, uh, the car.

Eduardo is distracted by her beauty. He leads her to the car. She peaks her head in the window.

SENORA RUIZ

Hello.

Angelina steps out.

SENORA RUIZ (CONT'D)

If you are hungry, I can fix you something to eat.

Angelina nods.

ANGELINA

Si, Senora, Gracias.

SENORA RUIZ

Alright, let me show you to your room and then we'll go into the kitchen.

Angelina and Eduardo follow her to a resident quarters. Senora Ruiz opens the door. It sticks a bit due to age and warping.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

They step inside the room. Angelina sets her bag and the angel down.

Inside they see two small iron bunks. They are neatly made. There is small bathroom and a mirror across the room. A cockroach scurries across the floor, fleeing from the light.

Angelina shivers in response to the cold room. Eduardo removes his jacket and wraps it around her. Senora Ruiz locks eyes with him for a moment. He is noticeably uncomfortable with the eye contact.

They exit.

EXT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Senora Ruiz locks the door. She hands Eduardo the key.

SENORA RUIZ

You'll need that.

EDUARDO

How much is the rent for maybe two weeks?

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

There, full plates for my new hungry friends. Would like some soda or juice? I have orange juice. It is fresh.

Angelina nods in favor of juice. Eduardo nods no.

EDUARDO

May I please just have some water?

She pours him a glass of water from a pitcher and sets it on the table near him.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Thank you, Senora.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

So you have come from far?

EDUARDO

No, not very far.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Oh, you are on an adventure! Traveling can be very fun.

ANGELINA

Who sits on this bench? Many people?

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Actually, many girls about your age. They work here in the factory, make money, and live here. Many of the girls lost their parents at an early age. Some just want to be independent.

ANGELINA

Many girls?

She looks at Eduardo. He smiles.

They eat and stop talking for a few moments.

EDUARDO

So the girls work here, live here and make money? Maybe Angelina could help and make money too.

He looks at her enthusiastically.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
Angelina is a young woman today.
She is 13 years old. Very strong.

SENORA RUIZ
Yes, with the other girl gone, we
need one more to help. Would you
like that, Angelina?

ANGELINA
Si.

Eduardo motions to speak to Tia in the other room.

EDUARDO
Angelina, would excuse us for a
moment, I'll be right back.

She is eating, but nods.

Tia looks puzzled but follows Eduardo.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

TIA
Is there a problem?

EDUARDO
No, but I need to tell you a few
things.

In Spanish, he explains what happened with Angelina's mother
grandmother and the assessor. Tia shakes her head in
disbelief but understands.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
So, you see, it is time very soon
for her to live her own life. In a
couple of weeks, I will leave and
perhaps she will be a good worker
for you, living here. She misses
her mother. Being around you and
the other girls is what she needs.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
Well, let's see how it works. If
she likes it, she would certainly
fit in. Seems like you came to the
right place.

She looks puzzled by something.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA (CONT'D)
We should get back in the kitchen.

They walk back into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eduardo sits at the end of the table across from Angelina.

Angelina is sitting next to a handsome medium complected boy. He sixteen years old. They are feeding the dog and laughing.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA (CONT'D)
Santo, what are you doing awake?

SANTO
I heard talking and woke up.

Santo smiles at Angelina.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
This is my son, Santo. He helps here too. He takes care of the horses.

ANGELINA
You have horses here?

SANTO
Yes. We have six. I can show you tomorrow. They pull the plows for the crop.

Angelina smiles. Eduardo looks disapprovingly at Santo. He feels somewhat jealous .

ANGELINA
I always wanted to ride a horse! I dream of riding a horse at the sea.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
We are not far from the sea. Maybe you can one day. Santo can show you how to ride.

He nods and smiles as if smitten, at Angelina.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA (CONT'D)
We should go to bed. Tomorrow is very busy. We start at seven o'clock.

(MORE)

SENORA RUIZ / TIA (CONT'D)
Breakfast is on the table exactly
at seven thirty. If you need
anything, I am in the room next to
the fountain. Good night to you
both. Santo? To bed.

Angelina and Santo look at each other.

SANTO
Si, Momma.

TIA
Santo, when you go to the market in
the morning, please get some rice.

SANTO
Si. Good night.

Santo exits.

Senora Ruiz finishes drying the dishes . She, Angelina and
Eduardo exit.

EXT. COURT YARD - NIGHT

The light of the moon is very bright, illuminating the
walkway and the foliage.

ANGELINA
It is very pretty here.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
You'll see everything tomorrow
Mija.

Angelina likes the sound of the name Mija, as her mother
referred to her that way often.

As they walk through the courtyard, Angelina and Eduardo
veer left, Tia and Santo veer right.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA (CONT'D)
Sleep well. Good night.

Eduardo is jiggling the key to open the door. He and
Angelina enter the dark room but leave the door open using
moonlight to find a candle.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Eduardo sits on his bunk and takes his shoes off.

ANGELINA

Those are big feet. Why do men
have big feet but not women?

EDUARDO

Because women would look funny with
big feet. Put my shoes on and see
for yourself.

She puts his shoes on and tries to dance in them. She laughs.

ANGELINA

Senor, will you teach me to dance?

EDUARDO

Yes, but not in those shoes, and
not tonight. Time for bed.

ANGELINA

Oh, alright. I like it here much
more than aguelita's. I have a new
friend too.

EDUARDO

Ah, yes, the boy. I think that
tomorrow you will meet many
friends. (clears his throat), girls
your age.

ANGELINA

Santo said there are horses here
and he will teach me to ride them!
I can't wait! He is handsome. He
is nice too.

EDUARDO

Oh, yo u have plenty of time for
boys. You can never kiss them."

ANGELINA

Never? Why?

EDUARDO

They turn into frogs.

ANGELINA

I thought, if you kiss a frog, he
turns into a prince.

EDUARDO

That is not true. It is the other
way around.

She giggles.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

Go get your pajamas on and brush
your teeth. Then after you, I will
do mine.

ANGELINA

O.K.

She takes her bag into the tiny bathroom and closes the door.
Eduardo hears her gargling. She gargles unusually long.
Eduardo locks the door.

He lays on his bunk thinking about the assessor's face as he
died. He picks up Angelina's angel from her bed and looks at
it.

He hears Angelina run the shower. When she is finished, he
gets up and knocks on the door.

EDUARDO

You need a towel. Here. I am not
looking.

She reaches through the cracked door, takes the towel.

ANGELINA

Gracias.

Eduardo looks at her face and feels an unexpected attraction
to her. He Tries to avoid it and looks away.

She closes the door. When she opens the door she is wearing
flannel pajamas. She walks over to him, kisses him on the
cheek.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

Good night, papa. You are like a
father to me.

He brushes his hand across her cheek and hugs her.

She climbs into her bed and he covers her up.

EDUARDO

Good night.

