

Los Caminos Del La Vida
"The Walk of Life"
v3

written by
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TW violence, weapons, and substance abuse

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EXT. CATALINA'S BACKYARD - DAY

Palm trees sways around. Smoke from the grill fills the air. JAVIER(14) kicks a ball to WISIN (10). MANUEL(20) steals the ball from Wisin. Javier starts laughing.

ROSALIA (26), ISABELLA(24), and MARIA(22) sit on beach chairs, drinking from red solo cups. CATALINA(40s), enter with a tray of food. Javier spots her and runs and grabs the tray.

JAVIER
I got it mami.

Catalina smiles. Javier places the tray on the table. The three girls sitting smiles at her.

MARIA
Mami, sientate [Mami, sit].

Catalina walks to the chair. She reaches for it, misses it and holds her head.

ROSALIA
Mami, estas bien? [Mami, are you okay]

CATALINA
Si, solamente es que siento un poco mareado. [Yes, I just feel a little dizzy].

She tries again and falls to the ground. Everyone runs to her.

EVERYONE
MAMI!

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Catalina lays on the bed, connected to machines. Manuel sits by the window, Javier sits by her side, holding her hand.

CATALINA
I'm so sorry. I'm so so sorry.

Catalina cries. Javier wipes her tears.

JAVIER
It's okay, Mami, I'll be okay.
We'll be okay.

Catalina turns to Manuel.

CATALINA
Where are your siblings?

MANUEL
They didn't want to see you like
this.

CATALINA
Oh, I understand.

Javier holds her hand tighter.

JAVIER
I'm sorry they're not here.

Catalina places her hand on his cheeks.

CATALINA
Ay mi niño, estas bien. You should
go too, I don't want you to see me
this way either.

Javier shakes his head.

JAVIER
No, I'm staying here. You're not
dying, you're going to be fine.

Catalina looks at him and Manuel sincerely.

CATALINA
I want you both to know that I will
always be with you. I will always
watch over you, and on days you
feel the most alone, I will still
be there.

Javier's eyes gets watery, he quickly shakes himself, trying
to stop the tears. Catalina looks at her older son.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
Please look out for each other.

He nods.

CATALINA (CONT'D)
I lovvvv

Catalina starts to seizure, the heart monitor goes crazy.

MANUEL AND JAVIER
Mami!

Javier and Manuel tries to stabilze her. The doctors rush in and pushes them out of the room.

DOCTOR 1
Get them out of here!

As doctors push them out, Javier screams for his mother.

INT. SEEN THROUGH THE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Catalina's heart monitor flat lines. Doctors places the paddle on her chest.

DOCTOR 1
Clear!

Catalina chest pumps up. The family continues to wail and shout.

DOCTOR 1 (CONT'D)
Clear!

Catalina chest pumps up again, heart monitor still flat lining. The other doctors shakes their head.

DOCTOR 1 (CONT'D)
Time of death.

Ringin is heard. Everything is in slow motion. Doctor 1 walks up to the family.

DOCTOR 1 (CONT'D)
(muffled)
I'm sorry, we did everything we could.

Muffled wail is heard. Javier stares at the nurses covering Catalina's body with a blanket.

EXT. OUTSIDE CHURCH - DAY

Bells heard, dingin every minute. A beautiful white church surrounded by palm trees. A crowded group of people, all wearing black, crying in front of the church. 8 people (4 woman, 3 men, and 1 little boy) in front of the church.

They hug people as they walk in the church. Javier leans against a pole in front of the church. Older women comes up to him, hugs him while crying as he tries to politely shove them off.

One of the 8 people, Manuel, glances over to Javier who is walking away from the crowd. He excuses himself, walks over to him, and gently places his hand on Javier's shoulder.

MANUEL

Hey, where are you going?

JAVIER

For a walk.

MANUEL

Yeah, but mami's mass is about to start.

JAVIER

I'm not going.

MANUEL

What?

JAVIER

I said, I'm not going.

Manuel stops walking and stares at Javier.

MANUEL

Wait.

Javier stops walking and turns around and faces Manuel.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

What do you mean you're not going?
You don't want to say bye to her?
See her one last time?

JAVIER

I said my goodbye that day before she died. She was happy, and calm, and that's how I want to remember her as. Alive.

Manuel places both his hands on Javier's shoulder and sighs.

MANUEL

I get it, but this may be the last chance to talk to her. Even if she's not speaking back. Or at least you can be with our other brothers and sisters. All of us together, as a family. Just like she would've wanted.

Javier pushes his brother's hands off of his shoulders.

JAVIER

I'm sure she would've liked all 9 of us together, but I don't want my last memory of her to be ruined by seeing her dead in a casket. I'll go to the burial, if you want, but not this.

MANUEL

I don't want you to end up regretting going to your mother's funeral. I mean you went to Papi's funeral.

JAVIER

I was 10. I didn't have a choice, and now every time I think of the good times, the memory of him dead overpowers it.

MANUEL

But what if you regret-

JAVIER

I'm not going to regret it. Please, Manny. I just want to remember her as she was.

Manuel sighs and nods. He turns back around and walks into the church along with everyone else. Javier is by himself. He sits on the grass and plays with it. Church music is heard in the background, and big wind blows by.

Javier looks up and sees his MOTHER(40), dressed in all white next to the church. She blows him a kiss and waves goodbye. Javier eyes begins to water. He quickly wipes his eyes, closes it, and takes a deep breath.

Javier opens his eyes again and his mother is gone.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

(trembling;whisper)

What am I going to do without you,
mami?

INT. FAMILY'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

All of the siblings sit on the couch. The women are crying, one of them hugs Wisin, who cries on her, the men stares into space, and Javier leans against the wall, staring out the window.

MANUEL

We need to talk about how we're taking care of the kids.

JAVIER

I can take care of myself.

LUIS

You're 14, no you can't.

JAVIER

I've been doing it my whole life anyways. I've taken care of myself, I've taken care of Mami, of Wisin, even fucking Manuel.

MANUEL

There's more to taking care of yourself than stealing food from the neighbors and begging for money on the streets. We all brought in stuff to the table. Plus, you have school.

JAVIER

I don't need school.

ROSALIA

Don't be stupid. Look, they have been with me for the last week, it makes sense for them to stay with me.

JAVIER

No.

ROSALIA

What do you mean, no?

JAVIER

I said what I said, I'm not going back to that house. I'm not staying in the house if mami isn't there.

LUIS

C'mon don't be stubborn.

JAVIER

I mean it, Luis.

Manuel sighs and rubs his head.

MANUEL

Fine, you can stay with me.

JAVIER

Fuck no.

