

Divorcées, Evangelists and Vegetarians
by
Gustavo Ott
Translation Heather L. McKay

Susan Gurman Agency LLC
14 Penn Plaza, Suite 1703, New York, NY 10122-1701
www.gurmanagency.com

“Divorcées, Evangelists and Vegetarians” was first performed by the TextoTeatro Group at Horacio Peterson Theater in the Ateneo in Caracas, Venezuela, on October 20, 1989.

In the US, the play was first produced in 2003 by GALA Theater in Washington, D.C. (*Hugo Medrano, Artistic Director/ Rebecca Medrano, Executive Director*) directed by Abel López.

Characters:

GLORIA
BEATRIZ
MECHE

SCENE I

Subway station platform.

Sound of a train pulling away. Wind.

On stage, Beatriz, who looks at her hands and paces.

She looks at herself in a mirror. Stops. Almost cries, but controls herself. She dabs at her eyes. Enter Gloria, carrying two brand name shopping bags. She is furious.

GLORIA: ...Disgusting pig. Hairy little worm. Lousy rat, filthy dog, snake in the grass. (To Beatriz) Can you imagine?

BEATRIZ: Excuse me?

GLORIA: The balls on that man! I mean... The enormous balls! His balls are like two mountains. (*Spreading her arms as wide as possible*) Like this. The balls...! The balls! The balls on that man...!

BEATRIZ: Who?

GLORIA: Coming late, the son of a bitch. The son of a bitch comes late. First, he asks me to go to the hotel, he has to have me. And me... I go because I'm so... Then he goes and is late. (*Smokes*) The balls! Coming late! And then, just like that, he says I'm not going to the party with him. (*Strides off to one side*) To the party! I'm not going to the party! (*Stomps back*) And he didn't even wait for me to get my clothes off to tell me! You understand?

BEATRIZ: I...

GLORIA: No, of course you don't understand. You don't understand anything. What's there for you to understand? (*To one side*) He wants to go to a party alone... Hah? (*To Beatriz*) Have you ever heard anything so sick in your entire life? (*Doesn't find cigarettes. Voice of the creep*) "My love, it's just I need to be alone at the party. "Alone." "All alone." (*Loud*) With that twit, that's who he's going to be with! (*Beatriz gives her a cigarette*) Thanks, I don't smoke. (*Lights it. Smokes*) They're all the same... Exactly the same. (*Beat. Inhales. In normal tone*) So... What's your name?

BEATRIZ: Beatriz.

GLORIA: What a pretty name. I'm Gloria. Hi! What do you think?

BEATRIZ: About what?

GLORIA: About him wanting to go alone. He says he wants to go alone. What do you think?

BEATRIZ: He's seeing someone else...

GLORIA: Yeah. Right. Of course. Sure. Obviously.

BEATRIZ: This is your husband?

GLORIA: He's not my husband, my boyfriend, or my anything, because I just told him to go to hell. Let him find himself some other idiot. I'm not putting up with it anymore.

BEATRIZ: Maybe he's trying to call you and...

GLORIA: I'm not stupid. I'm not a fool. If he calls, I'll tell him to go to hell, Betsy, I swear...

BEATRIZ: Beatriz...

GLORIA: Because this isn't the first time, Brunhilda... It's not the first. I ignored it the first time, I ignored it the second. The third and fourth I ignored together. Then the fifth... But this is number ten, Antonia...

BEATRIZ: Beatriz...

GLORIA: (*Loud*) Beatriz, Beatriz, Beatriz... I'm lost as a chad in a ballot box. (*Back to her subject*) Ten times, I've counted, honey, ten times, on these fingers. These fingers should claw his face till they rip his testicles off!

BEATRIZ: Off his face?

GLORIA: I don't care if it's hard, that's why I had my nails done extra long! Look! (*Shows her very long acrylic nails*) He's not doing it to me again. Not even if he takes me to Ganymede. Not even if he calls. Or picks me up in a... (*Suddenly she remembers something*) My shoes! (*She pulls a pair of red high heels from her bag. Sighs*) Thank God! I ran out of there so fast, I thought I might have left them. I've got this feeling I left something somewhere. What do you think?

BEATRIZ: Fabulous. With a little black dress.

GLORIA: Exactly.

BEATRIZ: Light gray silk stockings.

GLORIA: Just bought them. I was going to wear them to the party...

BEATRIZ: (*Takes the shoes*) For some shoes, there will always be a party, honey. There was a time I never stopped dancing...

GLORIA: And me! I couldn't see a stoplight without thinking I was in a disco. I haven't spent a weekend at home since I was nine years old.

BEATRIZ: Problem solved, darling.

GLORIA: It's just, this party is special. His brother's getting married. (*Sugary*) My brother-in-law. I spent weeks looking for a dress and some fabulous heels for this wedding... You should see the dress. Cut down to here. (*Pointing to her bust with exaggerated motions*) Everyone was going to be looking at me.

BEATRIZ: Go alone.

GLORIA: If only I could...

BEATRIZ: Don't you know the groom?

GLORIA: Of course I do. He was my boyfriend first.

BEATRIZ: Oh, so, you go from brother to brother...

GLORIA: It pisses me off that he'll think I'm a fool.

BEATRIZ: Then don't go and that's that.

GLORIA: If I don't go they'll think I'm hurt. And I want him to see me looking like a star.

BEATRIZ: Who? The brother or him?

GLORIA: Both.

BEATRIZ: What for?

GLORIA: So they can see what they're missing.

BEATRIZ: Maybe that's why your boyfriend doesn't want you to go, so you can't see his brother...

GLORIA: That's not it. It's his wife.

BEATRIZ: Oh! (*Annoyed*) Your boyfriend's married.

GLORIA: His sweet little wifey poo, that little two-headed snake, it's her fault. He doesn't love her.

BEATRIZ: Of course he doesn't love her. He's seeing you.

GLORIA: That's what I say.

BEATRIZ: That's what they all say.

GLORIA: He doesn't love her. They got married too young.

BEATRIZ: That's what happens to us when we get married before we've lived.

GLORIA: You're married?

BEATRIZ: Divorced.

GLORIA: Oh! What a coincidence.

BEATRIZ: You're divorced too?

GLORIA: No, my parents just got divorced. After all those years. (*Gesturing*) They couldn't stand each other.

BEATRIZ: Mine are still together, but there's no affection.

GLORIA: How sad!

BEATRIZ: Habit, they say.

GLORIA: That's worse.

BEATRIZ: Worse is dating a married man.

GLORIA: That's different.

BEATRIZ: Why is that different?

GLORIA: Because that's not what I am to him. (*Beat*) Besides, that snake is... She used to be very pretty, but now, now she's old, fat, bald, and whiney. She looks fifty.

BEATRIZ: Men wear you down.

GLORIA: And she only gets him on weekends. The rest is mine.

BEATRIZ: And marriage is a meat grinder.

GLORIA: (*Not paying attention*) I bet tomorrow he'll come running back like a lap dog and look at me with those eyes of his and say all those things he always says and I'll forgive him. It's not the first time. I've counted fifteen. Not three, not ten. Twenty, Adelaide.

BEATRIZ: You said fifteen. Beatriz.

GLORIA: Beatriz. And it's thirty-two. I think. I don't know. Whatever. (*Walks to one side, furious*) I had my evening all planned. I thought we'd be spending it together. He'd end up apologizing and thanking me. Because I'm the one who always pays. When he gets the check, he looks it over, puts on his angel face and smiles that smile and I end up paying. Now I don't know what to do.

BEATRIZ: Whenever something like that would happen to me, I'd go to the movies. Maybe that's why I've seen so many rom-coms. To help me forgive.

GLORIA: Not me. I'd rather see a war movie, with plenty of killing. Forget about forgiveness sweetheart, give me blood.

BEATRIZ: Whenever I'd see a movie I liked, a romantic one, where they really loved each other, I'd swear it was based on a true story. That it was as real as life itself. And two human beings could love each other just like in the movies "forever."

GLORIA: Benilde: Nothing with a happy ending can be true.

BEATRIZ: Well that's very encouraging. You should write a self-help book.

GLORIA: "Let it be." (*Remembering*) I'd even...! (*Looks in the other bag. Pulls out CD*) Look, I'd even bought him a present. His favorite... The Beatles.

BEATRIZ: The who?

GLORIA: This bunch of hairy old dudes that everyone over fifty likes. Their names were-

BEATRIZ: George, John...

GLORIA: Paul and Ringo.

(*They sing "Let it Be," a little off key*)

BEATRIZ: How old are you?

GLORIA: Thirty-two. What about you?

BEATRIZ: Me too. But where I grew up, everything came late. If something was going on in the world, the first place we'd read about it would probably be our sixth grade history textbook. By the time The Beatles had a hit in my hometown, I was a mother already.

GLORIA: You have kids?

BEATRIZ: Just one.

GLORIA: Oh! How sweet. How old is he?

BEATRIZ: Eight. The exact same number of years-

GLORIA: I like kids, from a little distance. You know, like a couple times a week. An afternoon at the playground, with their mother right there, of course. And none of that crybaby stuff, it makes me want to slap them sideways.

BEATRIZ: I felt the same way, until I got pregnant and had to get married.

GLORIA: You got married because...?

BEATRIZ: Why else? I was single.

GLORIA: Where are you from?

BEATRIZ: The South.

GLORIA: And you came here to...

BEATRIZ: I came to... (*Beat*) I came to shop.

GLORIA: I shopped all afternoon. I was looking for shoes and stockings and I ended up buying a skirt, a blouse, earrings...

BEATRIZ: I love to shop. Especially when I'm depressed.

GLORIA: That's for sure. It's the one good thing about this city, Raquel. The only one. The stores. The rest is just pollution, noise, nasty people, idiotic men, and disgusting places like this. (*Looks for another cigarette. Beatriz offers her one. She takes it*) It's a good thing I found you. Whenever I have problems, I'd rather have a turtle by my side than my family, a friend or a man.

BEATRIZ: Thanks.

GLORIA: I didn't mean you.

BEATRIZ: You meant the turtle.

GLORIA: What?