He goes in the bathroom to brush his teeth but leaves the
door open. He blows out the candles and climbs into his
bunk. He lays in the dark looking at Angelina. They fall
asleep.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - EARLY MORNING

Eduardo and Angelina wake to a banging on the door.

Eduardo gets up and with his hair sticking up, he opens the door. Tia laughs so hard at seeing his hair, she can't speak. He looks at her like she is crazy. Angelina wakes, walks over to the door. She looks up at his hair and begins laughing hysterically.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
Pardone, Senor, tu pello! It is
time for breakfast.

He realizes that his hair is sticking up. He combs his hair down with his hands.

TIA
I have to go tell the guard it's
time to eat. See you inside.

EDUARDO
We will be there in a minute.
Thank you.

Tia exits.

They hurry to get dressed. They open the door.

Eduardo sees a police car at the front gate .

EDUARDO (CONT'D)
You stay here a minute. I will be
back. Don't go without me.

Angelina nods. He exits.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - MORNING

Eduardo sneaks along the side of the house. He hides behind a large bush to eavesdrop.

EXT. FRONT GATE - MORNING

The POLICE OFFICER is questioning local residents about any suspicious characters in the area that might lead them to the person responsible for the fire and homicide at the De La Puente home.

GUARD

No. I have seen nothing. It is very quiet here. A criminal would be noticed here.

Tia comes through the gate. She knows the story of the fire. She knows that the fire was an act of heroism. Eduardo explained everything to her. She does not discuss Eduardo and Angelina with the officer.

OFFICER

Hola Senora Ruiz. We are looking for any strange traveler you might have seen in the last couple of weeks. Someone started a fire in the old De La Puente home. The body of the county assessor was found in the ash. We are looking for a man named Eduardo Castillo. Workers at the hospital where the old lady died, recalled this man visiting her.

TIA

I have never heard that name. No. Did anyone else live in the house? Was it robbery? How did the fire start?

OFFICER

There was just old woman there. For a while, she had a guest. A grand daughter. She died prior to the fire in the hospital. Lung problems. We think vagrants stayed in the house after she died. We cannot find any family members to notify. We think the man left with the girl. The fire was started with gasoline.

TIA

Oh that is tragic. No. There have been no strangers in this area. I will contact you if we hear of anything.

OFFICER

Muchas gracias. Buenos dias.

TIA

Buenos dias.

They lock eyes awkwardly. The officer senses something wrong. He opens his mouth as if to speak, but holds back. He nods at Tia.

The officer gets in his car and drives off. Tia walks inside.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

As the officer is driving, he sees Santo on the side of the road. He pulls over and stops to question him.

Santo is nodding. The officer hands Santo a small stack of money. They shake hands.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - MORNING

Eduardo sneaks back into the room before Angelina goes to breakfast.

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - MORNING

Eduardo opens the door as Angelina is coming out of the bathroom.

EDUARDO

Are you hungry? I could eat five plates. Full of food.

ANGELINA

Me too! Let's go.

Eduardo sighs. They exit the room.

EXT. COURTYARD - MORNING

There is a crowd of girls passing them as they exit their room. Angelina is thrilled at the chance to be around other kids. The girls are talking loudly. Angelina and Eduardo follow behind them in the door and through the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The crowd of girls get seated at the long table. Angelina sits at the end. Eduardo sits at a small round table with the security guard.

Senora Ruiz stands at the end of the long table to talk to the girls.

Her long black hair is pinned up in a loose bun. She is wearing denim coveralls too begin the work day.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
Girls, good morning. I want to introduce you to our guest. Her name is Angelina. She might stay and become part of our family.

ANGELINA
Hi everyone.

She waves and sits back down shyly. She looks around at the girls. She seems at home.

Eduardo notices her awareness. He looks over at her and nods, endorsing her new home.

Breakfast is being served. Large platters are being passed around the table. Each girl chooses what she wants and puts some on her plate. Angelina loads her plate.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
Today is very busy. The tomatoes are ripe. I need every spare hand available for picking. Baskets are stacked outside the shed.

She walks over to Angelina and bends down to talk quietly with her.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
Would you like to work with me today? I can show you how to do everything.

ANGELINA
Yes. Will I see the horses today? Senora? Does your son Santo live here?

SENORA RUIZ / TIA
Ah, I Think you like him. All the girls like Santo. He lives here for a couple of weeks and then he lives with his father for a couple weeks. We alternate. He has two homes. He was visiting yesterday but he will be back next week.

ANGELINA

To sleep and live here? Where does he sleep?

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Hmm, you're asking a lot of questions. Could you have a crush on Santo?

ANGELINA

Oh, no, Senora!

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

He sleeps in the extra bunk in my room. You are thirteen? Santo is almost seventeen. He is a bit too old for you, Angelina.

Angelina plays down her interest in Santo.

ANGELINA

Yes! Much too old. Es un viejo. (Old Man)

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

No, no viejo. Mija, you will be a woman soon. And you will meet a very good and special man. Santo is a good boy, but his time is all with horses. He doesn't notice any of the girls here.

ANGELINA

Hmmmm, I see. May I see the horses tomorrow?

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Of course. I will show you around everything.

Eduardo rises and walks over to Angelina and Senora Ruiz.

SENORA RUIZ

Hola Eduardo. I was just telling Angelina that that tomorrow she will see everything, even horses.

EDUARDO

That is fantastic! (To Angelina)
While you eat, I must talk to La
Senora."

Angelina smiles, but quickly engages in conversation with the
girl seated to her right.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

She has found her place. Senora,
may we talk outside?

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Yes, let's go in the court yard.

They exit.

EXT. COURT YARD - DAY

They walk in silence. The dog follows them.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA (CONT'D)

Is something wrong?

EDUARDO

No. Everything is perfect. Senora,
you remind her of her mother. She
has many sisters her. A big
family. She is a young woman. She
needs to be with women to grow up.
Can she stay here? I will give you
any money you need.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

You are just going to leave?

EDUARDO

Not now. Tomorrow. I will tell
her that I must go back to work and
that my assignment is far away. I
will see her again. Please Senora?
She is so happy here. She is a
fast learner. She will help with
anything.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

O.K. She fits in very well. She
Is a very sweet girl. I cannot be
her mother, but I can be her
friend. (They agree). Tomorrow it
is then. Will you tell her
tonight?

EDUARDO

Yes. We will have a long talk.

They walk back inside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The girls are eating and laughing. Angelina doesn't notice Eduardo and Senora Ruiz return. Angelina is laughing with food in her mouth and her mouth slightly open. Senora Ruiz catches her eye. She feels embarrassed and closes her mouth. In a motherly way, Senora Ruiz nods acknowledging the correction.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

(To the girls) Please put your plates away.

The GIRL sitting next too Angelina whispers in Angelina's ear. The girl is 14 years old. She has perfectly parted ebony hair that is braided in back.

DIANA

Did you meet Santo? He tries to kiss all the girls.

Angelina pretends to be disinterested. She laughs.