MANUEL

Do you want to live in the fucking streets? You are staying with me and Ceclia, that's final is that clear?

Javier stays silent and rolls his eyes.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I said is that fucking clear, cabron?

JAVIER

Whatever.

INT. MANUEL'S KITCHEN - DAY

Javier cracks an egg and places the yolk in a bowl. He throws seasoning in the mixture and whisks away. Manuel sits at the dining table, reading the newspaper.

MANUEL

Make sure the eggs are creamy, it was way too dry last time.

JAVIER

You got it, Manu.

Javier places the scrambled eggs on two plates with bacon and toast next to eat. He brings it over to the table and puts one in front of Manuel and the other in front of him. Manuel takes a bite of the scrambled eggs. Javier stares at him.

MANUEL

Better, definitely.

Javier smiles and bites into the piece of bacon. Manuel wipes his mouth with napkin. He clears his throat and looks down.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Look, um, I don't really say this, but I appreciate what you do here for Cecila and I these last couple of months, with the cooking and the cleaning, but um, but-

JAVIER

But what?

MANUEL

Well, um, Cecilia is pregnant!

Javier eyes glows and he smiles big.

JAVIER

Wow! Congratulations, Manu. Why are you acting like that's a bad thing?

MANUEL

See, um, with the new baby coming along, Cecilia-

Javier sinks into his seat in realization.

JAVIER

She doesn't want me here anymore, does she?

Manuel shows his hands and shakes his head.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

No, kid, no she doesn't. It's that she doesn't care about you, it's just there's no space-

JAVIER (CONT'D)

I sleep on the couch. What other space does she need?

MANUEL

Look, Isabella said she doesn't mind taking you in, I already bought you your flight to go to New York.

JAVIER

Are you kidding me?

MANUEL

Hey, this could be a fresh start. You know you can even go to school over, get a good education.

Javier shakes his head, picks up his plate, and walks out of the room.

JAVIER

(mumbling)
Unbelievable.

INT. AIRPORT PICK UP - DAY

Crowded area, Isabella stands in the middle, looking around. Javier comes out of a room, wearing a big backpack, and sees Isabella. She waves at him and walks towards her. She gives him a big hug.

ISABELLA
You've grown so much!

Javier just shrugs as Isabella takes the backpack off of him, and puts it on herself.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Are you hungry? I made your
favorite, rice, beans, and chicken.

INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Javier eats the food in front of him.

JAVIER
Where's Tito?

ISABELLA
Oh he's with his father, visiting
their grandma down in Connecticut.

Javier nods as he drinks the glass of milk.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
There's a great school in the area-

JAVIER
I'm not going.

ISABELLA
Don't be like this, you have to go.

JAVIER
I need to work. I need make money,
I can't do that if I'm in school.

ISABELLA
Javi, you are 14, you need to be in
school.

Javier picks up his empty plate and cup and places them in the trash can.

JAVIER
I said, I don't.

Javier walks out of the room.

EXT. OUTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Fire hydrant is exploding water, kids running around it, laughing and splashing each other, adults on the sidewalk, CARION(30s) flips burgers on the grill. Javier comes out and sits on the steps. He looks around.

Dominican & Puerto Rican flags are spread around on windows and clothing lines. Salsa music plays loudly. A baseball lands on Javier's feet. Javier picks the ball and toss it up in the air, then catches it.

RAUL(14) runs up to Javier with a baseball mit on his. CARLOS (14) and DIEGO(14) follows behind him.

RAUL

Oye primo, pasame la pilota por favor. [Translate: Hey cousin, can you pass me the ball please]

Javier looks up at him and throws the ball. Raul catches it in his mit.

RAUL (CONT'D)

Gracias. Yo no te- a sorry, let me speak in English. My mom says I need to speak it more since I am in this country now. I'm name's Raul. That's Carlos and Diego.

Raul puts his fist out. Javier pounds it with his fist.

JAVIER

Yo soy Javier.

RAUL

Puertorriqueño?
[Puerto rican?]

JAVIER

Directamente de la isla [Translate: Straight from the island].

RAUL

Yo sabia, el accento tuyo me lo dijo. [Translate: I knew it, you're accent gave it away] Is this your first time here?

Javier shakes his head.

JAVIER

I used to live in Connecticut with my parents at one point. You Dominican?

Raul smiled and opened his arms.

RAUL

Pues claro. Como tu sabia? No me diga, por que yo soy tan guapo? [Translate: Of course. How did you know? Don't tell me, because of how handsome I am?]

Javier laughed and rolled his eyes.

JAVIER

I see you're full of yourself, what about you two?

CARLOS

I'm Puerto Rican, my family and I moved her when I was five.

DIEGO

Dominicano, pero yo todavia estoy preniendo inglés. Yo entiendo bien pero hablando, [Translate: Dominican, but I am still learning English. I can understand well, but speaking it]
(heavy accent)
Me is learning.

The group of boys laugh as a BANG is heard. The boys jumps up and turns to look. GUY 1(30s) is laying on the sidewalk. Blood is coming out of his forehead. Carion comes closer to him as well as 3 other guys.

Guy 1 lifts himself up slowly and shakeningly. Carion laughs and then kicks Guy 1 back down. Javier stares angrily and extends his leg to stand up. Raul grabs Javier's arm and pulls him back. He shakes his head.

RAUL

(low voice)

Don't stare. Don't look. Don't say anything, it's not our business.

Javier turns to him, confused.

JAVIER

But he's-

RAUL
 (low voice)
 Shhh! Not to loud. That guy right
 there is Carion.

Diego and Carlos scooches closer to the other two.

CARLOS
 (low voice)
 You don't want to get caught
 staring at him.

DIEGO
 (low voice)
 Ese hombre es el diablo.
 [That guy is the devil]

JAVIER
 (low voice)
 Tienemos que ser algo.
 [we have to do something]

CARLOS
 (low voice)
 What we need is to go inside, is
 this your house, Javier?

JAVIER
 (low voice)
 Yes, but-

Raul, Diego, and Carlos slowly stands. They nudge Javier. He
 shakes his head follows them inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Javier unlocks the door, all three boys runs in and goes
 towards the window. The three of them stares. In background,
 Guy 1 screams.

GUY 1 (O.S.)
 P-PLEASE. STOP.

The three boys collectively, "ooh". Javier stands there
 confused. He shakes his head and starts pacing back and
 forth.

JAVIER
 So we're just going to sit here and
 watch a guy die?

RAUL
He won't kill him, not in broad
daylight anyways.

JAVIER
Who is Carion anyways?

They all turn and look at Javier.

CARLOS
He's the most terrifying man to
ever walk on Earth.

JAVIER
A-are you serious?