BEATRIZ: Nothing. Forget it. Poor creatures are already facing extinction. Turtles have enough problems without you mixing them up in this mess.

GLORIA: I meant someone I don't know... Don't be so complicated!

BEATRIZ: Fine.

GLORIA: I hate complicated people. (*Tosses the cigarette*) I'm selfish, all right, but a girl's... Look, I feel like being selfish and that's it. I'm sick of always explaining myself!

BEATRIZ: How long have you been together?

GLORIA: Two years. Since one hell of a March 21st. I met him at 6 in the morning, in the park. I was exercising. (*Looking Beatriz over*) I guess you don't work out much. Or diet? Lipo? Black magic?

BEATRIZ: I'm not into organized activities and-

GLORIA: I was with Meche that day. A friend. Well, not really a friend, she helps me out around the house sometimes. She's forty, but you should see her. She looks my age. She does odd jobs and works nights at a movie theater, as an usher.

BEATRIZ: I always liked that job.

GLORIA: She says it sucks.

BEATRIZ: You can watch all the movies.

GLORIA: Meche's practically a nun. I actually don't remember what religion she is. Some spiritualist thing, a Mason, Israelite... some witchcraft like that. That day, the day I met my boyfriend, the little mule was arguing that life on other planets is impossible.

BEATRIZ: But you...?

GLORIA: Please! I'm absolutely positive.

BEATRIZ: They haven't found any yet.

GLORIA: Because they don't know how to look. But I do. I know.

BEATRIZ: What do you know?

GLORIA: (*In semi-secret*) That there are Martians and flying saucers and all that.

BEATRIZ: You sound so sure.

GLORIA: I have proof. (*Beatriz looks at her*) There's life in the universe. In other galaxies. And if they haven't seen them yet it's because they don't want them to.

BEATRIZ: We can't be sure.

GLORIA: I've had close encounters.

BEATRIZ: You've seen aliens?

GLORIA: As close as you and I are now. They laugh at America's rockets. And another thing, the great minds of science and art, they come from another planet. Ganymede. (*Lost in thought*) On one trip they showed me how they live.

BEATRIZ: They took you with them!

GLORIA: I've seen globular clusters. Galactic nebulae. They control everything and we're their guinea pigs.

BEATRIZ: Well they've definitely been experimenting on me then.

GLORIA: That day I explained it all to my little Presbyterian. But she didn't buy it. She prayed for me, said a spell, and then, poof!: he appeared.

BEATRIZ: Who?

GLORIA: My boyfriend.

BEATRIZ: He was walking around there?

GLORIA: No. He came in a helicopter. He's the "Eye in the Sky" for Radio WKYS. He was getting ready for the morning traffic report. He's up there every day. Except when it rains.

BEATRIZ: Doesn't he have windshield wipers?

GLORIA: Don't be stupid. He doesn't fly because it's dangerous.

BEATRIZ: Sorry.

GLORIA: The thing is he was flying around in his helicopter. The idiot came down low and messed up my hair. That's how I met him. How could I help but fall in love?

BEATRIZ: He came just like an alien.

GLORIA: From a galaxy far far away. He recited a poem to me over the loudspeakers. And he threw me a present. He held out a twig and said that twig was me. Later on I found out he eats them in vinegar.

BEATRIZ: Twigs!

GLORIA: Vegetarian food. He's macrobiotic and after a while I ended up eating asparagus and soup too.

BEATRIZ: You don't eat meat?

GLORIA: Blood and meat destroy your soul.

BEATRIZ: Well, I eat red meat three times a day.

GLORIA: (*Looking at her*) I can see that.

BEATRIZ: What do you mean?

GLORIA: When they're slaughtered, animals secrete adrenaline that stays in the meat and that's what you eat. Pure tragic energy.

BEATRIZ: And adrenaline causes cancer, I suppose.

GLORIA: Adrenaline from dead animals kills your soul.

BEATRIZ: My soul is deader than Latin anyways.

(*Another train arrives. Noise and wind. People talking. Gloria looks at someone*)

GLORIA: Listen, Angelica, tell me something. Why does everyone keep staring at me? Do I have a light bulb in my nose or something?

BEATRIZ: (*Obvious*) It's your clothes.

GLORIA: What?

BEATRIZ: Your shirt...

GLORIA: (*Realizes her shirt is ripped*) Fuuuuuck! You see? He's... he's... He's an animal. Look what he did to me. And I didn't even notice. That pig... that worm, that syphilitic rat. You know why he did this? Do you? Because I said something about his mother and then he got all irate and said-

BEATRIZ: "You can't say that to a man."

GLORIA: How'd you know?

BEATRIZ: I saw the movie. Remember I like movies.

GLORIA: And he grabbed my purse and threw it out the hotel window. And he said...

BOTH: "Don't talk about my mother."

GLORIA: Exactly. Then, when I tried to stop him, he got really pissed and tore my shirt because-

BEATRIZ: You bit him.

GLORIA: What are you, a witch?

BEATRIZ: I've got my own story to tell. My "ex" used to hit me. He was jealous. He had his things on the side. But if he saw me talking to someone, or if I was late or if I was just happy, he'd get unbearable.

GLORIA: Cristina, please, don't interrupt. I'm telling you my story. So then, the guy drags me around the room and me I'm screaming like a madwoman. Then I bit him again and beat a flaming retreat.

BEATRIZ: Until one time he said he was jealous because he loved me. Two days later we split for good.

GLORIA: Yeah, ok, whatever. But, when I ran off, I forgot my purse and all my ID. (*She moves off to one side. Picks up a cigarette butt and tries to light it but can't*) My purse! I don't even have... I've got nothing! I've got nothing! Understand? Nothing?

BEATRIZ: You should go back.

GLORIA: Go back?

BEATRIZ: And get your stuff.

GLORIA: Just like that? That's it?

BEATRIZ: You can't go around without ID.

GLORIA: You think?

BEATRIZ: Yes. I saw it in a movie once...

GLORIA: What if he's still there?

BEATRIZ: Don't look him in the face.

GLORIA: What if he comes up to me and says things? I've got no pride.

BEATRIZ: Well, that's your problem. You have to face up to things.

GLORIA: What about you?

BEATRIZ: What about me?

GLORIA: What are you doing now?

BEATRIZ: I'm waiting for the subway.

GLORIA: Yeah, but, where are you going? What are you doing?

BEATRIZ: I... I'm not doing anything.

GLORIA: Then why don't you come with me? We'll have a drink. I feel like getting rip roaring drunk.

BEATRIZ: What about your stuff at the hotel?

GLORIA: Come with me.

BEATRIZ: What?

GLORIA: Come with me. You go with me to the hotel. It's right around the corner. We'll get our stuff-

BEATRIZ: YOUR stuff...

GLORIA: ...and leave. We'll go to the movies, or my place, we can listen to the Beatles.

BEATRIZ: I don't think that's-

GLORIA: There's an old love story playing.

BEATRIZ: Actually...

GLORIA: It's called "9 1/2 Weeks."

BEATRIZ: Isn't that an erotic film?

GLORIA: It's about a woman who dumps this real hottie.

BEATRIZ: That sounds good.

GLORIA: Gorgeous. Mickey Rourke.

BEATRIZ: Who?

GLORIA: I've seen it seven times.

BEATRIZ: I like the ones based on real life.

GLORIA: Real life, shmeal life. Who cares about real life? That's communism, that's... it's technology. No thank you. My thing is pretending I'm Kim Bassinger, all blonde, big blue eyes and that sexy voice "Oh, my Gaaawd." Can't you just see me as a blonde?

BEATRIZ: Yes, but the image is hair-raising.

GLORIA: You should see me with my hair dyed.

BEATRIZ: I can't see you any other way.

GLORIA: Even my roots go Bassinger. "Oh my Gaaawd."

BEATRIZ: I hate blondes.

GLORIA: Gentlemen prefer them, that's what the tango says.

BEATRIZ: There's a tango that says that?

GLORIA: What do I know? Look. You look like you've got nothing better to do. I need someone to go with me because if he sees me, then... if he sees me by myself he might do something. Say he's sorry. And this is number forty-five. I know myself, Betzaida.

BEATRIZ: Bea...

GLORIA: I'm a fool. I've got no pride. I always say yes. If you come with me, if you hold my arm, dig your nails in if you see me wavering, bite me if I start to bat my lashes at him. If you come with me that lowlife won't dare say a word to me.

BEATRIZ: I have to...

GLORIA: To what? Nothing. You have anything to do? Anything to lose?

BEATRIZ: Me?

GLORIA: Look, I'll pay the cab fare, the movie, the drinks. Everything. But don't leave. I can't stand to be alone when I'm nervous. I need someone to talk to. To tell them things and them to tell me.

BEATRIZ: But you haven't heard a word I've said.

GLORIA: Later, later... Just come with me. I'll tell him you're my best friend. Ok? Ok? Ok? (*Like the decision has been made*) Come on: Let's get out of here.

BEATRIZ: But I came to...

GLORIA: That doesn't matter. Let's get out of this stinking hole that I'm never setting foot in again and go to the hotel. We'll get my stuff, and look stern, like lawyers or even worse. Then, we'll go have a drink till nine thirty. Then we head for the East Side Cinema and...

BEATRIZ: You have to listen to me first.

GLORIA: No, no, you can tell me later. Come on!

BEATRIZ: Don't interrupt, Gloria.

GLORIA: I'm not interrupting, Adelaide.

BEATRIZ: Adela... I'm Betzaida. I mean Beatriz.

GLORIA: So what?

BEATRIZ: Look: I came here to do something...

GLORIA: Of course. You're very busy. People are always busy with their own lives and they don't care about anyone else...

BEATRIZ: If you knew why...

GLORIA: We'll work it out. I'll help you with whatever you have to do and then you come with me to the hotel. Ok?

BEATRIZ: You don't know...

GLORIA: What are you going to do?

BEATRIZ: I just met y-

GLORIA: Where are you going?

BEATRIZ: What I want to do, you do here.

GLORIA: Where, here? In the subway?

BEATRIZ: Yes, why?