Eduardo gestures that it is time to leave. Diana waves goodbye to Angelina as she gets up to leave. Angelina waves back.

EDUARDO

I see you have a new friend.

ANGELINA

Her name is Diana. Her mother died in a train accident. She does not have a pappi like you.

EDUARDO

Yes but she has the girls and Senora Ruiz. She has a big family here. It is beautiful today.

Senora Ruiz remembers that she is showing Angelina around.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Angelina, are you ready? Eduardo, you are welcome to come see how we do things here.

EDUARD

I would like that, but I have to do
a few things. You go.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Follow me, this way.

They walk out the back door.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - DAY

They are amazed to see thousands of rows of tomato plants. Beyond that there are two large horse pastures , a barn and stables. The barn is old greying wood but well maintained. There are no horses outside. In the foreground there is an old work shed with plows and other tools on benches next to it. There are stacks of baskets for picking tomatoes.

In the distance, they see a horse being ridden by a young man. He rides towards them. As he nears Senora Ruiz sees that it is Santo. He rides past waving. He gallops at a fast pace to the back pasture.

EDUARDO

I think, I must lay down. You two
enjoy the tour and your afternoon.

ANGELINA

Are you sick?

EDUARDO

My stomach is a bit upset. I will
be in the room, you have fun.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

(To Senora Ruiz) Thank you, but I
need to lay down.

SENORA RUIZ / TIA

Si. She is in very good hands.

He looks out towards Santo in the distance, then at Angelina.

Santo stops and stares at Eduardo.

EDUARDO

(With disdain in his voice) I see
that. I will see you later.

Angelina hugs him.

ANGELINA

Did you meet Santo? Come say
hello.

EDUARDO

An other time. I must lay down.

Eduardo exits into the courtyard.

Angelina looks out towards Santo.

TIA

Angie, come let me show you the
equipment and the shed. I will
show you the most beautiful
tomatoes in the world. Soooo dark
red and sweet. Let's look at the
tomatoes first.

ANGELINA

I love tomatoes.

They walk in to the rows of tomatoes. Tia picks a large ruby
colored tomato and offers it to Angelina.

Angelina takes it and takes a bite.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

It is almost like fruit. It Is
sweet.

TIA

My grandfather started the crops.
He said if the farmer loves
tomatoes, the crop will be sweet.
He loved tomatoes. He was right.
He could eat a whole basket.

ANGELINA

Where are the girls?

TIA

They are on the other side. They
are picking today. You'll get to
do that tomorrow.

Santo gallops towards them, slowly trotting past Angelina
showing off. She looks at him and blushes, smiles.

He is olive complected and muscular. His jawline is well
defined. His eyes are green/brown and twinkle as he flashes
a dimpled smile.

He rides close to Angelina.

TIA (CONT'D)
You were going to be be with your
father until tomorrow. What
happened?

SANTO
Papa has much work and said I could
come early Mama. I can show her
the stable. Can I Take her?

ANGELINA
I have never been on a horse! I
would love to ride!

SANTO
I am an expert at riding. I will
teach you.

Tia rolls her eyes at Santo.

TIA
OK. But.

Santo extends his hand. Tia helps put her foot in the
stirrup. She climbs up behind Santo in the saddle.

TIA (CONT'D)
Santo? Una hora (one hour)

SANTO
Si Mamma, una hora, adios.

He laughs as they begin galloping. Angelina has her arms
wrapped tightly around him.

Angelina closes her eyes, savoring the moment.

SANTO (CONT'D)
(Yelling because the wind is in his
face) So you've never been on a
horse?!

ANGELINA
No! I Love it!

SANTO
I think you love me. (He laughs)

ANGELINA

I don't know you. Maybe you are un
diablo. Are you loco?

He turns the horse right, they head into the woods along a
stream. The stream is lined with Columbian orchids.

As the trot, the horse becomes spooked and will go no
further. Eduardo dismounts, and helps Angelina down.

SANTO

He won't go further until I kiss
you. (She looks at him in
disbelief). Honesto! He said
that. It's in his eyes. I know
horse language.

ANGELINA

I was right! You are loco! You
talk to horses.

She tries to avoid his request for a kiss by walking to the
edge of the stream. He Walks closely behind her.

SANTO

You never rode a horse, and you
never kissed a boy.

She bends down over the stream, picks up some water and
splashes him. He gasps and brushes the water off of his
face.

ANGELINA

You've never been splashed before?

He walks over to her. He kisses her tenderly, with no
resistance from her.

SANTO

Si. I think you love me. A kiss
cannot lie.

Angelina realizes what just happened.

ANGELINA

Someone said, you try to kiss all
the girls.

SANTO

That is a lie. I have only kissed
you. You are my first kiss and I
am yours.

Santo picks her up and carries her to the horse.

SANTO (CONT'D)
He is ready to go now.

She smiles and shakes her head.

ANGELINA
We will be in trouble for being
gone longer than one hour.

SANTO
We will not lie. We will tell them
the horse got spooked and stopped.
It's true!

They smile a guilty smile and get back on the horse. Santo admires Angelina's figure as he helps her up. She catches him looking her over. She blushes.

They trot slowly back to the house where Senora Ruiz is waiting for them.

She is standing in front of the shed.

TIA
What took so long?

Angelina and Santo look at each other, then at Tia.

SANTO
The horse spooked by a tree and
would not move. I think there was
a snake nearby.

ANGELINA
Yes! I saw it, behind the tree. It
was big (She gestures by widening
her arms four feet apart.

Tia cocks her head at the ridiculousness of the attempt at an explanation. She grins.

SANTO
Sorry we are late.

TIA
Go get cleaned up.

A parade of girls walk past them giggling and whispering.

ANGELINA
I love horses.

TIA
I noticed. (She smiles knowingly at Angelina).

Angelina and Santo part ways to go clean up for lunch.

Angelina goes to her room.

INT. ROOM - AFTERNOON

She opens the door to find Eduardo on the bed weeping. He quickly wipes his tears away, when he sees her. He sits up. The guilt over the murder of the assessor and his feelings for Angelina have become overwhelming.

ANGELINA
Why are you crying?

She puts her arms around him.

EDUARDO
I promised my father that I would only be here for a while, until you are safe. It is time for me to step aside and let you live your life as a young woman. You have a lovely home and a big family here.

She begins to cry.

ANGELINA
But, you can stay here too. Please don't go.

He struggles with the goodbye.

EDUARDO
Like your mother, I will always be here.

He places his hand on her heart.

You will see me again. I promise. You are a woman. It is time for me to let you spread your wings and fly, Mija.

ANGELINA
When are you leaving?

EDUARDO

I must go in the morning.

There is a knock at the door. Tia enters.

TIA

You told her?

He nods.

TIA (CONT'D)

You have us as a family. One of the girls will be sharing the room so you will not feel alone.

Angelina nods. She hugs Eduardo tightly.

ANGELINA

Gracias. You saved me. You protected me.