RAUL
One time, Eladio-

DIEGO
El vendia pinchos y hamburguesas en
la escina.
[He would sell pinchos and
hamburgers in the corner]

RAUL
Accidentally put onions in Carion's
burger.

Javier sits down and chuckles and looks at them in confusion.

JAVIER
And that's bad because?

CARLOS
Carion's allergic to onion. A
simple mistake cost Eladio to lose
something very valuable to him.

JAVIER
His grill?

Diego raised his arms up.

DIEGO
Los manos de el.
[His hands.]

Javier shivered at the thought of that. Music is heard loud and the boys went into the window again. Everyone went back to normal, grilling and dancing. Guy 1 slowly lifts himself up. He is covered in blood and bruises.

JAVIER

What did he do to do this?

RAUL

Owe Carion money.

They all continue to stare at the group of adults dancing and singing. Carion looks up and into the apartment. Raul, Diego, and Carlos all duck down. Javier stayed where he was, staring back. The others tried to pull him down, but he doesn't move.

Carion breaks eye contact when someone hands him a beer.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Javier sits at the table. FRANCO(late 20s) sits next to him, reading a newspaper, and TITO(1 year old) sits on a high chair in the other side of him. Isabella places a plate of food in front of everyone and sits down.

ISABELLA

Como te fue tu dia hoy, Javi?
[How was your day, Javi?]

JAVIER

I made some friends.

Isabella smiles. She takes the small spoon and gives the baby a spoonful. Franco lowers the paper and takes a spoonful.

ISABELLA

Ay que bueno! Quien son? [Oh that's good! Who are they?] Maybe I know them and their mothers.

JAVIER

Raul, Diego, y Carlos.

FRANCO

Those are good boys. I work with their fathers, very strong men.

Javier shrugs and eats his food.

ISABELLA

Y tu mi amor, como te fue en el trabajo?
[And you my love, how was work?]

FRANCO

Bien, mi vida.
[It was good, hon]
(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

Did you hear what Carion did to el chamaco [the guy] from down the street?

ISABELLA

It's unbelievable que ese cabron no le llevaron preso todavia. [that that bastard hasn't been arrested yet].

JAVIER

Why don't you call the cops on him?

Isabella and Franco stares blankly at him.

FRANCO

Hijo, you keep your eyes down and mouth close here. It's not our business.

JAVIER

Yeah, but-

ISABELLA

Don't get involved, Javi. Let's just drop it.

Javier rolls his eyes and sinks back into his seat. Isabella feeds Tito, and Raul goes back to reading his newspaper.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Big bright lights. Sounds of people winning, people losing. Long lines for food, rides, and bathroom. Javier, Raul, Diego, and Carlos run in at the entrance. They stop and stare at everyone. Big smile on their faces.

They spot no line at the cotton candy cart and runs to it. They each get a cotton candy that's bigger than their head. They walk around, laughing at the people who lose at the ring toss game. Diego passes his cotton candy to Javier.

They all shout "You're going to lose"! Diego shakes his head and cracks his knuckles. He grabs a ring and throws one. Miss. The boys laugh. Diego grabs another. Miss. Another. Miss. No more rings. Diego shamedly walks back to them.

Javier hands him his cotton candy as they all laugh.

RAUL

Buttery fingers?

DIEGO
Oh shut up, it's not me, the thing
is fucking rigged.

The boys all laugh and walk over to the tilt-a-war. They all
scream and laugh in the ride.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

The boys push each other around, laughing. Carlos steps on a
car key on the ground. He picks it up and shows it to the
guys. Their eyes brightens up.

RAUL
Score!

DIEGO
We should just leave it.

JAVIER
Or we find the car and ride it.

RAUL
Agreed.

Carlos throws the keys up in the air and catches it. He
smirks at the boys. Raul & Javier smirks back. Diego shakes
his head. Carlos, Raul, and Javier start running to the end
of the street where there are cars parked.

Carlos puts the key one car, not turn, Raul another, nothing.
Then Javier tries, nothing.

DIEGO
See it might not even be any of
them, let's just go before we get
caught.

JAVIER
Wait there's one more car, down
there.

The four runs to the last car on the street. Raul, Carlos,
and Diego faces goes blank.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
This might be it!

RAUL
Javi, that's not a good idea.

JAVIER
What do you mean?

CARLOS
That's Carion's car.

JAVIER
And?

Javier walks over to the driver side, and inserts the key.

DIEGO
Ay dios mio, este cabron nos vas a matar. [Trans: oh my god, this dumbass is going to get us killed.]

RAUL
Javier, por favor. No hagas esto. [Trans: please don't do this]

Javier turns the key. The door opens. The three boys start panicking, looking around to see if someone saw them.

CARLOS
Ok ok you had your fun, let's go.
Now, Javier!

Javier smirks at them and gets in the car. Javier starts the car.

RAUL
Oh my god! Get out, Javier, get out, get out!

Javier lowers the window in the passenger side.

JAVIER
C'mon, we're not going to get contact, get in.

Javier pretends to drive, making car noises. Diego shakes his head and runs away.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Diego!

CARLOS
Screw this. Raul, let's go.

Carlos starts to run too. Raul stops and stares at Javier, he shakes his head and follows.

JAVIER
Wait!

Javier takes the car out of park and presses the gas. In the moment he realizes what he has done and panics. He catches up to his friends, who slow down there running.

RAUL

What are you doing man!

JAVIER

I don't know how to stop this! I don't know why I did this!

CARLOS

Hit the brake! Watch out!

Javier sees a figure of the man at the end of the street. He's trying to stop, but the car is still speeding. The man gets closer, and closer when he slams the brake. Stopping an inch before the man. Javier takes deep breath.

Raul, Diego, and Carlos stop in their tracks, their faces are blank and pale. The man walks over to the window, and Javier sees it's Carion. He takes control of his emotions.

JAVIER

I-

Carion swings open the door of the car and pulls Javier out. He presses him against the car. Javier looks over to his friends and then back at Carion. He grabs Carion's wrists trying to push him off, Carion pushes him harder against.

CARION

Now, tell me, who the fuck do you think you are trying to steal *my* car?

JAVIER

(mumbles)

Maybe if you didn't leave your keys-

CARION

What did you say?

Javier stares at him. He clears his throat.

JAVIER

I said maybe if you didn't leave your keys wandering around, I wouldn't have been able to.

Carion scoffs and shakes his head.

CARION
You think you're tough, kid? You
just got lucky.

JAVIER
It's not luck.

Carion puts the kid down and moves back. He looks at him up
and down, examining.

CARION
You're about the right size... Hmm,
I'll tell you what, I'm not going
to be harsh on you, *if* you break
into this store for me. They have a
window that's always open, but no
one can fit.