GLORIA: ...So what can you do here? Count trains? Wait for someone? Come with me. Be a friend. (*Picks up her bags*)

BEATRIZ: I... I... I'm sorry. I... (*Suddenly changes tone*) I came here to throw myself on the tracks.

GLORIA: (*Gloria drops her bags*) What?

BEATRIZ: I want to kill myself.

GLORIA: But... but... fuck, fuck, fuck... but... but why?

(*Sound of approaching train*)

BEATRIZ: And here's my train now...

GLORIA: Beatriz, DON'T DO IT!!! Noooo... come here...!

(*The train arrives. Gloria grabs Beatriz before she can jump. They embrace. Subway station disappears. "Help" by the Beatles plays. Spotlight on Meche. Walking towards stage right. A row of movie theater seats appears*)

SCENE II

Inside a movie theater. First row seats. Seated on the far right, Gloria. Meche comes in with her flashlight.

MECHE: Gloria, darling, sweetheart, how's everything?

GLORIA: All right.

MECHE: I didn't see you come in. What are you doing here?

GLORIA: Seeing a movie.

MECHE: Again? You've seen it seven times!

GLORIA: I like the leading man, you know that.

MECHE: I can't see anything special about him.

GLORIA: That's 'cause you spend all your time praying you'll go blind.

MECHE: The demons of the flesh control your life.

GLORIA: Demons of the flesh. Look: I like "Mickey Wickey." So what? The movie relaxes me. So what? And I can see it whenever I want. So what?

MECHE: Nothing. So nothing. But a nice girl shouldn't see this kind of movie.

GLORIA: You see it every day.

MECHE: I work here.

GLORIA: So you close your eyes every time they show Mickey's backside?

MECHE: Yes. No. Of course I do!

GLORIA: So if you close your eyes: how do you do your job?

MECHE: Because I...

GLORIA: So now you can see with your eyes closed?

MECHE: No, but I... (*Shouts*) I hate you! And here I was so happy to see you.

GLORIA: Stay happy. I'm not going anywhere.

MECHE: I was just thinking about you. I'm so depressed, Gloria. I don't feel good.

GLORIA: Go to confession.

MECHE: I'm going through the worst period of my life.

GLORIA: You should write a soap opera.

MECHE: Don't make fun of me. A terrible thing is happening to me... I... My body's changed, you see? It's different.

GLORIA: You're fatter. I can see that.

MECHE: I'm like ice.

GLORIA: What, made of little cubes?

MECHE: Like dead. Cold...

GLORIA: Is your blood pressure low?

MECHE: No, it's... it's... Nothing is going on in my body!

GLORIA: Oh! You're going through the change... But you're not old, Meche.

MECHE: I am now.

GLORIA: Unless you're talking mentally.

MECHE: It's my body, not my head.

GLORIA: Meche, so you... Haven't you taken it out for a spin?

MECHE: Don't be fresh! I've been a widow for five years and that's how long it's been since I looked at a man!

GLORIA: What about them?

MECHE: What about them?

GLORIA: Do they look at you?

MECHE: All the time. I try to avoid them, but it's no use. I lower the hem on my skirt, I sing Hallelujah, I pray to Jesus, but they go right on looking. With desire, Gloria, with hunger. And I tell myself "it's the devil," but it's not enough.

GLORIA: The devil could cheer you up one night.

MECHE: That's a sin.

GLORIA: One night is not a sin, Meche.

MECHE: I mustn't think about such things.

GLORIA: Well, you should. (*Looks her over*) So you're menopausal and your libido's below zero.

MECHE: (*Sad*) I think so.

(*Enter Beatriz with candies and popcorn*)

BEATRIZ: They didn't have pistachios, so I got you popcorn.

GLORIA: This is Meche. Meche, Josephine.

BEATRIZ: Beatriz. Hi.

MECHE: Hi!

GLORIA: Meche works here.

MECHE: (*Shining the light on her*) I'm an usher...

BEATRIZ: You think I have time to go to the bathroom?

MECHE: It depends on what you're going to do.

BEATRIZ: Powder my nose. You know what? There's a guy out there who's trying to talk to me.

MECHE: Do you know him?

BEATRIZ: No, but...

MECHE: Then don't lead him on.

BEATRIZ: I'm not.

MECHE: Did you check his hands yet?

GLORIA: For what, Meche?

MECHE: Ring...

BEATRIZ: No ring.

GLORIA: A single boy.

MECHE: What you should be looking for.

GLORIA: Amen.

BEATRIZ: I'll talk to him, stop by the Ladies and be right back.

GLORIA: Take your time. They always show fifteen minutes of commercials and a Beatles video.

BEATRIZ: I wouldn't miss it.

MECHE: Though the powder room is packed, sweetheart. You'd think nobody peed at home.

GLORIA: You think they're saving on paper?

MECHE: With the way things are, sugar, I understand them.

BEATRIZ: Though now they even charge you to pee. I don't know about here, but in-

MECHE: Here too, honey. During matinees and the late show, when more people come. There's one charge for paper, one for pee, and another for poop.

(Beatriz goes out, running)

GLORIA: You can't even shit in peace anymore, Meche.

MECHE: End of the world. It's all in the Gospels.

GLORIA: Meche, please: The gospels say they're gonna charge us for taking a shit?

MECHE: In the Apocalypse.

GLORIA: It says that? Word for word?

MECHE: Well, not those exact words, but it's implied...

GLORIA: Just how the hell do you imply something like that?

MECHE: In the Condemnation of the Great Whore, when it talks about wanting to do something and not being able to.

GLORIA: That's shitting?

MECHE: Of course.

GLORIA: So why don't they use words that everyone can understand?

MECHE: Because everything's a symbol.

GLORIA: I cannot even imagine what symbol there could possibly be for pissing and shitting for free and in peace.

MECHE: There is one, Gloria, there is. It says so in the Gospels.

GLORIA: Is there anything that's not in that stupid book!?

MECHE: What you've got.

GLORIA: What?

MECHE: You can see it a mile away.

GLORIA: You can see what?

MECHE: Well, let's just say that today you've got fool written all over your face. What happened?

GLORIA: Nothing.

MECHE: Nothing? That's just what my sister Cecilia said one night. She came home with that same exact look, like a camel lost in the Arctic circle. "What's the matter, sis?" "Nothing, Meche, I'm fine." Act II, she throws herself off the balcony.

GLORIA: She killed herself by jumping off the balcony?

MECHE: No, killed, no. It was the second floor. But it's the intention that counts.

GLORIA: True.

MECHE: So, give.

GLORIA: Oh, Meche. Forget it.

MECHE: Does it have to do with that macrobionic man you call a boyfriend?

GLORIA: I don't have a boyfriend.

MECHE: I told you something. Now it's your turn.

GLORIA: It's private.

MECHE: So if it's private, how's a person supposed to find out?

GLORIA: Ask the Gospels. They know everything.

MECHE: Oh, Gloria. You are not at peace with Jesus.

GLORIA: You're right. I'm not at peace with him. I'm at war. And it just so happens today I'm pissed off at God. Because all men, even Him, with his divinity and all, are shit.

MECHE: OH! Child. Hail Mary, Jesus, and Joseph. Don't say that or God will punish you. Remember how you suffered the last time.

GLORIA: What happened the last time?

MECHE: He taught you a lesson.

GLORIA: God never taught me any lesson, Meche. Don't go making stuff up.

MECHE: Oh no? So why do you think seventy-five pimples popped out on your face like a colony of army ants?

GLORIA: That happens to every teenager.

MECHE: At the age of 32?

GLORIA: It was a coincidence. Food poisoning.

MECHE: A coincidence you only got rid of by praying. Like that rash you got on your...

GLORIA: Meche!

MECHE: Well, there.

GLORIA: Sure, you won't say them, but you'll do them.

MECHE: Or that time you-

GLORIA: Meche, I'm not in the mood for Jehovah's Witnesses today.

MECHE: Evangelists, if you please. Don't be insulting.

GLORIA: You don't understand a thing about love.

MECHE: Oh, I don't, don't I? Ok: what did that macrobiotic swami do to you? (*Gloria hides her face. Some tears escape*) He's still treating you like a fool. And I've told you a thousand times, but you won't listen, Gloria. Don't date married men. Much less a chubby vegetarian.

GLORIA: A vegetarian doesn't have to look like a corpse.

MECHE: Of course he does. He has to be emaciated and begging for forgiveness. Yours has a belly and he's as carnivorous as the butcher's dog, and that thing will even eat bugs... Look, Gloria, I might be a servant of the Lord, but I'm a woman too. You think I'm an Evangelist because I don't know about these things? It's just the opposite... Those are the silly girls in church, not even fifteen yet and they think they're saints because they're still virgins.

GLORIA: Virgins? Please!

MECHE: I got into this when I was old already and I thank the Lord because I sinned plenty. Sinned here, sinned there. Many, many sins, all different and with different lengths and widths...

GLORIA: But, Meche, I thought you'd gone "cold."

MECHE: And I had two husbands, and I paid my dues. Because two husbands is a steep price. I know what it's like out there and what it's like in the Gospels and Christ. And I swear, I promise you, Jesus at least doesn't leave bruises like that.

GLORIA: (*Alarmed*) I have a bruise?

MECHE: On your shoulder.

GLORIA: Filthy goddamn animal, son of a fucking bitch!

MECHE: Hail Mary, full of grace! (*To the heavens*) Heavenly Father forgive her the language, the poor thing's really hurting.

GLORIA: Is it really obvious?

MECHE: You could say it's a hickey. What happened?

GLORIA: We had a fight.

MECHE: Nothing new there.

GLORIA: This one was no holds barred. Knock down drag out.

MECHE: From what I can see he won the first round.

GLORIA: No, the worst part came after...

MECHE: After what?

GLORIA: After the fight, when I went back.

MECHE: You went back! Well aren't you the true Christian...

GLORIA: I'd left my purse in the room.

MECHE: And you saw him?

GLORIA: The bastard was still there... Drunk. It's a good thing Carmela stayed at the door and didn't see anything.

MECHE: Carmela? Isn't her name Betunia?

GLORIA: Yeah, Betunia, right.

MECHE: And the bruise?

GLORIA: I complained.