EDUARDO

You saved me too. Someday, you will understand, I promise. Remember, that things are not always as they appear.

She looks at him as if she understands. Tia smiles.

ANGELINA

But, you said you would teach me how to dance.

He stands, extending his hands to her. She takes his hands. He puts his hand on his back. He places her left arm atop his shoulder. Angelina looks nervously at her feet. With his hand, he guides her chin up. He teaches her basic waltz steps.

Tia watches them dance.

There is commotion in the court yard. One of the girls sits crying, holding her ankle.

TIA

I'd better o take care of the crisis. She opens the door and exits.

They continue dancing. Eduardo hums a waltz.

EDUARDO

See, It's easy, just. One step
and quicker steps. And let's turn
2,3, glide across the floor, no
bouncing, very smooth. You float,
like feather on wind. Can you
remember the steps?

She laughs.

ANGELINA

Yes! I can do it! I love to dance!
Oh no!

EDUARDO

What?

ANGELINA

You said you would teach me how to
drive. You can't leave until I
can drive.

EDUARDO

I can't?

Angelina looks at him frowning and shaking her head.

Yes, I suppose you're right!
Right now. Let's go right now.

ANGELINA

Really?! A car!

He takes her hand they exit.

EXT. COURT YARD - DAY

They walk towards the front yard where the car is parked.
Angelina is skipping and jumping at the excitement of
learning to drive.

EXT. FRONT OF RESIDENCE - DAY

Eduardo opens passenger door for Angelina. He walks around,
gets in driver side.

INT. CAR - DAY

EDUARDO

O.K. I will teach you what each control does.

Angelina watches intently. He explains the function of all controls. Angelina appears to understand.

Eduardo is distracted by the distant sound of sirens.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The sound of police car sirens get closer until they are surrounded by police.

The police officer who had been to the residence prior to investigate the arson and homicide at Angelina's grandmother's house gets out of his car. Several others have weapons pointed at Eduardo.

INT. CAR - DAY

Angelina scoots nervously closer to Eduardo. He turns the ignition off and takes the keys out.

.

ANGELINA

What is happening? Why are these cars here? Police?

EDUARDO

They are here because I killed the man who tried to hurt you. I set the house on fire. They are here for me. I committed a horrible crime. They will arrest me. I have to say goodbye, Angelina.

His eyes begin to water.

He takes her hand and places it on his heart. She begins to cry and hugs him.

He places the ignition keys in her hand.

EDUARDO (CONT'D)

This car is yours. I'm sorry, but Tia will teach you to drive.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The police officer approaches the car cautiously with his hand on his revolver.

OFFICER
Eduardo Castillo?

Eduardo nods. He puts his hands up in compliance. The officer recognizes Eduardo, but is not sure from where.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Please step out of the vehicle.
Haven't I seen you before?

Eduardo nods No.

Eduardo steps out. The officer turns him facing the vehicle and places handcuffs on his wrists, behind his back. The officer begins reciting the charges.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
You are under arrest for arson and
the murder of Fidel Domingo.

Angelina sits on the front seat silently with her head down crying. As she looks up, the officer begins walking Eduardo towards his squad car. Eduardo looks back at Angelina.

Angelina looks out the window. She sees Tia, Santo and some of the girls watching the arrest. Tia approaches the squad car.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Senora Ruiz, I'd like to ask you a
few questions. Do they live here?

TIA
No, but I offered them a place to
stay for a few days. That man is
not a criminal. There is an
explanation for this.

OFFICER
Tell it to the judge. Right now,
we must place the girl in temporary
custody until we find her a home.

TIA
Please, Senor. I have many young
women here. She can stay here.

Santo stays in the distance knowing that he tipped off the police that Eduardo was there.

OFFICER

Alright. I need to ask you some questions though. I also need to talk to the girl.

Eduardo motions for another officer to take Eduardo to jail.

The officer gets in the car. They drive off.

Tia and the officer walk over to the car Angelina is in.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Hello Angelina. Can you please step out of the car? Let's go inside and talk.

She gets up. They walk into the house. Tia and Santo follow behind.

INT. TIA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Angelina, can you tell me what you know about the fire at your grandmother's house? Do You know what happened?

ANGELINA

My grandmother smoked cigarillos. Maybe she fell asleep smoking.

OFFICER

Why did you leave?

ANGELINA

She was very mean to me.

OFFICER

Did you leave with Eduardo?

ANGELINA

No. He left before I did and I saw him in the plaza. He was my friend. He did nothing wrong! Let him go! He protected me!

OFFICER

From who?

Who did he protect you from?

ANGELINA

Senor Domingo!

OFFICER
Thank you Angelina.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
I think I have enough information.
Thank you. You've helped your
friend. Buenos dias.

He walks out to his car, gets in his car.

INT. SQUAD CAR - DAY

The officer is on his radio.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
Seargente, Si. Hermano de tuja.
Por protection. Si en cinco
minutes.

He drives through trees and into the woods until he meets up
with the squad car that Eduardo is in.

A military JEEP pulls up.

A husky, clean shaven MAN gets out. He is wearing a military
uniform, highly decorated in ribbons. He steps out smoking a
cigar and walks over to the vehicle Eduardo is in.

The man motions for others to pull Eduardo out of the car.

GENERAL DOMINGO
I had one brother. (To the other
officers) Is this the man who
killed him? His name was Fidel
Domingo.

The others nod once. A muscular dark haired officer pulls
Eduardo by the hair over to the general.

GENERAL DOMINGO (CONT'D)
I am General Domingo. It is my
pleasure to meet you, at last.

The officer throws Eduardo face down on the ground. He puts
his knee into Eduardo's lower lumbar spine and reaches around
his neck. The general hands the officer a hunting knife.
Another officer pulls his cuffed arms, dislocating them, up
and over his head.

Eduardo does not scream. He trembles.

GENERAL DOMINGO (CONT'D)
My brother was stabbed in the back.
My family is still suffering. (He
inhales deeply) Do you know what
suffering is? (Beat) Are you
suffering, Mr. Castillo?

The general bends down and gets in Eduardo's face. Eduardo's breathing is shallow. He spits in the general's face.

The general gets up, stands and puts his thumb down.

The officer holding the knife, slowly slices into Eduardo's back puncturing his right lung.

He wheezes and gasps, then is silent.

The general bends down and whispers into Eduardo's ear.

GENERAL DOMINGO (CONT'D)
Maybe we will run into each other
in hell. I hope for your sake, we
don't.

Eduardo lays in the rays of setting sun that are streaming through the trees. He is bleeding, limp, and not breathing. The sun sets. The general and others drive off.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

The kitchen is filled with laughter and the sound of shuffling forks. The girls are eating dinner. Angelina is seated at the end of the long table. She is looking across the table with her back turned. The girls all begin whispering and laughing.

She turns around to see Santo sitting beside her.

SANTO

You should eat. You look pale.