JAVIER
What's in it for me?

CARION
You live. You get to keep your
little fingers.

JAVIER
I want money.

Carion laughs and shakes his head.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
\$1,000 dollars.

Carion laughs harder. Javier stands and stares at him.
Serious expression across his face.

CARION
Vete pa carajo [go to hell], hell
no. I'll give you \$50.

JAVIER
\$1,000.

CARION
You're 12, what do you need that
money for?

JAVIER
I'm 14, and none of your business.
I want \$1,000.

Carion shakes his head and laughs.

CARION

I'll tell you what kid, if you can do this, without getting caught, you have a deal.

Javier extends his hand. Carion looks down at it, chuckles and shakes it. He gets in his car, and looks at Javier.

CARION (CONT'D)

You have until 1 tonight. Meet me at the junkyard around the corner, and if you don't come through, I look forward to collecting that hand you shook on.

Carion drives off. Javier stands there frozen. Raul, Carlos, and Diego runs up to him, jumping on him, shaking him.

RAUL

YOU SURVIVED. YOU MOTHER FUCKER, YOU SURVIVED!

DIEGO

Tonto, y ahora que vas hacer?
[Trans.: Idiot, and what are you going to do now?]

Javier looks at his friends.

JAVIER

I'm going to go steal what he wanted me to. Can you keep a lookout? I'll split the money with you guys.

DIEGO

No.

They all look at Diego.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

Pero tu estas loco es, Javier? Ayudando un criminal? Robando el caro de un criminal, y ahora quieres a meter a nosotros ahora. No, me voy, perdoname Javier, pero yo no puedo ser tu amigo, y si uno de ustedes te meta con el, se cabo nuestro relaciones.
[Trans: Are you crazy, Javier? Helping a criminal? Stealing a criminal's car, and you want to get us involved?

(MORE)

DIEGO (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Javier, but I can't be friends with you, and if any of you goes along with him, our friendship has ended.]

Diego walks away.

CARLOS

Diego, por favor!

DIEGO

No! Yo no soy de Puerto Rico. Yo estoy aqui de residencia. No puedo cojer chances. Me voy.
[No! I'm not Puerto Rican, I'm here on a residency and I can't take any chances, I'm out of here.]

RAUL

Yo tambien estoy aqui de residencia y yo me voy a quedar con Javier. No se bobo, Diego!

Diego flips them off. The three of the watches him leave. Raul puts his hand on Javier shoulder.

RAUL (CONT'D)

I can use the money.

Javier shakes his head.

JAVIER

No, Diego is right. I shouldn't get you involved, this is my mess, my problem.

CARLOS

We don't mind-

JAVIER

No, it's fine.

Javier walks away.

CARLOS

We're helping him, right?

RAUL

Of course. He's going to get himself killed without us.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF JEWELRY STORE - NIGHT

Javier stands in front of a big store. Glass windows that takes up most of the store. Javier walks to the side of the building. Raul runs up and stops him.

JAVIER

What are you doing here? Get out of here!

Raul shakes his head.

RAUL

We're here to help you.

JAVIER

We?

Raul shows his walkie talkie and the points to Carlos who is on the roof of the building that's across the street.

RAUL

We're your lookouts. We'll make sure nothing happens to you.

JAVIER

You guys shouldn't-

CARLOS

(via walkie talkie)

We're not taking no for an answer.

Javier gives Carlos a small smile, then nods at Raul. Raul hands him a walkie talkie. Javier continues to walk towards the alley way of the building. He goes behind it and finds the small window. It's taller than expected.

Javier spots the dumpster nears it and pushes it with his force slight closer the window. He closes it and hops on it. He opens the window, and starts to pull himself in it.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - CONTINUOUS

Javier hangs from the window, and slowly drops himself to the ground. He spots a briefcase, and grabs it. He roams around, putting as many jewelry has he can inside it. He walks to the main part and sees a big gold plated, diamond ring.

Javier grabs it. He puts the ring in his pocket. BING BING, alarm goes off.

CARLOS
 (via walkie talkie)
 Get out of there!

Javier closes the briefcase and runs to the back, sees the windows too high. Looks around, frantically, and spots a table in the far corner. He grabs the table and pulls it to the window.

He throws the briefcase and then pulls himself out the window. He falls on the dumpster. He groans in pain.

RAUL
 (via walkie talkie)
 Meet us at the park.

CARLOS
 (via walkie talkie)
 Hurry, the pigs are coming.

Javier rolls himself up, grabs the briefcase, and starts running.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Carlos and Raul pace themselves by the slide.

CARLOS
 What if they-

RAUL
 Shut up.

CARLOS
 I mean it's possible-

RAUL
 Ni lo piensas, Carlos. [Trans.
 Don't even think about it, Carlos]

Javier runs up to them and the two boys releases a deep breath. They pat Javier's back.

CARLOS
 Cabron, you made it out!

They all laugh. Javier opens the case and the boys sees the jewelry. Carlos and Raul's eyes stares at it wide eyed.

JAVIER
 Take something.

The two look at him.

RAUL

What?

JAVIER

Yeah, take something, one item. I did. A gold ring.

CARLOS

What if Carion finds out?

JAVIER

How will he? Take something and you can either save it or we can get money off of it. We earned this.

They hesitate. Raul makes the first move and grabs a diamond necklace. He looks at Carlos. Carlos shrugs and grabs a gold necklace. Javier closes it.

CARLOS

What now?

JAVIER

Now I gotta meet with Carion.

RAUL

Bueno suerte amigo, y gracias.
[Good luck friend, and thank you]

Javier nods and walks off.

RAUL (CONT'D)

So what do you think. Dead man walking?

Carlos shrugs and stares at Javier walking.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Piles of tires circle around with car parts on the ground.. Javier walks slowly through the open gate, looking around with the briefcase in his hand.

JAVIER

Carion? I got the stuff you wanted?

Javier walks backwards, not seeing Carion behind him and bumps into him. He quickly jumps back and turns to him.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

My bad, my bad.

CARION

Did you break into that store liked
I asked?

Javier places the briefcase down and opens it, showing lots of jewelry, then closes it. He hands it to Carion who is smirking as he takes it.

CARION (CONT'D)

How did you it? Let me guess, same
way you broke into my car?

JAVIER

It's not breaking in if you left
your key wandering around.

Carion scoffs and shakes his head.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Besides, when you grow up living in
cars from time to time, you learn
how to do things.

Carion gives him an impressed look.

CARION

Well, you did good kid. Have you
done this before?

Javier shakes his head.

JAVIER

No sir.

CARION

Color me impress, well have a good
night kid.