MECHE: And he hit you?

GLORIA: Meche, he didn't hit me. "Hitting" is for sissies. He belted me one that stopped me cold!

MECHE: You don't learn. Never give them the chance to hit you. There are rules in relationships. And you better follow them.

GLORIA: Really? So are these rules written down on a scrap of paper, in some table, or the Bible or something? Because when their fist is heading straight for your face there's no rules, no words, no nothing. Nothing but enormous pain, a smashed face and swelling ugly as Satan's balls!

MECHE: Rule number one: never date married men.

GLORIA: Let me write that down: no married men.

MECHE: They tie you down and they never leave their wives.

GLORIA: You do all you can to play the virgin and they always end up treating you like a whore.

MECHE: Don't say that. It makes me want to cry.

GLORIA: I don't know what to do. He said if I left him he'd kill me.

MECHE: *(Looking at Gloria's face)* And how many times can they kill a woman?

GLORIA: As many as they like. Until they fall asleep.

(Enter Beatriz, in a hurry)

BEATRIZ: Gloria, Gloria... He asked me back to his place!

MECHE: Are you going to you just abandon Gloria, in her time of trials and tribulation?

BEATRIZ: Trials and tribu-what?

GLORIA: *(Gesturing to her face)* I'm fine. You do your thing, Marisol.

MECHE: You shouldn't...

GLORIA: Hang on.

(Gloria stands. Takes blush and lipstick out of her purse and touches up Beatriz's makeup)

GLORIA: You don't want him to think you're a twit. You'll scare him off. Give me a smile, like this. No, not like that. Like this *(Smiles)* and use your eyes, get him going. Eat him up. Bite him, scratch him, drink him up. Like Kim Bassinger. "Oh my Gaaawd."

MECHE: Good heavens, don't say such-

BEATRIZ: He tried to kiss me.

GLORIA: Encourage him. They think this movie gets us hot.

BEATRIZ: That's what he said.

GLORIA: If they don't stop repeating themselves they're going to have to stop talking. My ex took me seven times. And seven times we ended up waking up the check-in girl at the hotel.

BEATRIZ: *(To Meche)* Do I look pretty?

GLORIA: Gorgeous.

BEATRIZ: My first date in a year!

GLORIA: Here take some money. Take it all. Live it up and to hell with conventions. A good night'll help a girl forget.

BEATRIZ: I'll never be able to thank you enough!

GLORIA: What are girlfriends for? Come with us to the park tomorrow. You know you could use the exercise. And you can tell us all about it.

(Beatriz and Gloria exchange a kiss. Beatriz exits)

MECHE: You never kissed me like that!

GLORIA: It's against your religion.

MECHE: That's not true.

GLORIA: So what!

MECHE: Sure, you've got a new friend, so now the old ones aren't gold anymore.

GLORIA: Please!

MECHE: That girl's a hypocrite, I'm telling you...

GLORIA: She's a woman, like any other woman.

MECHE: Faker than a 3 and a half dollar bill.

GLORIA: But...

MECHE: You're made for each other!

GLORIA: You're so eaten up by jealousy you're halfway down its throat.

MECHE: Shit meets "Gotta take a dump!!!"

GLORIA: Meche!

MECHE: Forgive me Lord. I shouldn't use such foul language.

GLORIA: If your minister could hear you now!

MECHE: Dear God, forgive me, forgive me, forgive me. Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.

GLORIA: You don't have to be that way. You shouldn't be jealous. We've been friends forever!

MECHE: It's just I've gotten so moody.

GLORIA: I didn't know that about you.

MECHE: I'm changing, Gloria.

GLORIA: We're all changing.

MECHE: Yes, but I'm going backwards. I'm in reverse. I'm envious of everything. I want everything. Life feels so short...

GLORIA: I can't believe this is you saying this!

MECHE: Why?

GLORIA: Because you're the kind of person who always has an answer for everything.

MECHE: I don't have any answers anymore.

GLORIA: What you need is love, like Carmela.

MECHE: You shouldn't have egged her on.

GLORIA: She's not a child, Meche. She's my age.

MECHE: You have no morals.

GLORIA: To hell with morals! If you knew what she was about to do...

MECHE: *(Suddenly cheering up)* Problems?

GLORIA: Of course, you celestial vulture.

MECHE: Problems are my specialty. Maybe the Lord's word...

GLORIA: Even a mute's words would help that one.

MECHE: That bad?

GLORIA: It just so happens I found her in the subway. She wanted to kill herself. Throw herself on the tracks... Toss herself away like a wrinkled old trash bag, like garbage, like someone who doesn't care about anything anymore. She wanted to kill herself and I saved her.

MECHE: Holy shit!

GLORIA: What did you say?

(Meche repeats herself, but in secret)

MECHE: Lord, forgive my foul language.

GLORIA: Shit! Shit! Shit! What else is there to say? I bet God himself said "Holy shit" when he found out. You what He thinks of suicide...

MECHE: So why did she want to kill herself?

GLORIA: She didn't say. But I think she wants to kill herself because she eats more meat than a dog. And, you'll have to excuse me, but anyone who eats meat three times a day is a suicide victim in the making.

MECHE: No one kills themselves over eating meat, Gloria. Now, if they don't eat it, then maybe...

GLORIA: So it must be because she's divorced.

MECHE: Oh, Gloria, you're so naïve. If every divorcée committed suicide this country would be deserted. Women would disappear from the face of the earth. We're the absolute majority. Look at me.

GLORIA: You're not divorced.

MECHE: Widowed in the nick of time.

GLORIA: That's not the same.

MECHE: *(Lights dim a little)* It's going to start. *(Looking toward Beatriz)* Let's go jogging in the park tomorrow, at six. Maybe I can help her. We're experts at people who want to kill themselves. We rehabilitate them and get them singing to the Lord.

GLORIA: She'd be better off throwing herself on the subway tracks.

MECHE: In Japan they're trying out mirrors on the platforms.

GLORIA: What for?

MECHE: So when someone's about to jump, they see their face and reconsider.

GLORIA: So does it work?

MECHE: No, of course not. Those people are pagans.

(The lights dim. The movie starts)

MECHE: (Stands) I'll see you tomorrow and you can tell me all about it.

GLORIA: Ok.

MECHE: Gloria...

GLORIA: Yeah...?

MECHE: Kiss me like you kissed her.

GLORIA: You're like a five year old.

(Gives her a kiss)

MECHE: I have to go...

GLORIA: Tomorrow in the park, at six.

(Meche starts to walk away. Stops)

MECHE: They're in the doorway... They kissed!

GLORIA: Let me see...

MECHE: Look...

GLORIA: *(Turns around)* I can't really see...

MECHE: Well she won't be coming to sit with you now...

GLORIA: Who'd've believed it, Miss Goody Two Shoes!

MECHE: And he's taking advantage. Look where his hands are.

GLORIA: (*Looking in that direction*) Let him! A good squeeze will take a girl's mind off of... Fuck! (*Loud*) That lousy son of a lousy... that low down, no good, filthy rat, dirty dog...!

MECHE: Child!

GLORIA: It's him!

MECHE: Who?

GLORIA: Take a good look, my blind little Evangelist. Take a good look.

MECHE: I can't see...

(*People shush them*)

GLORIA: Goody Two Shoes is sucking face with my boyfriend!

MECHE: Good heavens! It's the cabbage on legs!
And she's letting him! (*Gloria starts toward them. Meche stops her*) What are you going to do?

GLORIA: Take her to the subway and push her myself and turn her into hamburger meat! You see? You see? They're the worst. The fragile-looking ones.

MECHE: It's not her fault. (*Watches them in fascination*) Wow... that's some kiss.

(*Gloria snatches the popcorn from Meche angrily*)

GLORIA: And here I made up her eyes and did her lipstick, and I loaned her money! You see what an idiot I am?! Idiot with a capital "I!" (*Voices hush her*) I will not shut up! And I'll tell you what! I'm going straight over there and I'm gonna scratch both their eyes out! (*Standing, storms toward the door*) Hey, you two, get over here!

(*Gloria, furious, heads for Beatriz. Meche stops her. Lights. Voices of people complaining. The Beatles' "It's Been a Hard Day's Night" plays. Blackout*)

SCENE III

6:30 a.m. the next day. Park. We hear panting and bicycle bells. To one side, a bench and a rock.

BEATRIZ: *(Tired)* ...I've got nothing left, Gloria. I can't... I don't want to go anymore. Gloriaaaaaaa!

(Enter Gloria from the opposite side of the stage, wearing a small backpack)

GLORIA: Go on, suffer. Drag that body over the rocks. Sow your abundant cellulite in the muck.

BEATRIZ: Stop this, Gloria...

GLORIA: Beg for mercy.

BEATRIZ: Mercy!

GLORIA: You have no pride.

BEATRIZ: I don't have anything anymore.

GLORIA: I put poison in your water.

BEATRIZ: Please, you have to listen to me...

GLORIA: Cyanide with rat poison, insecticide, bug spray and sulfur.

BEATRIZ: Enough, Gloria! Enough already! Go to hell.

GLORIA: Oh, such language!

(Beatriz gestures in annoyance. Gloria takes off her backpack and leaves it on the bench)

BEATRIZ: Listen to me: I didn't know he was your boyfriend.

GLORIA: I didn't feel a thing when I saw you two kissing. I just felt sorry for you, Maria Antonia.

BEATRIZ: We've been together for over twelve hours and you still don't know my name.

(Meche rides up on a bike. She has a bag and a small boom box playing Evangelical music)

MECHE: It's a... It's a good thing you stopped... Because I saw you... back there... and I raced and raced... to catch up...

GLORIA: Turn off that diabolic device, Meche, before I shove it up your...

MECHE: Gloria!

GLORIA: Nose.

MECHE: (*Singing along*) "Christ alone can save you/ Only he can light your way/ Hallelujah, Jesus loves you/ For his sweet peace I pray."

GLORIA: (*Stops jogging*) Jingles for morons at six in the morning. Fuck, Meche!

MECHE: (*Turns off music. To Beatriz*) How's your arm feeling now?

BEATRIZ: Better.