ANGELINA
(Sobbing) I can't eat. I will
never see him again.

SANTO
You must eat.

He glances angrily at the giggling girls.

Tia sits silently next to Angelina.

Angelina gets up and runs out the back door.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Angelina is upset about Eduardo's arrest and absence running to the pasture. Santo gets on his horse tied at the back door and gallops to catch up to her.

SANTO (CONT'D)

Get on!

She jumps on. They gallop very fast under the light of the full moon to the river.

They gallop faster.

SANTO (CONT'D)

Hold on tight.

ANGELINA

I am.

SANTO

Why were you running out here?

ANGELINA

I wanted to think. Eduardo is gone! Everyone knows about the arrest. They are laughing at me.

SANTO

I'm sorry that happened to you.

ANGELINA

He is not a criminal. I know it.

SANTO

Looks can be deceiving, but I'm sure he was not.

They reach the river. Santo gets off the horse and then helps Angelina down. The mud is soft and wet, so Santo picks her up and carries her.

They reach a small rustic boat dock that Santo has built. He puts her down and unties the small boat. He helps her in the boat and climbs in.

ANGELINA

Is this your boat?

SANTO
No. It is yours.

He begins rowing. Angelina He rows to the middle of the river, they begin drifting slowly with the current.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - THREE MONTHS LATER

The kitchen is noisy. Santo stands and rings a cow bell to get everyone's attention.

TIA
Santo, what is going on?

Angelina and Tia look puzzled.

SANTO
I have something to tell every one.
I have asked Angelina to marry me,
and she said yes.

Tia is shocked. The girls are unusually silent.

TIA
We should talk about this.
Marriage is very serious. You are
both very young.

SANTO
You were young when you married
Papa. Please, give us your
blessing.

TIA
Yes.

She looks at Angelina who waits for a response.

TIA (CONT'D)
Yes, yes, you have my blessing.

The girls all clap. Tia hugs Angelina. Santo takes her hand and they sit together at the end of the table. Angelina looks distracted but smiles at Santo.

SANTO
(To Angelina) What is wrong? Are
you not happy?

ANGELINA
Eduardo is not here.

SANTO
You must move on.

He looks disappointed.

SANTO (CONT'D)
We are family now and we should
start to plan our wedding.

They hold hands and eat breakfast.

ANGELINA
Summmer?

SANTO
Why wait? Is there something
you're not telling me?

She nods reluctantly.

ANGELINA
I am not very hungry. Come
outside. I need to tell you
something.

Santo looks at his mother and the girls.

SANTO
Excuse us, please.

He takes her by the hand. They walk into the foyer where
they can't be heard.

INT. FOYER - MORNING

Angelina is telling him the story of her mother's death, her
grandmother's neurosis and of the assessor. She does not
know his name or that he was the assessor.

ANGELINA
And he was a very bad man. I woke
up and he was there, he put a
(sobbing), I don't remember his
face . It was horrible.

Santo hugs her. Angelina doesn't tell him the whole story.

SANTO

That is in your past. You are my family now, well, soon. Why don't we get married today? At the river? My mother, the girls, you and I. Just simple.

She nods.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

ANGELINA

I don't know how to drive it but Eduardo gave me the car! We have a car! Come see!

Excitedly, she takes him to the side of the house. She shows him the car.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

The keys are in my room.

Santo is inspecting the car. As he opens the trunk, he sees a small chest. Eduardo had taken it from the house before it burned down. Santo closes the trunk of the car.

SANTO

It is a very good car. We can drive it later. Can you believe my mother gave us her blessing? I know she likes you. You belong here.

They walk back. Tia meets them on the path.

TIA

Did you decide on a day for a wedding?

SANTO

Tomorrow.

TIA

So fast! That is how your father and I married. Tomorrow it is. Son, the house along the river is yours. Your grandfather wanted you to have it.

She kisses Santo on the forehead.

SANTO
Thank you, Mamma.

CUT TO:

INT. ANGELINA'S ROOM - DAY

Tia is adjusting the scalloped lace dress that belonged to Angelina's mother. She pulls the corset tighter and zips up the dress. It fits her perfectly.

TIA
You are tiny , like a swan. You are trembling. I remember that feeling. I can see in his eyes that Santo will always love you. I raised him to be very kind and gentle. He will be so good to you. I will have a beautiful daughter in law. I know I cannot replace your mother, but I will love you like a daughter. I want to give you something from my family.

She opens a small box revealing an antique necklace. It is a pearl surrounded by diamonds. She puts it on Angelina.

Angelina is overwhelmed by the event and the moment.

TIA (CONT'D)
Are you ready to go to your husband? He is probably nervous too. Let's go. I called Father Correo. He should be ready to perform the marriage.

They exit into the backyard.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The girls are walking to the river. Tia puts Angelina on her horse and trots to the boat dock. The priest and Santo are waiting. There are many chairs in front of the dock. The girls are being seated and are whispering.

Tia walks Angelina to Santo and then sits.

FATHER CORREO

He begins with a bible in hand.

SANTO

I, Santo, take you, Angelina, to be my wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

ANGELINA

I, Angelina, take you, Santo, to be my husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

FATHER CORREO

The rings.

Angelina gives a ring to Santo.

SANTO

Take this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity in the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit.

He places the ring on her finger.

ANGELINA

Take this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity, in the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit.

FATHER CORREO

I now pronounce you, man and wife.

You may kiss the bride. They kiss. The girls clap. They walk past the girls as they throw rice at them.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - SIX MONTHS LATER.

Angelina and Santo are lying in bed. Angelina is on her side facing away from Santo.

ANGELINA

I'm sorry. I had a bad dream. I keep seeing his face. You kiss me and I can't see his horrible face, but I feel him. He was on top of me like an animal.

She is crying. Santo is sympathetic but frustrated.

SANTO

I can't touch you. He is always in our bed. Please, look at me.

She can't face him. He gets up and gets dressed.

ANGELINA

Where are going?

SANTO

For a drive. I'll be back. I need some air.

Angelina rolls over and cries.

INT. CAR - DAY

Santo is sitting with his face against the steering wheel. He remembers the keepsake chest that he saw in the back of the trunk. He gets out, opens the trunk and removes the chest.

Curiously, he begins to look through the contents. He finds some miscellaneous jewelry, some post cards, pictures of Angelina's mother and father, and her grandmother. He stops and stares at a picture of Angelina when she was a little girl.

He opens a flask of whisky and takes a drink.

As he digs further, he finds a folded piece of paper. He unfolds it and reads it. It is the contract between the grandmother and Eduardo for all of Angelina's time in exchange for five million pesos. Santo never heard the name Eduardo, so he believes that Eduardo was the man who abused Angelina. Horrified, he crumples the paper and speeds back to the house.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Santo throws open the door. Angelina is sitting up in bed.

ANGELINA

Santo! You have been drinking. So early.

SANTO

Why didn't you tell me more about the man who hurt you? Why?!