Carion turns around and starts walking away. Javier quickly walks, and stands in front of him.

JAVIER

Oh uh where's my money?

Carion chuckles and rubs his chin.

CARION

What money?

JAVIER

The- The money for the job. You
said you would give me \$1,000, now
where is my money?

Carion pushes him aside and keeps walking.

CARION
Just get some rest kid, there's no
money.

JAVIER
No you said-

CARION
Forget it kid.

Carion starts walking away again. Javier shakes his head and pushes him. Carion turns and pushes him down and takes out a gun, pointed it towards him.

CARION (CONT'D)
Kid, don't make me fucking use this
shit. Get the fuck out of here, you
got played, deal with it.

Javier gets up and stands in Carion's face.

CARION (CONT'D)
I mean it kid.

Javier grabs the gun and places it on his forehead.

JAVIER
Then you better fucking shoot me.

Carion looks surprise.

CARION
What?

JAVIER
You heard me, you better fucking
shoot me in the head because I'm no
bobo for you to play with.

CARION
Do you have some sort of death
wish, kid?

JAVIER
I got nothing to lose! Now give me
my money or shoot me!

CARION
That sister you live with, isn't
she going to worry? You don't want
to do this to her, do you?

Javier stares at Carion and steps closer to him. Carion cocks his head and squints his eyes. He takes a step back.

CARION (CONT'D)

What about- what about your parents back in Puerto Rico?

JAVIER

I'm an orphan, cabron. So I'm telling you one last time, give me my money or shoot me.

The two stand frozen, staring at one another. Then Carion lowers the gun and laughs. He takes out his wallet, pulls out Javier's money, hands it to him, and Javier snatches it from his hand.

Javier puts the money in his jacket, and turns around.

CARION

You got balls, kid.

He continues to ignore him.

CARION (CONT'D)

If you ever need more, you know where to find me.

Javier stops. He doesn't faces him.

JAVIER

I won't.

He walks away, leaving Carion there.

CARION

(to himself)

Oh yes you will.

(smirks)

They always come back.

INT. FAMILY'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Javier walks in the apartment. The lights are on and Rosalia is pacing back and forth, eyes watery. She sees him walks in and hits his back. Javier covers himself. Franco runs in the room and pulls her away from.

ISABELLA

Díos mio, Javier, que me quieres matar?

[Oh my god, Javi. What, you want to kill me?]

JAVIER

Pero que te pasa, Isa?
[What's wrong with you, Isa?]

ISABELLA

Que me pasa? Que me pasa es que tu piensas que tu puede ser cual que cosa. Imagina mi emoción cuando ese chamaco, Diego me dices que tu estaba trabajando con Carion.
[What's wrong with me? What's wrong with me is that you think you can do whatever yo want. Imagine my expression when that kid, Diego comes to tell me that you are working with Carion.]

Javier stays quiet. He looks at her, blank face.

JAVIER

Y? [And?]

Isabella lets out a disbelief chuckle.

ISABELLA

Como que, "y"? Pero puñeta, tu esta volviendo loco o que? Haciendo negocios con un tigre? Con un bichote? A llegando a casa a la dos de la maldita mañana?
[What do you mean, "and"? Are you fucking crazy? Making deals with a criminal? A gangster? Coming home at 2 in the fucking morning?]

Isabella shakes her head and sits down on the couch.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Yo se que es dificir. Peldiendo a papi joven, y ahora mami se mureo-
[I know it was tough, you losing dad and now mami died-]

JAVIER

Callate, Isa.
[Shut up, Isa]

Isabella looks at him in shock.

ISABELLA

Yo creo que es mas mejor que tu vayas pa tras a Puerto Rico y vivir con Rosalia.

(MORE)

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
 [Maybe it's best if you go back to
 Puerto Rico and live with Rosalia]

Javier shakes his head.

JAVIER
 No.

ISABELLA
 Si, Javi-

JAVIER
 De pues me voy de aqui. Isabella
 gane un mil hoy, y ahora quieres a
 mandame a sufrir de nuevo. No me
 voy.
 [Then I'm leaving here. Isabella, I
 just made a thousand dollars and
 you want me to go suffer again? I'm
 not going.]

Javier opens the door and runs out. Isabella gets up and goes
 to chase him but Franco hold her. She starts to sob.

ISABELLA
 Javier! Javier!

EXT. OUTSIDE CARION'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Javier runs up the stoop and bangs on the door until Carion
 opens the door, in his pajamas. He looks at the kid. Javier
 is out of breath.

JAVIER
 You said I can come back for more?

CARION
 I might have a job in line for you.

JAVIER
 Great when can I start?

CARION
 Go home, we'll talk tomorrow.

JAVIER
 I-I don't have a home. I left.

Carion smiles devilishly and moves to the side.

CARION
 Come in.

Javier walks in. Carion closes the door behind him.

10 YEARS LATER

INT. CARION'S DINING TABLE - DAY

Javier takes a bite of the food in front of him. Carion sits down next to him.

CARION
I'm playing poker with the guys
today, you want in.

JAVIER
Nah, I'm good. I'm meeting up with
Raul and Carlos later.

CARION
Bring them too, more money for me
to take.

He smiles. Javier rolls his eyes.

JAVIER
(mockingly)
Oh Ha ha ha.

Carion pours juice in Javier and his cup.

CARION
Eat more food, you need be bulkier
if you're going to take over for me
someday.

JAVIER
Like that would happen, you'd be in
your 80s and still in charge.

CARION
That's the dream.

Javier rolls his eyes and puts his plate away.

EXT. OUTSIDE CARION'S HOUSE - DAY

Javier(24) opens the door, exits, and closes it behind him. He takes out a cigarette, lights it up, and takes a long inhale and exhale. Raul and Carlos comes up dabs him up.

CARLOS
 Cabron, que ta todos?
 [Cabron, how's everything?]

Javier shrugs.

JAVIER
 Na tranquilo quieto.
 [Everything's good]

RAUL
 So ah-

Raul looks around and whispers.

RAUL (CONT'D)
 Word on the street is that Carion
 and the crew are trying to steal
 that Porsche on 180th.

Javier and Carlos shushes him. Carlos covers him mouth and looks around make sure no one heard.

CARLOS
 (hushed)
 Are you tryna get us killed?

Carlos slowly removes his hand.

RAUL
 Ay disculpa. [My bad]

Raul looks both ways and leans in closer.

RAUL (CONT'D)
 C'mon let me in. How is it that
 Carion let you bring Carlos in, but
 not me? I'm the brain of the
 operations.

CARLOS
 Exactly.

JAVIER
 You went to college, Raul.

RAUL
 But I dropped out.