MECHE: (*To Gloria*) You practically yanked it off last night.

GLORIA: I'll finish the job today.

MECHE: (*To Beatriz*) That scene she made was movie-of-the-week material. Gloria, all set to kill you, and you slipping away, and her yelling and the cabbage running around...But in the end, thanks to the awesome power of God, it all worked out. That butchering cabbage won't be bothering us anymore. (*Meche looks at Beatriz*) So: you want to kill yourself?

BEATRIZ: (*Looks at Gloria*) What?

GLORIA: Fuck, Meche. There's your famous tact!

BEATRIZ: I thought you were my friend!

GLORIA: I don't know how she found out, really.

BEATRIZ: (*Starts to exit stage left*) I don't know why I ever met you!

(*Beatriz cries. Meche stops her*)

GLORIA: Nice going, you witch.

BEATRIZ: (*Weepy*) They always betray you, every time.

MECHE: Wait, now wait, don't get all upset. I'm not your enemy.

GLORIA: Fuck, don't cry... I can't stand it...

(Beatriz cries)

MECHE: There's a solution for everything in this life, except death, Beatriz. Submission, resignation, and prayer. Did you know that if you commit suicide you don't go to heaven? Cry, that's good. It washes away your guilt. You've been living in sin and you dared to disobey God's laws. Cry and repent.

GLORIA: For fuck's sake, Meche! She can do whatever she wants, but no crying. I hate people who cry, they make me cry. Don't make a big deal out of it. (Whimpering too) Don't cry, crying's for silly little girls. A woman should never cry. The rest of them can cry, but you no.

BEATRIZ: I should be dead! And no one should feel sorry for me!

(Meche tries to concentrate. Closes her eyes, speaks in a strange language. Gloria goes to her bag and pulls out a joint. She lights it, smokes and passes it to Beatriz. Meche doesn't notice)

MECHE: *(Suddenly in English)* Seek the awesome power of the Lord. Do not be confused. The devil is like a triangle in your heart, his sharp points damaging and destroying it.

BEATRIZ: *(After a long drag)* I'm feeling better already. Thanks.

MECHE: You're welcome. I knew my power would... *(Realizing)* Gloria! What are you doing?

GLORIA: Just a little puff, Meche.

MECHE: What? Dope! Narcotics! Drug trafficking!

BEATRIZ: Hey, don't get carried away.

MECHE: Illegal substances. The police. They could be behind that tree. We'll go to jail! Destroy that! Annihilate that tool of the devil against your soul. How far have you fallen, Gloria? Drugs, no less!

GLORIA: Come on, I wouldn't call it "drugs," Meche. No. No. A little pot. It's kid stuff. An old habit. Nothing dangerous. Besides, it's one hundred percent natural.

MECHE: At six in the morning!

GLORIA: It relaxes you in an emergency. *(To Beatriz)* It relaxed you, right?

BEATRIZ: I'm feeling better. Let me have another drag.

MECHE: It's temptation. *(Says something in a strange language)* Don't let Satan lead you down the sulfurous pathway of sin. "Free yourself of bad habits," says the Gospel.

(Beatriz smokes)

GLORIA: Meche, come off it. I've seen you bend an elbow over forty-seven times and counting.

MECHE: The Evangelical church tolerates a glass of wine or two, a little drink, a sip. *(Dramatic)* But not vice! *(Beatriz takes another hit)* Besides, that's bad for you. It kills neurons and makes you dizzy.

BEATRIZ: There's nothing wrong with it, Meche.

MECHE: *(Dramatic)* It's things like that, that make you the way you are!

BEATRIZ: How am I?

GLORIA: How is she?

MECHE: *(dramatic)* Like that!

BEATRIZ: Like what?

MECHE: *(dramatic)* "A desperate woman!"

BEATRIZ: I am not a-

MECHE: *(dramatic)* You wanted to kill yourself!

GLORIA: But not over a little dope, Meche, don't be stupid. Francesca thought of it because... She was in the subway and then I came. The train was just about to pull in and... As soon as I saw her, I knew. It was obvious, she... she wanted to kill herself because she's divorced... And that's all.

(Beatriz giggles. Meche and Gloria look at her)

BEATRIZ: Gloria, no, that's not the way it is... *(Laughs)* Maybe I wanted to cut myself to bits, but it wasn't over my divorce. Please!

GLORIA: But...

BEATRIZ: Look, nothing lasts forever. You make ties and you untie them the second you realize you have to live your whole life. All of it. Not in pieces. *(Smokes again)*

Nothing lasts, learn it now. Nothing lasts. Nothing. Not even this. (*Tosses it*) When you're going to kill yourself you don't think about that. You think about something else. You see your whole life stretched out like a thread. You see all the years you've lived, and you see nothing. Nothing good. Thirty-two years and nothing. Nothing. You never think you're going to kill yourself until, suddenly, everything seems possible.

MECHE: (*Goes to her, sincere*) But...What made you think such a horrible thing?

(*Pause*)

BEATRIZ: I think...

GLORIA: Yeah?

BEATRIZ: That...

GLORIA: What?

BEATRIZ: I...

MECHE: Spit it out.

BEATRIZ: You...

GLORIA: Aha...

BEATRIZ: Ummm...

MECHE: (*Explodes*) Ummm...! What the hell? (*They look at her*) God forgive me, but the information's urgent! What? What? Say it!

BEATRIZ: Maybe the reason, well, one of the reasons was... It was a woman. That's it. A woman.

MECHE: Your ex-husband was seeing another woman?

BEATRIZ: My ex has nothing to do with it. I'm talking about a woman. She must have been twenty-five and I saw her in the subway. She was wearing this serious suit, really elegant. She was so beautiful. She bumped into me. She was in a hurry. She was carrying a folder, she glanced at her watch and... she was in a hurry. That's all. Then I looked at myself and I realized that that woman was the woman I wanted to be. A woman in a hurry.

GLORIA: And you're not?

BEATRIZ: I got married young, against the wishes of my whole family and even my own. They didn't know I was pregnant.

MECHE: You have a kid? That's wonderful!

BEATRIZ: Yeah, wonderful, but wonderfully dramatic too, Meche. That's when I had to drop out of college. Drop my plans. I'd always dreamed about a desk and a secretary and being in a big hurry. In the end, I had to content myself with changing his clothes for the first time, watching him take his first steps, and living every second like it was an hour.

MECHE: That's beautiful. A little boy. God bless him. Jesus is love.

GLORIA: Jesus is shit, Meche. Aren't you listening to the story?

BEATRIZ: The baby grew up, ate up all my savings and meanwhile I... I took classes and slept with my husband. I spent my time thinking about going to the movies, weekends, friends that came and went, recipes for dinner, about everything that's nothing. The years slid by while I was watching TV. Then, I saw that woman. I pictured her with all her responsibilities, her big desk, a datebook full of meetings and contacts and I was envious. Because she's like that and I'm just an alarm clock going off at the same time and a telephone with the ringer down and no messages. *(To Gloria)* Don't you have any more of that?

GLORIA: Yeah, of course. Be prepared. *(Meche looks at her)* I was a Girl Scout. *(Gloria hands her another joint)* So why'd you get divorced?

MECHE: He left her for another woman.

BEATRIZ: He didn't leave me. I left him.

GLORIA: What?

BEATRIZ: I left him. I dumped him. Walked out. *(They keep looking at her)* But that's not important.

MECHE: Not important? Of course it's important! Why'd you leave him?

BEATRIZ: You don't want to know.

GLORIA: Meche will slit her throat if you don't spill.

MECHE: We're going to help you, we're going to help you so your thoughts and feelings can rise from their teeming submarine depths.

(Meche pulls out a small liquor bottle)

GLORIA: Take a look at you!

MECHE: A little fuel, to get things moving...

GLORIA: I thought that was a sin.

MECHE: *(Takes a drink)* The devil's in the vice, not the alcohol. Getting drunk is a sin, not drinking... not drinking...

(Beatriz takes a long drink. Meche takes the bottle from her)

BEATRIZ: When I was married, I'd see and I'd meet people I liked, men I was attracted to. And I'd see my girlfriends, young like me, and hear what they were doing and suddenly I realized there was a part of life I hadn't run into. And then, I started thinking about things I wanted to do but couldn't anymore.

And I felt guilty. And he... He changed. He didn't treat me the same way. He didn't talk to me. He didn't talk to me about dreams. And then the little things they stop doing; they don't open your door or push in your chair. They don't take you to the movies or buy you dinner, they don't want to spend money. They don't write you poems and passion turns into habit.

MECHE: Nothing like dating.

BEATRIZ: When I was growing up, they gave me everything. From the time I was a little girl, I felt important, loved, noticed. No one ever told me I might be second best.

GLORIA: Me either.

BEATRIZ: And he also, he got weird. Neurotic. The only thing he cared about was if the bathroom floor was dry. So I left him. One fine morning, I got up, I turned on all the faucets, I took my son and left, with the bathroom two inches under water.

MECHE: *(Takes a drink)* In Japan they say that when you want to kill yourself, you should look in the mirror.

BEATRIZ: I did.

MECHE: And didn't you see the face of Jesus?

BEATRIZ: No, I saw a woman who wanted to feel.

MECHE: *(Running away)* Not feeling isn't so bad.

GLORIA: *(To Beatriz)* You hit her in her sore spot!

MECHE: We make such a big deal out of wanting to feel. But: feel what? Lust? Sex? That's it? (*Loud*) That's it? Thinking about sex all the time is a sin, a sign of the devil!

BEATRIZ: I didn't say anything about sex.

GLORIA: Meche relates everything to her low sex drive.

MECHE: Gloria!

GLORIA: An eye for an eye, sweetheart.

MECHE: You can't keep a secret.

BEATRIZ: So soon? Don't tell me you're already...? You're not that old, Meche. Are you?

MECHE: I'm a widow. For five years now the only man I've needed is Jesus.

GLORIA: Look, Meche. You want my advice? Find yourself a twenty year old. Some Muslim Rosicrucian you like who likes you back. And make yourself useful. It doesn't last long, but you enjoy it more.

(Meche begins to concentrate)

MECHE: (*Serious*) All I have to do is look at you two to see you have the demon of concupiscence inside you!