ANGELINA

I can't talk about it!

SANTO

He didn't just do this to you, he did it to us!

He is crying.

SANTO (CONT'D)

My wife wont let me love her because this animal took her!

ANGELINA

He didn't have me. He only tried.

SANTO

He did take you. He took your soul.

Angelina is crying hysterically.

ANGELINA

No, you have my soul. You are my husband. I just need time. Please, Santo.

He sits next to her on the bed. He takes her in his arms and they sit quietly for a while. Angelina falls asleep in his arms.

He lays her down. He pulls the contract out of his pocket.

He notices the signature and address on the paper. He walks out of the bedroom and closes the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

He sits on the sofa fumbling with the contract. There is a knock at the door. He opens the door to find Tia standing there with a pot of soup.

SANTO

Mamma, gracias, but I am in a hurry. I have an appointment.

TIA
Appointment? It's Saturday.
Nobody has appointments on
Saturday. I brought you some soup.
Albondigas. Your favorite.

She peeks in the door. She barges in.

TIA (CONT'D)
Where is Angelina? Is she sick?

SANTO
She is sleeping, Mamma.

TIA
Am I going to be a grandmother?!

SANTO
No, she is tired. We had a long
night.

TIA
I remember long nights with your
father. Young love. So romantic.

SANTO
Please, Please go.

TIA
You are not telling me something.
I know you. What is wrong?

He shakes his head.

SANTO
It is nothing. Nothing.

He walks past her and out the door. She stands at the door
staring at him. She goes into the kitchen and sets the soup
on the stove.

INT. CAR - DAY

Santo is speeding towards town. On the drivers seat is a
pistol, the crumpled contract and some whisky. A cow is
standing in the middle of the road. He swerves to avoid
hitting it but retains control of the car.

He is uttering profanities in Spanish. He drives several
miles and then pulls over to look at the address on the
contract.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Twenty nine Plaza Del Cielo.
Eduardo Castillo.

He looks at Eduardo's signature at the bottom below the grandmother's. He takes a swig of whisky and throws the bottle out the window, shattering it into a building.

He sees a man walking and gets out of the car.

He approaches the old man.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Senor, pardone mi. Do you know
where I can find a man by the name
of Eduardo Castillo?

The man shakes his head no.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Gracias.

He walks further. A local parade is marching up the small street. He cannot see past the crowd. He stops a woman pushing a baby stroller.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Senora, do you know where I can
find this man, Eduardo Castillo?

WOMAN
No, I Don't know of anyone by this
name.

After hours of asking around, he is exhausted. The hot sun beats down on his skin. He sits on a park bench resigning himself to quit the search.

A priest walks by and notices his distress. He sits next to him.

PRIEST
What is troubling you, son? You
have the face of revenge. Do You
want to confess what is your heart?

SANTO
No, Padre. This is not God's
problem, it is mine. Buenos dias.

He gets up and walks away from the priest. He walks to the car, gets in. His tires screech as he hurries away.

EXT. ROAD TO RESIDENCIA - DUSK

Santo is driving erratically.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DUSK

Santo stumbles up the steps. He is intercepted by Tia.

TIA

Santo! You are drunk. Did you go to a bar? This behavior is going to ruin your marriage. Angelina is worried sick. Come inside.

SANTO

Mamma,.I am a grown man. Leave me to deal with this. I must talk to my wife. Now, go, please.

Tia looks concerned but exits.

TIA

I'll be inside the main kitchen if you need me.

Santo calls upstairs to Angelina

SANTO

Angelina!

She does not hear him.

INT. STAIRWAY - DUSK

Santo stumbles up the stairway. When he reaches the bedroom, he pushes on the door falling in.

INT. BEDROOM - DUSK

Angelina is sitting at a small vanity in front of the mirror brushing her hair. She sees Santo, gets up and sits on he bed. She takes her robe off and stands in front of him. She lays down beside him. He lays on top of her and begins forcefully kissing her. She senses the anger in his kiss. She tries to push him away but he holds her to him.

ANGELINA

Stop it! You Are hurting me.

He ignores her. He grabs the back of her hair.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)
Ow, no! You are acting like an
animal, like he did!

Santo is furious but is caught up in the moment and takes her by force. He moans and let's go of her in exhaust. He rolls off of her. She lays there in silence.

SANTO
You are my wife. Mine.

They fall asleep facing away from each other.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - SIX MONTHS LATER

A doctor stands over Angelina's swollen abdomen with a stethoscope.

DOCTOR
Yes, it is a very strong heartbeat.

Santo sits nervously in a chair near her.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
You have a health Ruiz baby in
there. Congratulations.

Angelina smiles but appears uncomfortable with the news.

SANTO
I'm going to be a father! A son!

Angelina looks at him.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Or a daughter.

The doctor shakes Santo's hand. They exit into the waiting room where Tia anxiously awaits the news. Santo nods at her in confirmation.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY

Tia hugs Angelina.

TIA
Yes? I am a grandmother?!

She can hardly contain her excitement.

TIA (CONT'D)
I can't wait to tell everybody!

On the way out the door, Tia is telling everyone she passes of her new grandmother status.

ANGELINA
I wish my mother could see.

TIA
She would be proud. You are a beautiful mother.

They exit the hospital.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

They get into the car.

Angelina and Santo look at each other as if they are keeping a secret.

INT. CAR - DAY

ANGELINA
I don't feel so good. Please slow down. Stop the car!

Angelina gets out and vomits on the side of the road.

TIA
(To Santo) Es natural. Hormones are terrible during this time.

Santo looks pale. He gets out and gets sick too.

Tia is sitting in the car waiting. They get back in the car.

On the way back, Angelina stares out the window. She becomes upset when she recognizes the field surrounding her grandmother's house.

ANGELINA
Santo, please, turn here! I have to see something!

SANTO
What? What do you see?

He turns onto the small driveway.

She looks at a newly constructed house that sits where her grandmother's house once was. She envisions the assessor next to her as she emerged from the tub. She sees her dark windowless room. She envision the gun to her head. She sees Santo carrying the keepsake chest and the angel away from the burning house.

She begins to panic.

TIA

Angie, take A deep breath. It's ok. What did you see?

ANGELINA

My grandmother used to live here.

Tia knows the story but did not tell Santo. She nods sympathetically and tries to calm Angelina down.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

So many memories. It Is just strange to see another house here. I guess the county sold it after my grandmother died.

Santo looks puzzled as she talks about it.

SANTO

She did not leave the house for you?

ANGELINA

No. My mother always said she was loco. When I saw her she was never very nice. And that man. Bad memories. (To Santo, changing the subject) Do you remember your grandmother?

SANTO

No, I was small. I was busy always with the horses. My grandmother was very quiet.

As they pull up to the house, all of the girls wait in front to hear the news from the doctor's visit.

EXT. RUIZ HOUSE - DAY

The car pulls After they get out of the car,

One of the girls, Diana, runs up to Angelina.