JAVIER
 Yea but you have the chance to go
 back. Why screw that up?

RAUL
I don't plan on going back. Let me
in.

CARLOS
Raul, if you get caught and
arrested-

JAVIER
Or deported.

RAUL
I'll be fine, besides, like you
said, I'm the brains, I won't get
caught.

Carlos looks at Javier and shakes his head. Javier throws his
bead had and groans.

JAVIER
I'm so going to regret this.. Raul,
you can join us tonight. I let
Carion know.

Raul gets excited.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
But one mishap, and you're out.

RAUL
All I need is a chance to prove
myself.

Carlos leans over to Javier.

CARLOS
(whispers)
Are we going to regret this.

Javier turns and smiles at him.

JAVIER
Let's hope not.

INT. POKER ROOM - NIGHT

Carion throws down a few cards. He takes out the cigarette in
his mouth and shakes his head.

CARION
Absolutely not.

JAVIER
Carion, c'mon man.

CARION
That clumsy ass kid is going to
ruin everything.

JAVIER
He's not I swear!

Carion shakes his head. The dealer deals him and the other
guys more cards.

CARION
Guys, this kid is so damn clumsy,
I-I mean I asked him to pass me a
screwdriver one time, next thing
you know the screwdriver when
through this kid's foot and he's on
the floor.

Everyone in the room, except Javier, starts to laugh.

JAVIER
But, but he didn't cry, I think
that counts for something.

Carion shakes his head and places down a royal flush on the
table. The guys around him throws the cards down as Carion
collects the cash.

CARION
You know what, fine. You want him
so bad, go, prove it to me, but if
he screws up, it's your head.

Javier nods.

INT. JAVIER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Raul puts a bandana on his head, Javier leans in front of the
window smoking a cigarette, and Carlos leans into the couch.
He grabs the backpack from the ground and pulls out a needle
and a bottle.

Carlos sucks in the liquid in the needle, extends his arm,
wraps a rubber band around him, flicks his forearm, injects
the needle in his vein, and exhales. He takes the rubber band
off of him. He leans deeper in the couch and closes his eyes.

Javier and Raul looks at each and back to Carlos.

RAUL
Cabron, you doing that shit again?

JAVIER
I thought you stopped after what
happened to Diego?

Carlos and Javier puts hangers in a backpack. Raul looks at himself in the mirror.

RAUL
You can do this. You can do this.

Carlos and Javier looks at Raul weirdly and then at each other. The two burst laughing, shaking their heads. They get up, carrying the bags, and pat on Raul's back.

CARLOS
(mumbling)
We're going to get caught, aren't
we?

Javier grins and nods.

JAVIER
(mumbles)
Oh this was a bad idea.

Carlos turns to Javier.

CARLOS
(mumbles)
At least it's your head and not
mine.

He pats on Javier's back and leaves the room. Javier throws his head down.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Raul, Javier, and Carlos, dressed in all black, sneakingly walks alongside the alley wall. Raul peeps over and spots the 1991 navy blue Porsche. He goes back to his spot.

RAUL
(whisper)
Question, wouldn't we get caught
stealing the parts in the middle of
the street?

Carlos face palms.

JAVIER
No shit, Sherlock.

CARLOS
We gotta take it somewhere else,
they steal the parts.

RAUL
Ohh gotcha, ok ok, let's go.

Raul goes first. He crouch down and speed walks to the car. Carlos goes next, and then Javier. Raul grabs the hanger and push it through the crack of the window.

CARLOS
(whisper)
Go easy, nice and slow, you don't
wanna-

Raul drops the hanger in the car. Javier covers his face and Carlos clenches his fist.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
You fucking idiot! You had the one
job-

JAVIER
(whisper)
Shut the fuck up before someone
wakes up and hear you.

Javier takes out a key from his pocket. He goes over the car and tries to unlock it. After a couple jiggling, door opens.

CARLOS
You had a fucking key?

JAVIER
I had a skeleton key made, just in
case.

The three of them get in the car. Javier hot wires the car and drives it off.

INT. JAVIER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carion sits on the couch, arms leaning over the edge with a drink in one hand. Carlos, Javier, and Raul stand in front of him.

JAVIER
We took it to the junkyard, took
all the parts we could-

CARLOS
Stereo, rims, tires, the lights,
you name it.

RAUL
Then we sold it to Lorenzo.

CARLOS
And to Eduardo as well.

Carion places the cup on the table and leans forward.

CARION
So how much are we talking about?

Raul grabs a duffle bag and dumps out buttload of money.
Carion laughs and claps. He grabs Raul's face.

CARION (CONT'D)
Welcome to the team, paísano
[buddy]!

Carion grabs his cup and holds it up high.

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Cups clinks in the air. Carion, Carlos, Raul, Javier, and other men takes a sip of their drink as they sit around the table. Empty plates in front of them. Carlos leans over to Javier.

CARLOS
They have a pool table section over
there.

Javier looks over and sees a separate room connected to the restaurant. People playing pool.

RAUL
Let's go.

INT. POOL TABLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carlos, Raul, and Javier walks over to the pool table.

CARLOS
I see y'all are ready to lose
today.

JAVIER
Are we betting or what?

CARLOS

\$100.

Javier shakes Carlos' hand. Raul sits on the chair and shakes his head. Javier and Carlos begins their game. Javier starts first, gets two balls in. Carlos, gets one in. Javier places the pole stick at an angle.

He hears a woman laugh and looks up. MERCEDES(20), beautiful long, black curly hair, white buttoned up and long pants, places two plates at the table near them. Her laugh is contagious.

Javier accidentally moves the stick and miss his turn. Carlos laughs, and it brings Javier back to focus.

JAVIER

C'mon I get a redo, that don't count.

Carlos shakes his head and starts his turn.

CARLOS

You snooze, you lose.

Raul laughs and follows his eyes to what Javier is staring at.

RAUL

Shit, I would lose focus to if she was in my eye view.

Carlos turns to see what the other two are staring at. He leans against the table and whistle.

CARLOS

Oh yea, Javi, you can get a redo.

Javier fixes his hair, and checks himself in the reflection of the glass box on the wall. He starts walking towards the bar table. Raul heads over to Carlos.

RAUL

\$50 bucks laughs in his face.

CARLOS

You're on.

The two shake hands.

INT. CASHIER/BAR TABLE- CONTINUOUS

Mercedes writes on a notepad. Javier leans against the table, and she looks up and place the pencil down.

MERCEDES

Hi sir, are you checking out?

JAVIER

Actually, I was wondering if I can place an order.

Mercedes grabs her notepad and looks up at him.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Can I get two drinks, one for me and one for you.