BEATRIZ: The demon of what?

GLORIA: Ew, that sounds awful!

MECHE: (*Says something in her made-up language*) Concupiscence.

GLORIA: In English, woman. (*Meche says something else in another made-up language*) That sounded like a hex.

MECHE: When I'm meditating on God I speak a sacred language even I don't recognize. I speak to him, I meditate with him, I say sacred words I don't understand.

(Says something in another, particularly ugly, language)

GLORIA: Meche, don't start with that stuff. It scares me.

MECHE: Beatriz, that demon is inside you!

(Says something in the strange language. In a trance)

BEATRIZ: Don't look at me like that.

MECHE: *(To Beatriz)* You live with that demon. He's eating your...

(Says something in the other language)

BEATRIZ: I don't have any demon inside me eating my...! *(Imitates what Meche said)* I don't! What does concupiscence mean?

MECHE: Lasciviousness.

BEATRIZ: Oh. Right.

GLORIA: Do you know what lasciviousness means?

BEATRIZ: Of course.. *(To Gloria)* What is it?

GLORIA: Lasciviousness is when you... Of course, when you're... uh... on airplanes and... You tell her, Meche.

MECHE: Lasciviousness is carnal desire!

BEATRIZ: Oh! That!

GLORIA: Thank heavens!

BEATRIZ: You had me scared.

GLORIA: I thought it had something to do with body odor.

MECHE: The demon of lasciviousness has you trapped inside and as long as he does, you won't be happy!

BEATRIZ: I already knew that.

MECHE: About the demon?

BEATRIZ: No, about being unhappy. So how do you know all this?

GLORIA: Because she's a scholarly Tibetan Hindu Samaritan.

MECHE: I'm in close contact with the spirit and souls. Even death. You see I know when someone has died even if I haven't seen them and sometimes even if I don't know them. They communicate with me in infinite ways: trances, banging, whispers, pinching,

clothes hangers, photos... I see a dead man's face and I know who he is, his name, how he died.

BEATRIZ: Meche would be a big help in the morgue.

(Suddenly, Meche goes to Beatriz. Takes her by the shoulders)

MECHE: Come here...! *(dramatic)* An evil spirit is inside you...!

BEATRIZ: Are you an Evangelist or a Spiritist?

MECHE: *(dramatic)* The things of the spirit are all one!

GLORIA: You can't win. She's got a saying for everything.

MECHE: Evil spirits go where they can satisfy their perversity! Spirits sniff out the wounds of the soul, like flies sniff out the wounds of the body! And I have been sent by the Lord to cure you! Are you ready?

GLORIA: Oh, you're fucked now, Augusta: She's going to operate on you.

MECHE: The sooner...

(Says something in her strange language)

GLORIA: That means "the better."

MECHE: We must cleanse the filth of the soul just as we cleanse that of the body. But to drive it away, we cannot simply ask, we must renounce what draws it to us! *(Loud, dramatic)* Are you willing to do that? Do you have faith?

BEATRIZ: I think... I think... that-

MECHE: Excellent. *(Begins speaking in her language. Then in English. Loud, in a mystic tone)* "We beseeeeech you oh almiiiiighty and allpooooowerful God, send down your heeeavenly spirits to guide us. Drive oooooout the spirits that would lead us astraaaay and grant us the understanding to separate truth from falsehood." *(Gestures abruptly. Speaks another language. Goes into a trance)* Demon of concupiscence inhabiting this body, I ORDER YOU TO LEAVE! Out! *(Gestures again)* Good spirits, I beseech you to guide this mortal, Anastasia...

BEATRIZ: Beatriz!

MECHE: Whatever

BEATRIZ: If they don't know my name the spirits will end up guiding someone else!

MECHE: They already know who you are! Now say this: (*Meche, prays in a secret language. Suddenly, in English*) “Almighty God, in your name, may the evil spirits be driven from me.” Repeat. (*Beatriz does*) ...and may your good spirits help me to fight against them.” Repeat. (*Beatriz does. Meche now furious*) “Delinquent spirits who inspire evil thoughts; cheating, lying spirits who deceive them; mocking spirits who abuse their trust, I reject you with all the strength of my soul and I stop my ears to you!” (*Meche makes sounds of thunder with her mouth. Suddenly runs to Beatriz’s side and points in terror*) He’s out!

BEATRIZ: Who?

MECHE: The spirit of concupiscence! (*Points, as if an invisible entity were running around*) There he is! Run! He’s behind me, he’s after me, now he wants to get inside of me. Get back! Vermin! (*Says something in her language*) Be gone!

(*We see how “the spirit” chases Meche as she tries to get away. The “spirit” then enters Meche through her vagina. Meche screams and looks at the audience*)

MECHE: He got in me! Oh God! HE GOT IN! Protect me!

(*Meche begins to touch herself sensually, as though someone else were doing it. Meche moans and yells, between fake pain and real pleasure. Beatriz and Gloria watch, uncertainly*)

BEATRIZ: What should we do?

GLORIA: I’d say nothing.

BEATRIZ: But she’s suffering.

GLORIA: Looks to me like she’s enjoying it.

(*Meche pants. Puts her hands between her legs*)

MECHE: Mocking spirit, leave my body. Oh! Oh! Oh!

BEATRIZ: Should I call the fire department?

GLORIA: To put out a spirit?

BEATRIZ: An exorcist then? I saw a movie where-

(*Meche then has a colossal and mystic orgasm*)

GLORIA: *(To Meche)* Enough already, spirit, enough. You never last that long. Get out of there, spirit, go on, leave her alone, you did what you had to do. Beat it, spirit, light up a cigarette and turn on the TV.

BEATRIZ: She's coming out of it.

GLORIA: That spirit had a nice touch.

BEATRIZ: The truth is that spirit wasn't inside me. It's a shame.

MECHE: *(Suddenly comes to herself. Exhausted)* He's gone!

GLORIA: I would have liked to meet him.

MECHE: Don't joke about these things, Gloria.

GLORIA: Did you get his phone number? What's he doing tomorrow? Does that spirit have a brother?

MECHE: *(To Beatriz)* How do you feel?

BEATRIZ: Me? *(Looks at her)* Well, um... I'm the same.

MECHE: *(Annoyed)* The same? How can...? But you're free now. The demon's not in you anymore. Don't you feel any different? Can't you feel the butterflies' wings, the leaves in the trees, the pitter-patter of passing ants?

BEATRIZ: *(Looks at the ground)* Well, the pitter-patter of ants... I don't think so. *(After a short pause)* I'm sorry.

GLORIA: You're a failure, you old gypsy. *(Takes out another joint)*

MECHE: *(Furious)* It's you and that damned weed. Gloria: you interfered, it's your fault...!

GLORIA: Don't fuck with me. I wasn't the one rolling around with the demon.

MECHE: You are rotten and evil!

GLORIA: What did I do?

MECHE: Silence, spawn of Satan!

(Meche tries to take the joint away. Gloria won't let her. Meche slaps her furiously. They pull each other's hair. Beatriz tries to separate them. In the struggle, the bottle of alcohol drops)

GLORIA: What's the matter with you?

(Beatriz manages to separate them. Meche cries)

MECHE: Forgive me... forgive me... my friend... Gloria...

BEATRIZ: What happened to her?

GLORIA: She doesn't like to lose, she's too proud. I don't know how you got into the Masons.

MECHE: Evangelists!

GLORIA: Same thing!

(Beatriz picks up the bottle and offers it to Meche)

BEATRIZ: Take it easy, here...*(Meche takes a long drink)* Again, easy...*(Meche takes a long drink)* Again, easy...*(Meche takes a long drink)*

GLORIA: Any easier and she'll be falling over.

MECHE: I deserve it. Say whatever you want. But you have to forgive me, my friend...

GLORIA: Meche, please!

MECHE: *(Drinks)* If you don't forgive me, I'll never be happy again...

GLORIA: If the priest could see you, drinking white lightning before seven in the morning...

MECHE: *(On her knees)* Insult me, if you want. If it makes you happy, whip my back. Bleed me, kick me, bite me, accuse me, wipe the floor with my face, but forgive me... Please...

GLORIA: If you're looking for someone to crucify you and stick a crown of thorns on your head, then you can keep looking. I don't watch TV during holy week.

MECHE: Forgive me! I beg you!

GLORIA: Relax. Anyway, you didn't hit me hard. I've been smacked around so much lately, one more or one less...

MECHE: Forgive me or I'll die!

BEATRIZ: Forgive her already, Gloria.

GLORIA: Fine! I forgive you. Tolling bells and celestial chorus. Ta-da!

MECHE: NO! Really forgive me.

GLORIA: What do you want? A certificate?

MECHE: Lay your hand on my forehead.

GLORIA: The stuff you have in your head, I keep in my ass, Meche.

BEATRIZ: Do what she says.

(She does)

MECHE: Now say: "I forgive you all your trespasses."

GLORIA: Right. All your trespasses.

MECHE: "I forgive you."

GLORIA: I forgive you.

MECHE: *(Stands up)* Really?

GLORIA: Forget about it... you're nervous. All three of us are out of our heads.

BEATRIZ: Out of breath.

GLORIA: Each of us is picking up...

MECHE: Where the other one fell down.

BEATRIZ: That's really pretty, Meche.

MECHE: *(Drinks again)* Yeah, pretty. But I have to be serene. *(Drinks)* Serene... *(Drinks)* It's all over now. Ok. Ok. Serene.

GLORIA: Yeah, she's been missing her Serenaholics Anonymous meetings lately.

MECHE: *(Finishes drinking)* Honestly, girls, lately I. I... At my age when you've stopped... And the birthdays coming one right after another. I'm an old evangelist. And the thing is, when I go to the meetings I don't believe as much. I ask God to show me the way but all I find is the same old loneliness, down the same old sidewalk *(Drinks)* to the same old place.

BEATRIZ: Meche, you have your powers.

MECHE: Don't make me laugh!

BEATRIZ: When you were doing the exorcism, I felt something, really.