DIANA

Is there a baby? I didn't think
you were just getting fat.

ANGELINA

No, it's not fat. It is a baby.

DIANA

(Yelling to crowd of girls) It is a
baby!

The girls cheer.

DIANA (CONT'D)

If it is a girl, what will
you name her? Diana?

ANGELINA

I think, Tia.

Tia lights up at the idea.

Santo seems pensive. He walks into the house and closes the
door. Tia walks with Angelina and the girls.

TIA

We can have a baby shower.

Angelina smiles but is preoccupied with Santo's
disappearance. She excuses herself and follows him.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

She walks in and catches him reading a magazine. She grabs
it from him. She is shocked to see that it is a magazine full
of women in bathing suits.

ANGELINA

What is this?! I am fat with your
child and you must look at other
women?

SANTO

No. It is that you won't let me
touch you unless I force you! You
are my wife and we never make love!
I can't take this anymore! We are
married, but I feel alone! I would
like to kill the man that did this
to you. That did this to us.

Tia knocks on the door and then pushes it open.

TIA
Everyone can hear you screaming.
If you scream like this, it is not
good for a baby.

ANGELINA
I need to lay down. I feel sick.

Santo is angry but helps her lay down.

SANTO
(To Angelina) I'm sorry. I am
sorry.

He kisses her on the cheek.

SANTO (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Your skin is very hot. You are
with fever. We must call the
doctor.

ANGELINA
No, Santo. I am just tired.

SANTO
Rest and I will call the doctor.
Can I bring you some food?

ANGELINA
Yes. Some fruit?

SANTO
Yes. I will fix you a plate.

He pulls the bedroom blind closed and exits the room.

Angelina rests her hands on her stomach and begins to hum a
lullaby.

Santo returns with a plate of fruit, but Angelina is
sleeping. He sets the plate down on the table and lays down
beside her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Angelina rolls over and yawns to see the doctor coming into
the room. He takes her temperature.

DOCTOR
Your fever is very high, but you
have no sign of influenza.
(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Have you been bitten by any spiders
or mosquitos lately?

ANGELINA
No. I don't think so.

DOCTOR
May I examine your skin?

ANGELINA
Si.

The doctor carefully looks all over her body for insect bite marks.

DOCTOR
Are you in pain?

ANGELINA
My bones and muscles hurt.

The doctor stops to look at what appears to be a small mosquito bite on her leg.

DOCTOR
Your symptoms are consistent with
Dengue fever. This comes from a
tiny mosquito. You may need some
treatment and bed rest.

SANTO
What type of treatment?

DOCTOR
This virus responds very well to
circulatory shock. It is dangerous
to the baby, though.

Santo looks at Angelina fearing the loss of the baby.

ANGELINA
Then I don't want the treatment!

DOCTOR
If you choose not to have the
treatment, it could be fatal to
both you and the baby.

SANTO
We can have another baby. There is
only one you. Please. Have the
treatment.

ANGELINA
Santo, I am scared.

SANTO
I am with you. I will be here.

He embraces her.

DOCTOR
I can give her the treatment
tomorrow. I would like to start an
I.V. today to prevent dehydration
and bring the fever down.

ANGELINA
O.k. Do it.

The doctor pulls an I.V. kit from his medical bag and a
collapsible I.V. pole. He puts the needle in Angelina's
wrist.

Santo holds her other hand.

Tia walks in. She stands by Santo to comfort him.

DOCTOR
This should help. Tomorrow we
administer circulatory shock.

TIA
Dios, mio. (She gestures the sign
of the cross on her chest).

DOCTOR
Let her sleep. She will need her
rest for the treatment.

TIA
(Whispering to the doctor) What
about my grandchild?

DOCTOR
Angelina is strong, but say a
prayer, Senora.

The girls are peeking in the door. Angelina is sleeping
holding the stuffed angel.

Santo stay by Angelina's side, while Tia takes the girls down
to the kitchen for dinner.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

The girls sit quietly at the table.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Santo sits up in a chair beside Angelina's bed. He is fidgeting with the contract.

Angelina calls out for him. He sits with her.

ANGELINA

Santo , I did not tell you
everything about what happened at
my grandmother's house.

He puts his finger to her lips.

SANTO

Shhhhhhh. It is ok now. I know all
about it.

ANGELINA

You do?

SANTO

Yes. That man can never hurt you
again.

Thinking that Santo knows of the assessor, she nods in relief. She has nothing to hide.

SANTO (CONT'D)

That man will pay for his sins.
Bad people always do. When we have
a child, no one will hurt her.

ANGELINA

Her?

SANTO

Or him.

ANGELINA

Like the bad man who shot my
mother. I wonder if he paid for
his crime. I hope he went to hell.
My mother was so beautiful. I did
not see her get killed. It
happened very fast. The sun was in
my eyes.

SANTO

You didn't see who it was? His face?

ANGELINA

No, but I heard that the police shot and killed him. He was a very bad criminal. He killed people and sold drugs. He had prostitutes. Horrible. I am glad the police killed him. I wish I could see him and tell him how much I hate him. I would kill him with my bare hands if I could see him.

SANTO

I would kill him too. I will kill anyone who hurts you. I love you. I am sorry for those terrible things I said to you.

He kisses her. They fall asleep holding each other.

Angelina tosses and turns as Santo lays with her. He tries to stop her nightmare by kissing her. She responds and kisses him back.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PORCH - DAY

The doctor enters he house hurriedly with two nurses by his side.

DOCTOR

She is upstairs. This way!

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Santo hears them coming and opens the door. The doctor enters. A nurse takes Angelina's vital signs.

NURSE

That is odd. Doctor, she has no fever.

Angelina appears bright eyes and well rested.

He looks into her pupils and feels her pulse.

DOCTOR

This is unusual in my experience.
I cannot treat you. You are not
sick. I see no evidence of Dengue
Fever, or anything else. I was
wrong. I only see a glowing mother
to be.

ANGELINA

My baby is going to be o.k.?

DOCTOR

You both are.

SANTO

That is great!

He runs and yells for Tia.

He sticks his head out of the door into the hallway.

SANTO (CONT'D)

She is fine! Mamma come see!

Tia rushes in.

SANTO (CONT'D)

She needs no treatment! She is
fine, the baby is fine!

TIA

You see! I am going to be a
grandmother!

SANTO

We have to celebrate! Let's go to
the plaza! The Mercado! We will
have a fine dinner, a party to
celebrate!

SANTO (CONT'D)

We must get dressed and go!

Angelina laughs. The excitement can be heard across the
pasture.

They hurry and get dressed up. Tia enters. Her hair is
pulled back and she is wearing a lace dress.

SANTO (CONT'D)

Mamma, one minute. We will meet
you downstairs.

Santo puts on a suit and tie. Angelina is wearing a floral dress that Tia gave her. She is wearing her mother's locket.