Mercedes shakes her head and rolls her eyes.

MERCEDES

In your dreams.

Mercedes walks to the people next to him and hands them two cups of water. They leave, Javier takes their spot.

JAVIER

C'mon one drink, please.

MERCEDES

I'm at work

WAITER 1 (O.C.)

Mercedes, we need you at table 2!

JAVIER

Mercedes? Beautiful name. I'm Javier.

Javier extends his hand. Mercedes looks down at it and playfully nudge it away.

MERCEDES

I know, I've seen you around here with *those* guys. I'm good. Now, I have to go.

Mercedes grabs a beer and leaves it in front of Javier. She walks away and heads over to the table. Javier watch her leave, grabs the beer, and takes a sip.

JAVIER

Mercedes.

INT. POOL TABLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carlos hands Raul \$50, Raul slips it in his pockets. The two laugh. Javier walks up to them and mocks their laugh.

CARLOS

What's funny is you think a girl like that, would get with a guy like you.

JAVIER

What's wrong with how I look? I look good.

RAUL

Not with that mullet.

Raul and Carlos laughs as Javier touches his hair.

JAVIER

Just get back to the damn game.

CARLOS

Someone's mad.

Javier grabs the stick and hits the ball.

INT. JAVIER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Javier stares at the ceiling. He gets up and looks at the mirror. He looks at the mullet and runs his hands through it. Javi runs his hands across his messy semi-beard.

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

Javier enters the barbershop. Bachata music and men laughing fills the air. BARBER(30s), trims a guy's hair. He looks up at Javier and back to the guy in the chair.

BARBER

Que lo que, primo? [What's up, cousin]

The guy in the chair gets up and leaves. Barber pats the chair and motions Javier to come over. Javier sits on the chair.

JAVIER

I need a new look. I don't know what, but change it up, surprise me.

Barber smiles.

BARBER
Who's the girl?

JAVIER
Her name is Mercedes. I wanna
impress her, look good.

BARBER
Say no more, I got it.

INT. RESTURANT - DAY

Mercedes lowers the chairs from the table. She grabs her rag and wipes down the table. Door open and closing is heard in the back.

MERCEDES
Welcome, I'll be with you in one
second.

JAVIER (O.C.)
Take your time.

Mercedes continues to clean. She recognize the voice and sighs.

MERCEDES
Javier? I haven't seen you in a
whil-

Mercedes turns to face Javier. He holds a bouquet of flowers, his hair slicked back, mullet gone, and his wild beard now clean goatee. Javier hands her the flowers.

JAVIER
These are for you.

Mercedes accept the flowers and smells them. She looks at Javier up and down.

MERCEDES
You look different.

Javier smiles and slides his hand on his hair.

JAVIER
Good different?

Mercedes places the flowers on the bar table.

MERCEDES

Better. Anyways, how can I help you?

JAVIER

Go out with me.

MERCEDES

Direct aren't you?

Mercedes walks behind the cashier/bar table and continues to clean there. Javier leans over the table.

JAVIER

One date. Give me a chance, please, one date, and if you still have no interest in me, I'll respect your decision.

Mercedes pauses for a moment. She keeps her back from him.

MERCEDES

I'm off Friday night.

JAVIER

How's 8?

MERCEDES

Sounds good.

Javier smiles and walks away excitedly.

JAVIER

You won't regret it!

Javier exits the restaurant. Mercedes turns around and looks at the door. She shakes her head.

INT. JAVIER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Javier excitedly walks in.

JAVIER

I got a date with Mercedes-

The room is in shambles. Couch pillows thrown around the floor, vase shattered. Ruckus is heard afar. Javier runs towards.

INT. JAVIER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bed is crooked, drawers open with clothes spread out. Raul has Carlos pinned to the ground. Carlos kicks and screams.

JAVIER
What the fuck is going on?

Carlos fake calms down.

CARLOS
Javi! Can you tell Raul I'm fine,
that *he* needs to get off of me and
calm down.

JAVIER
Raul?

RAUL
He misplaced his dope and went
ballistic.

Carlos laughs.

CARLOS
Only addicts go crazy, I-I simply
was trying to find it.

Javier shakes his head and crouches down.

JAVIER
Carlos, you need him.

CARLOS
I'm fine, Javi. I'm fine, I'm fine,
I'M FINE.

Carlos squirms around on the floor.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
C'mon Javi, you took it right? You
hid it? Where is it, Javi?

JAVIER
I don't have it.

Carlos lets out another laugh.

CARLOS
Bullshit. BULLSHIT. WHERE THE FUCK
IS IT.

Carlos moves around more aggressively. Javier helps Raul hold him down.

CARION (O.C.)

I have it.

The three of them turn to face the doorway. Carion stands there with the bottle. Carlos calms down and smiles wildly.

CARLOS

Carion! Mi hermano [My brother]!

Javier and Raul shakes their heads.

JAVIER

(mouthing words)

Please, don't.

Carion walks over to them. He kneels down, grabs a needle from his pocket, and insert it to the bottle. He taps the needle. He grins devilishly.

CARION

How badly do you want this?

JAVIER

Carion, no.

CARLOS

Do it.

CARION

Are you sure?

Carlos nods rapidly. Carion taps the *inner elbow?* and injects the needle in it. Carlos closes his eyes and relax. Raul and Javier gets up and shake their heads.

Carion whispers into Carlos' ear. Carlos eyes goes wide eyed, fill with fear. Carion motions Javier to get out of the room. Javier leaves, Carion follows.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carion wraps an arm around Javier's shoulder.

CARION

How long did you know he was an addict?

Javier stays silent.

CARION (CONT'D)

You know my rule.

JAVIER
He's my friend, Carion.

CARION
Doesn't matter. There are no
friends, *especially* with a druggie.

Javier looks at his bedroom door, then back at Carion.

JAVIER
How long have you known?

Carion smiles suspiciously.

CARION
For a while. You should have kicked
him to the curb when you found out.

Carion starts walking towards the door.

JAVIER
Be he's my-

CARION
Friend, I know. A mistake you'll
have to learn to live with.

Carion leaves. Javier stands there, puzzled.

INT. JAVIER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is now organized. Carlos, Javier, and Raul sit on the couch, each of them staring into space.

JAVIER
I got the date with the waitress
from last week.

RAUL
Mercedes?

CARLOS
The one the nice bod-

Javier hits Carlos arm.

JAVIER
She's a lady, don't talk about her
like that, and yes, Mercedes.

They got back to staring into space.

RAUL

Where are you going to take her?

JAVIER

I'm not sure, but I want something special.

RAUL

You can cook for her.

JAVIER

Yeah, like I would bring her *here*.