MECHE: Don't lie. I appreciate that you want to make me feel better. But don't lie. Don't. I don't have any powers. I don't... (*Stands up*) Once... once I did. But it was different then. There was a time when I was a virgin.

BEATRIZ: There's nothing different in that.

MECHE: I mean I was a holy virgin.

GLORIA: Saint Meche, savior of Divorcées, Evangelists and Vegetarians.

MECHE: My mother was a believer. She'd put me to bed with candles and prayers all around me. One day my little sister, who was dying of the plague, was cured when I sang her a psalm. And then, because I was untouched and my mother was hysterical, the word spread that I'd cured her. They started calling me "the virgin" and the worst part was it was true. I was a virgin. A very miserable virgin.

GLORIA: All virgins are miserable, Meche.

MECHE: Extremely miserable. Until The Preacher came.

GLORIA: First miracle of the day: Meche sharing something personal!

MECHE: The preacher was blonde, gorgeous. He had the voice of an angel. He said he'd come to meet the virgin because he had a message for me. He came into my house. He prayed for me. He sang for me. He closed my eyes with his white hands. He baptized me with his silver tears of faith. And when I saw him kneeling there... so handsome, so eloquent, with the face of a saint who'd never muddy still waters, with his scent, his sweet taste, like a heavenly angel, like something untouchable, I threw myself on him and devoured him with kisses. (*Gloria and Beatriz shriek*) And well, I learned everything. That was it for my magic, my prayers and my virginity, of course. I can still remember every detail and it gives me goose bumps. (*Showing them*) Look...

GLORIA: Thank heavens you can't feel anything.

MECHE: The next day my preacher had vanished. (*Meche drinks*) Then I married my first husband, but he didn't last. Where I'm from, no man wanted you with a hole in your chassis.

(*Finishes the bottle*) My second husband was the Evangelist: a boozier, womanizer, partier, and night owl.

BEATRIZ: I've never read that Gospel.

MECHE: Yeah, revelation came to him later, when he fell gravely ill with... chronic scabiosis.

GLORIA: Scabiosis?

MECHE: Ah... sarcoptic pruritis.

GLORIA: And what is that?

BEATRIZ: Mange woman! He got mange!

MECHE: Then he reformed and five years ago...

BEATRIZ: You got lucky and he died and left you in peace. *(Pause. They look at her)*

GLORIA: No, don't say that. It isn't like that. She loved her husband. *(Gloria looks at Meche)* Right? *(Meche drops her head. Laughs)* I can't believe it! And here I thought you were suffering!

MECHE: I got my freedom very late.

GLORIA: I never would have guessed!

MECHE: *(Pause. With clarity, feeling better)* You had no way of knowing. You become an evangelist because he tells you to and he makes it sound so nice. AND YOU BELIEVE. You have faith. Just because he moves his lips so sweetly.

GLORIA: You might. I'd never do that.

MECHE: Oh really? Well, when I met you, you were about as vegetarian as an African lioness.

GLORIA: *(Forcefully)* I am a vegetarian. But I could just as easily be a creationist, a flutist...or a Presbyterian, if I ever find out what the hell that means. I'm not tied to him or anyone else. If I want I'll leave him and that's that. I make space, but I don't need to. I don't have to do what he does. I'd slit my wrists if I ever caught myself playing that part.

BEATRIZ: So you're not a vegetarian?

GLORIA: If I want I'll eat blood sausage and barbecued ribs and suck the fat off the bones. I'll drink the blood like tomato juice. So? What'll happen to me?

MECHE: Nothing will happen to you, Gloria.

GLORIA: Of course not!

MECHE: Because you're a vegetarian sometimes.

BEATRIZ: Exactly. Sometimes. That's all it is. That's the way we are, all three of us. Sometimes. "Sometimes," what a great expression: "Sometimes." "Sometimes" and a pair of fabulous red heels. "Sometimes" and your black dress cut down to here. "Sometimes" and a preacher for each of us.

(They laugh)

BEATRIZ: And 'til he gets here *(She chases them with a stick)* move that ass, sitting there like a bunch of idiots won't get us anywhere!

(She chases them for a few seconds. They play happily, like girls. Suddenly we hear a helicopter. Wind. Gloria is absolutely petrified. The noise grows louder)

MECHE: What's that?

BEATRIZ: Where's it coming from?

MECHE: The sky...

BEATRIZ: Gloria...!

(They look at her)

MECHE: What's wrong with you?

BEATRIZ: She's gone stiff.

MECHE: Gloria!

GLORIA: *(After a pause)* But...

(Suddenly, Gloria hides behind the bench)

MECHE: Oh! It's the cabbage!

GLORIA: *(From the bench)* Son of a bitch! I knew he'd find me! I don't want him to see me!

MECHE: He saw you. The devil always has four eyes.

BEATRIZ: So? You don't have to talk to him...

MECHE: That chicken eater is waving at us!

GLORIA: We'll pretend I'm not here, it's just you two...

MECHE: Stand up to him! Don't be scared of him.

GLORIA: It's not fear, Meche.

MECHE: No, of course not. It's terror.

BEATRIZ: He's laughing, that scumbag!

(We hear a voice from the helicopter loudspeaker)

MECHE: He's asking if it's you!

GLORIA: Say no!

MECHE: *(Loud)* Yes, it's Gloria! And she's not scared of you!

GLORIA: You damn Evangelist traitor!

BEATRIZ: Tell him to go to hell!

(We hear a voice over the helicopter loudspeaker)

MECHE: He says he's going to land!

GLORIA: He's crazy! He's totally crazy if he thinks I'm going over there. I'd rather die. I'd rather be turned into a rat. I'd rather throw myself on the subway tracks with this nitwit. But I won't go! I won't!

BEATRIZ: Maybe NOW he wants to take you to the party.

MECHE: Yeah, his wife stood him up and he needs a stand in.

BEATRIZ: Fuck him! Right, Gloria?

Gloria hesitates.

MECHE: Gloria. You. Are. Not. Going.

(We hear a voice from the helicopter. Gloria finally comes out from her hiding place)

GLORIA: (*Loud*) Idiot, wait there...! (*To Beatriz*) I'll be right back. I mean it. Just a second, to see what he wants. (*Pause. She changes her shoes and shirt*) Really... I just have to tell him something and I'll be right back. Wait here. I won't give him anything. Don't leave me... Briseida, I'll leave you my shoes, then I'll have to come back. My shoes and my purse and all my clothes and my house keys and my wallet and everything, everything. I have to come back. Take it all... I'll be right back. I'm as lost as a chad in a ballot box.

BEATRIZ: Gloria, wait... can I ask you something?

GLORIA: Ok, but make it quick.

(*Beatriz looks at her. The helicopter is starting up*)

BEATRIZ: (*Quickly*) Who's Chad?

GLORIA: What?

BEATRIZ: Chad, the guy who's lost.

GLORIA: How should I know?!

(*Gloria runs off stage*)

MECHE: Her hair's a mess.

(*We hear the helicopter moving off. Meche turns on the radio. The Beatles play, an ambient ballad*)

BEATRIZ: So now what do we do?

MECHE: Wait for Gloria.

BEATRIZ: And if she doesn't come?

MECHE: I don't know. We can't stay here all day. You have to take your son to school. A little boy. How nice! Right now you think he's holding you back but I... later... you... How I wish my time wasn't up.

BEATRIZ: You never had kids?

MECHE: I didn't have time. Damn it... (*Looks to the heavens*) Lord forgive me all my sins. I've done plenty and almost all of it today!

BEATRIZ: I don't think he heard you, Meche.

MECHE: Fine, I don't care. (*To the heavens*) And besides: You want me to tell you something? (*defiant*) I'll swear all I want, fuckin' a. (*To God*) So what? Split me in half with a bolt of lightning if you want, but I'm sick of all your fear!

BEATRIZ: Don't be like that.

MECHE: I've had it up to here (*Pointing to her head*) with his threats and his rules and his ready-made certified opinions on everything that goes on. (*Looks at her*) Have you ever, at any moment you can remember, have you ever been happy?

BEATRIZ: Happy? I... I've had fun, even though I haven't been happy. Happy for moments. Happy on a stormy afternoon, watching the raindrops fall and breathing in deep. Happy with my son, when he started to talk, when he looked at me like he needed me.

MECHE: Well, I haven't. Not lately. And I've started thinking it has to do with that little man up there. I've always had to do what I didn't want to. Like praying every day, doing my duty, doing everything he tells me to. He's like a husband, but without the good stuff...

BEATRIZ: Meche!

MECHE: God's like work. Like working in that movie theater. Day in, day out. You know I never missed a day.

BEATRIZ: You never called in sick?

MECHE: Well, yes, once. I stayed home, in my underwear.

BEATRIZ: Your underwear! Why?

MECHE: It was cooler. I was reading a book and listening to my neighbors fight and people swearing at each other in the street and I felt really good.

BEATRIZ: You could leave the theater and God. Quit it all. Who's stopping you?

MECHE: And the Evangelical church too! Yeah, I'm sick of all that. It's too much. I'm sick of whole nights singing to God! He's got enough people to sing to him. He's probably deaf with all those idiotic lyrics and off-key screeching. Maybe he'd rather you just give to him it straight, without all the clapping. You know, I've been thinking maybe He doesn't like that music and all that praying. Don't you think? Do you like it?

BEATRIZ: Honestly, I prefer The Beatles.

MECHE: And I like salsa.

BEATRIZ: So desert. Run away.

MECHE: And then what?

BEATRIZ: Then, nothing. Life.

MECHE: Oh no! Not life! My nerves!!

BEATRIZ: Life means you and no one else. You have to be like Gloria. You're you and forget everyone else.

MECHE: Just my girlfriends. Like you.

BEATRIZ: And you.

MECHE: And Gloria.

BEATRIZ: Her too.

MECHE: Even though she never listens to what anyone else says. Speaking of Gloria: She's not back.

BEATRIZ: I don't see the helicopter anywhere.

MECHE: One time we made plans to go get my ID and she left me hanging for four days.

BEATRIZ: Four days?

MECHE: I almost got deported as an undocumented alien. And I thought: "you better have a good excuse, Gloria, or I'll boil you in castor oil."