SANTO (CONT'D)
You look beautiful. Are we ready?

Angelina is radiant. They walk down the hallway stairs.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - AFTERNOON

They get into the car. The girls wave as Eduardo, Angelina and Tia drive away.

EXT. PLAZA - LATE AFTERNOON

The car passes a crowd gathering in the square. Clowns perform, musicians entertain onlookers and merchants sell their finest goods and produce. Mounted policemen ride past making sure that everyone is safe.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Let's go to the best restaurant.

ANGELINA
We cannot afford it.

SANTO
Yes we can. My father gave me some money years ago to use for something special. This is something special.

He points to a beautiful restaurant with tiki lamps outside.

ANGELINA
That looks beautiful. Yes, there.

Santo finds a parking space close to the restaurant. He parks and gets out to open the door for the ladies.

He extends his hand to Angelina. She steps out with the elegance and grace of a mature woman.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)
This is the best day of my life! I wish....

Santo helps his mother out of the car.

SANTO
You wish?

She was going to say she wished Eduardo could be there. She does not mention it.

ANGELINA

I wish my mother was with us. We used to come here to get cherry freezies. Every Saturday. Let's get some when we are done with dinner.

TIA

I love those too. Don't you, Santo?

Santo is distracted. He feels the folded contract in his pocket. They enter the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - DUSK

A HOSTESS greets them

HOSTESS

Three for dinner?

SANTO

Yes but we would like to sit on the patio to see the plaza.

HOSTESS

Yes. This way.

She leads them to a beautifully set table directly next to the plaza walkway.

As they sit waiting to order, a violin player stops at the table.

SANTO

Let's get Sangria to celebrate.

He calls the waiter over to the table.

WAITER

What can I start you off with?

SANTO

We want the best Sangria you have!

The waiter writes it down. And walks into the kitchen.

Angelina is entranced by the violin music.

TIA
 Music is good for a baby. When
 Santo was in my stomach, I sang to
 him.

ANGELINA
 Music is the voice of angels, my
 mother used to say. I loved her
 singing.

The waiter comes to the table carrying three glasses of
 sangria.

TIA
 I want to toast to a happy and
 beautiful life. To our happy
 family. To my grand child!

They toast.

Angelina stops and stares at a man walking in the crowd. She
 sees the back of his head and thinks it is Eduardo.

SANTO
 Is something wrong? You look like
 you saw a ghost.

ANGELINA
 No. I was admiring a dress I saw
 on a woman.

SANTO
 Let's think of names for a baby
 boy. I like Theo, after my father.

Angelina thinks she hears her mother's voice in the crowd.

ANGELINA
 That was odd. For a second, I
 thought I heard my mother.

She looks beyond the clowns in the plaza and sees a man in a
 dark jacket looking at her. She cannot clearly see his face.

Tia puts her hand on Angelina's cheek.

TIA
 You don't have a fever. Have some
 sangria. You'll feel much better.

She takes a sip of Sangria.

ANGELINA
 I like this. (She laughs).

Santo leans to kiss her.

TIA
A little bit is good , but more
than a couple glasses is not good
for the baby.

Angelina acknowledges the comment.

ANGELINA
I am hungry. Everything looks so
good.

Angelina is distracted by a man wearing black across the
plaza.

SANTO
What are you looking at, Angie?

Santo notices the man looking at Angelina.

SANTO (CONT'D)
Someone you know?

ANGELINA
No. I think it is the Sangria
playing tricks on me.

SANTO
Let's dance to this music.

They get up. He takes her hand. They slow dance to the
violin.

When they are finished, the waiter is ready to take their
order.

SANTO (CONT'D)
My wife would like the seafood
crepes. I would like the carne
asada. Mamma?

TIA
I would like the chicken con crema.

WAITER
Can I bring you more sangria?

SANTO
Yes, another round.

He finishes his glass quickly.

ANGELINA

I wonder if my mother is with
angels now.

Santo is a bit tipsy. He laughs at her.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

Why are you laughing? I am
serious.

SANTO

I want the doctor to examine you
again Monday. I think the fever
went to your brain.

Angelina is upset by his remark.

ANGELINA

Maybe you should not drink. You
are not so nice with sangria.

The waiter brings their food. He sets each plate in front of
them. They eat in awkward silence.

The violin playing stops and music becomes more festive for
the evening. Several couples get up and dance the Polka to
Tejano music.

Santo likes the music. He stands and takes Angelina's hand.

They dance fast. Angelina stops and is dizzy. As she stops,
she sees a man staring at her. She is frightened but he is
familiar to her.

The man approaches her. She is stunned and confused.

ANGELINA (CONT'D)

Eduardo! No! It can't be you!

Santo remembers the signature on the contract as "Eduardo
Castillo"

Santo gets up, runs toward Eduardo, thinking that he was the
man who exploited Angelina.

SANTO

It was you? You took her as a
child. You made the contract for
time with her.

Eduardo begins to speak, but Santo pulls out a pistol.

From across the aisle, Angelina sees Santo aim the pistol at
Eduardo.

ANGELINA

Santo! Noooooooooooooooooooooo!.

She gets up , but cannot move fast enough. Santo pulls the trigger and Eduardo falls.

Only the back of his head can be seen.

We see a flashback of the police killing the criminal in the plaza the day of Angelina's mothers death. The criminal hits the ground. He turns his head and we see Eduardo.

SANTO

(To Angelina) I saw the contract!
He paid your grandmother for time
alone with you. To hurt you.
To steal your soul!

Angelina bends down over Eduardo.

EDUARDO

(Whispers to Angelina). It was an
accident. My bullet killed your
mother. I had to protect you to
pay for my crime, my sin. I did
not want it to happen. Forgive me.

Angelina is crying. he tries to explain to Santo that the contract was to occupy all of her time to protect her from the assessor.

ANGELINA

(To Eduardo) Yes, Yes, I forgive
you. (To Santo) He was like a
father to me. He saved me. He
taught me to laugh, to dance, to
read, to trust, (sobbing),to drive.
He never hurt me. It was Senor
Domingo. Eduardo killed him trying
to save me. Senor Domingo was in
the bathroom. He put a gun to my
head. Eduardo saved me, Santo. The
contract was to save me.

As she is crying over his body, a tear lands on him and he vanishes.

Santo was an angel.

ANGELINA'S MOTHER (V.O.)

Mija, sometimes angels are only
here for a special purpose and then
they disappear.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PERALTA/RUIZ HOME BEDROOM - FIVE YEARS LATER

Santo and Angelina live in the house Angelina grew up with her mother in.

They are getting ready to go to the Mercado. Their daughter Tia is sitting on Angelina's lap having her hair brushed.

ANGELINA

(To Tia) Mija, how about if we get some cherry freezies? Would you like that?

TIA

I love freezies.

ANGELINA

(To Santo teary eyed) It's good to be home.

He kisses her. They take Tia's hand and exit.

FADE/CREDITS