BEATRIZ: Where was she?

MECHE: That idiot of a bloodsuckng cabbage had asked her to go to Ganymede.

BEATRIZ: Ganymede?

MECHE: On Jupiter or Saturn, or around there...

BEATRIZ: He asked her to go?

MECHE: And the fool went.

BEATRIZ: To Ganymede, the planet?

MECHE: Not even. A lousy asteroid. Smaller than the moon. But don't think he took her there in a rocket ship. Not even on that annoying, hunk of junk helicopter. No. He's couldn't make a grand gesture, not even in his imagination.

BEATRIZ: So?

MECHE: He probably took her to the Planetarium and slipped her some LSD. The big dummy thinks she was there and had a close encounter.

BEATRIZ: But Gloria's fantastic. It's too bad she's seeing a guy like that.

MECHE: I have a feeling that if we don't help her soon, she could do something drastic.

BEATRIZ: You don't believe she'd...?

MECHE: I believe everything, you know that.

RADIO: Extra! Extra! The New York Police Department has just announced the discovery of a very dead lifeless corpse in the area of Central Park. The deceased, who has now passed away, may have plunged from a precipice or been thrown from a great height. More to come... *(Returns to music)*

MECHE: Someone died in the park.

BEATRIZ: You know what? I'm going to go back to school...

MECHE: Someone is dead dead...

BEATRIZ: Finish my degree...

MECHE: They said it was a woman's body...

BEATRIZ: And be a woman in a hurry...

MECHE: And Gloria's not back yet...

BEATRIZ: With important papers under my arm...

MECHE: Would she throw herself out of a helicopter?

BEATRIZ: And a desk and a secretary...

MECHE: Would she? Or wouldn't she?

BEATRIZ: Just like before I got married, when I thought I was so smart, and special, and had such brilliant future ahead of me.

MECHE: Aren't you listening to me?

BEATRIZ: What?

MECHE: Gloria's not back and...

BEATRIZ: Let's wait a little longer. It's early.

MECHE: And they said there's the corpse of a dead woman in this park.

BEATRIZ: Oh, really? Who could it be?

MECHE: The radio said she was young, thin, and tall with black hair.

BEATRIZ: I didn't hear anything.

MECHE: And that her name started with a "G." And Gloria's not here. And she said she'd be right back. And she got into a helicopter with a psychopath.

BEATRIZ: What are you saying?

MECHE: Just that!

BEATRIZ: You think that?

MECHE: Exactly!

BEATRIZ: That she...

MECHE. That she, that!

BEATRIZ: You're thinking she...? Is it possible?

MECHE: Yes!

BEATRIZ: No!

MECHE: I'm sorry, I can feel it! He could've thrown her out!

BEATRIZ: No, it can't be...

MECHE: Destroyed by the helicopter's blades.

BETRIZ: If she fell the blades didn't touch her!

MECHE: Maybe he threw her out while he was flying upside down.

BEATRIZ: Don't say stupid things, Meche.

MECHE: What if they had a fight and she jumped out?

BEATRIZ: She wouldn't.

MECHE: What if he threatened her?

BEATRIZ: Meche, I don't think...

MECHE: Or he pushed her himself. Maybe that's why he came looking for her. To kill her.

BEATRIZ: Why would he want to kill her?

MECHE: Because she wouldn't tell him the secret!

BEATRIZ: What secret?

MECHE: How should I know?!

BEATRIZ: Gloria wasn't murdered, Meche.

MECHE: What if she killed herself? She threw herself into the void!

BEATRIZ: She had no reason to do that.

MECHE: For love!

BEATRIZ: You don't kill yourself for love!

MECHE: How do you know?

BEATRIZ: Because I've been there and love isn't enough.

MECHE: She's a woman of drastic measures!

BEATRIZ: No, don't say that...

MECHE: Besides, Gloria had never been in a helicopter.

BEATRIZ: But she...

MECHE: Or even on a bicycle!

BEATRIZ: Don't say that... you're making me... you're making me nervous.

MECHE: The radio said the woman was dressed like her... she had black hair...

BEATRIZ: Wait... stop... just stop...!

MECHE: It was her. My extrasensory perception is telling me it was. I'm going to go into a trance!

BEATRIZ: You're going back to that?

MECHE: I recognize the dead from a great distance! Awesome power of God...
(*Makes a ritual gesture*) Spirits of death, I need to know if... It's her! It's her! Strike me dead if I'm wrong!

BEATRIZ: No, no more death.

MECHE: Gloria's dead, chopped to bits, such a tragedy!

BEATRIZ: I think...

MECHE: I can feel it! I feel the dead, I told you! She killed herself... And we abandoned her... (*Crying*) Poor Gloria... tossed out like a rat...

(*We hear Gloria's voice, from beyond the grave*)

GLORIA: Mecheeeeeeeeeee!

MECHE: Did you hear that? She's trying to communicate with us. The dead speak! She's come to say goodbye!

(*Both cry. Beatriz is terrified too*)

GLORIA: Mecheeeeeeeeeee!

MECHE: I TOLD YOU! It's her spirit. (*Loud*) Teeeeell meeee, Gloriaaaaa, we hear you from your twilight abode, the valley of shadows. Tell us... What is it like there? What do you want to tellllllll us?

(*Just then, Gloria enters, victoriously*)

GLORIA: It's a good thing you waited!

(*Meche and Beatriz scream in terror*)

GLORIA: What? Is my hair a mess?

MECHE: No... it's just...

BEATRIZ: We... were... in...

GLORIA: Wait till you hear this...! If you knew...!

MECHE: Gloria! You're alive!

GLORIA: Oh, honey, more alive than life itself.

BEATRIZ: We were so worried...

GLORIA: I did it! That'll teach him. I treated him like a filthy dumpster dog, like a nasty hairy old rat.

BEATRIZ: Gloria, we thought... you were dead because... a little while ago... the radio said... a woman... against the rocks

MECHE: And we were so sad and blue that...

GLORIA: You want me to tell you or don't you?

BEATRIZ: Look how my hand is shaking. When I saw you I thought...

GLORIA: Don't interrupt Yolanda, you never let anyone else get a word in edgewise. Like I was saying: I just did something historic. To his face. To his face: I dumped him.

BEATRIZ: (*Happy*) What?

GLORIA: Just like Kim Bassinger does to "Mickey Wickey" in that wonderful movie. I said: land here, I'm getting off this filthy contraption. And I didn't care. I told him to take a hike. And I told him to go to hell, if they'll take him. After all, there are plenty of fish in the sea and variety is the spice of life. From now on, they either treat me right or fuck 'em. (*Looks at them*) So what's wrong with you two?

MECHE: Nothing. Nothing's wrong with us.

GLORIA: I'm so pleased with myself. I'm the best, aren't I?

BEATRIZ: (*Kisses her*) You're the best there is.

(*The end of "Let it Be" begins to play softly*)

GLORIA: So, what are we going to do today?

MECHE: Us?

BEATRIZ: Of course, us, Meche. Remember...

MECHE: Us! And to hell with the movie theater and church!

GLORIA: Why don't we get all dolled up and go out dancing tonight?

BEATRIZ: We'll drink beer.

GLORIA: Or maybe we should go to Ganymede.

MECHE: Gloria and her hallucinations again. No way, Gloria, that's too far for me...

GLORIA: No, no, no. Ganymede is this yummy little seventies-style bar, they play oldies, The Beatles and all that.

BEATRIZ: And what are we going to do there?

GLORIA: Nothing, Beatriz. Be there.

BEATRIZ: *(Takes her hand)* Beatriz. You remembered my name.

GLORIA: Yeah, but don't get used to it. Are we going?

MECHE: We'll stop by home first...

BEATRIZ: And I'm going to wear your black dress...

GLORIA: And I'll wear my killer red heels...

MECHE: And I'll dye my hair, squeeze into something and shake my tush!

(The three go on talking about their trip the next day and the places they'll go. The music rises and drowns their voices. Meche, Beatriz, and Gloria pick flowers as they talk and make a bouquet among the three of them. They hand it to each other, push it away, and play like girls until Gloria takes it and holds it up like a trophy. The other two kiss her. They laugh. Blackout)

GUSTAVO OTT

Gustavo Ott (Caracas, Venezuela). Playwright, novelist, and journalist, participant in the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa (1993); Residence Internationale Aux Recollets in Paris (2006); and Cité Internationale des Arts de Paris Residency (2010). Chosen for the *New Works Now!* program at the Joseph Papp Public Theater with *80 Teeth, 4 Feet & 500 Pounds* (2002) and *Two Loves and a Creature* (2003), as well as for the Playwriting Program of La Mousson D'Ete at the Comedie Française, with *Photomaton*. Recipient of numerous playwriting awards, including the Tirso de Molina International Playwriting Prize (Spain, 1998) for *80 Teeth, 4 Feet & 500 Pounds*, and the Ricardo López Aranda International Playwriting Award (Spain, 2003) for *Your Molotov Kisses*. Nominated for The Helen Hayes/Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play or Musical (2009), for *Mummy in the Closet: the Return of Eva Perón*. Prix Ville de Paris/Etc_Caraïbe 2009 for *Mademoiselle et Madame (Miss & Madame)*; FATEX Award for Playwriting (Merida, Spain, 2012) for *One Atom Away*. First Runner-up for the Madrid-Sur Award for Plays (2011) with *Three Five-Dog Nights*; Finalist in the Metlife/Repertorio Español Nuestras Voces National Playwriting Competition (New York, 2011), for *Cinco Minutos sin Respirar*; Third BID Award Hispanics in USA (2010) for *Juanita Claxton*; First Runner-up for the Torreperogil Playwriting Prize (Spain, 2007) with *Monsters in the Closet, Ogres Under the Bed*; Apacuana National Playwriting Award (Venezuela, 2015) for *Peludas en el Cielo (Poodles in the Sky)* and Aguijón Theater's Second International Hispanic Playwriting Award sponsored by the Cervantes Institute (Chicago, 2017) for *Brutality*. In the US, GALA Theatre in Washington D.C. has produced five of his plays. Gustavo Ott currently resides in Virginia. More information at www.gustavoott.com.ar.