He looks at Carlos who is shaking his head.

CARLOS

You could take her dancing. Let her move that sweet as-

JAVIER

Carlos, I'm not playing knock it off with that shit.

Carlos lifts his hand in surrender.

RAUL

What about a picnic? That's romantic.

CARLOS

Take her in the Pontiac. Go to Bryant.

JAVIER

Huh, that's not a bad idea. Thanks.

The three go back to staring into space.

RAUL

Carlos.. what did Carion say to you?

CARLOS

Not important.

RAUL

I dunno you look kind of scared.

CARLOS

Just drop it.

RAUL

I mean if-

Carlos jumps up.

CARLOS
I said fucking drop it! C'mon
you're the smart one, if I'm
telling you to mind your fucking
business, you fucking do so.

Carlos storms out of the apartment. Javier and Raul looks at the door and then at each other. Javier shrugs.

INT. JAVIER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Javier sits by the window, smoking a cigarette. A knock from the door.

JAVIER
Come in.

Carion enters. Javier shows the cigarette pack to Carion. He takes one and lights it up.

CARION
I need you and the boys to do a job
for me.

JAVIER
What is it?

CARION
Jose found a Ferrari. The fucking
jackpot.

JAVIER
Shit, thats a good one. Me and the
boys will be there, when you need
it?

CARION
Tomorrow.

Javier takes a puff, lets it out, and shakes his head.

JAVIER
Can't do tomorrow, I can do
Saturday though.

Carion laughs.

CARION
Oh that's funny, that's a good one.
Tomorrow it is.

Javier puts out his cigarette.

JAVIER
No, really I can't tomorrow.

CARION
What do you have that's so fucking important?

Javier walks a few steps away.

JAVIER
I.. I have a date.

CARION
A date? You're fucking leaving me hanging for fucking pussy?

Javier turns and gets in Carion's face.

JAVIER
Watch your fucking mouth, don't talk about her like that.

Carion smiles.

CARION
Fiery. I like that.

Carion puts out his cigarette and crosses his arm.

CARION (CONT'D)
Tell me Javi, who got you this apartment?

JAVIER
You did.

CARION
Who gave you food and shelter after your sister was going to ship you back to Puerto Rico?

Javier looks away, fists clenched.

JAVIER
You did.

CARION
Who still pays and provide for you.

Javier stays silent.

CARION (CONT'D)
Oh right, me. Fucking me.

Carion grabs the back of Javier's neck.

CARION (CONT'D)
Now I don't know who the fuck you think you are, acting as if what I say don't go. If I want you there tomorrow with your fucking punk ass friends, you be there with you punk ass friend, am I clear?

Javier remains silent. Not looking at Carion in the eyes.

CARION (CONT'D)
Now fuck your fucking date, put on your big boy pantalones [pants]cancel the fucking thing. You are busy on Friday, and attempt to disrespect me on more fucking time, and you'll fucking see what'll happens.

Carion pushes Javier to the ground and exits the room. Javier stays on the ground. He pounds the ground. Pause. He reaches for the landline phone and goes to dial.

JAVIER
Screw him.

He puts the phone back and walks to the closet. Javier pulls out a couple clothes in a bag and head out the door.

EXT. OUTSIDE MERCEDES' BUILDING - NIGHT

Javier, dressed in a nice button down, leans against his car. Mercedes comes out of the building, dressed a beautiful long black dress. Javier looks at her in awe.

He goes to the steps and extends his hand to her. She takes it. He spins her around.

JAVIER
Hermosa [Beautiful].

Mercedes smiles.

MERCEDES
You look handsome.

Javier guides her to the car. He opens the door for her. She enters. As he walks around, she opens the door from the inside.

INT. INSIDE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Javier continues to look at Mercedes.

JAVIER
Te ves tan hermosa, Mercedes. [You
look so beautiful, Mercedes]

Mercedes smiles.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
I originally planned on taking you
out to a picnic, but with the way
you look, I have a better place.

INT. A FANCY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Chandeliers lights the room. red, black, and gold decors.
HOST(20s) greets them.

HOST
Table for two?

JAVIER
Can we get a corner booth?

HOST
Those are reserved, sir. I can
introduce you to a-

Javier hands him a 50 dollar bill.

HOST (CONT'D)
You know what, a booth just opened
up. Come right this way.

They follow him to a nice corner booth, with a candle in the
middle of the table. Mercedes scoots first and then Javier.

HOST (CONT'D)
Your waiter will be with you
shortly.

JAVIER
Thank you.

Host nods and walks away.

MERCEDES

This place looks amazing! Have you ever been here before?

JAVIER

Once with Carion. We were celebrating the first we did a successful job with a plan I came up with...

Mercedes looks down, body tenses slight with discomfort. Javier does not notice.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

He was so proud of me, that's when he said he wanted me to take over for him one day.

Mercedes traces the napkin in front of her. WAITRESS (20s) walks over to them. Mercedes lets out a relief.

WAITRESS

Welcome! How's everyone enjoying their evening so far?

MERCEDES

Good and you?

WAITRESS

I'm doing good, can I get you guys any drinks to start with?

MERCEDES

Water for me.

JAVIER

Can we get two glasses of your best wine, as well?

The Waitress walks jots it down and nods.

WAITRESS

I'll be with your shortly.

She leaves.

MERCEDES

So, um, take over for him?

JAVIER

Yeah, the one calling the shots.

MERCEDES

Why would you want that?

Javier looks stunned.

JAVIER

I mean, why wouldn't I? The money,
the power-

MERCEDES

The higher chances of getting
arrested, getting killed-

JAVIER

I mean yeah there's some downside,
but I knew what I signed up for.

Waitress comes back with the drinks. She places it down.

WAITRESS

Are you ready to eat or need a
little more time?

MERCEDES

We're good, I'll have the surf and
turf, well done please.

JAVIER

I'll have the same.

Waitress walks away. Mercedes takes a sip of the wine.

MERCEDES

But do you want to keep living that
life?

JAVIER

What do you mean?

MERCEDES

I mean I get it, you signed up for
it, but you can also sign out of
it.

Javier shakes his head as he takes a sip from his wine.

JAVIER

No, I-I can't. I-

MERCEDES

You know what lets just put this
topic on hold for the moment. Maybe
this is isn't the moment.

Javier nods and looks down.

JAVIER

So you came from Dominican
Republic?

MERCEDES

Yes, I got visa along with my
sister. It's just us here, my
parents and brother are still back
in the island.

JAVIER

Do you miss them?

MERCEDES

Everyday, but being here helps me
and them have a better life,
financially.

Javier and Mercedes sips their wine. Silence between the two.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)

What about your parents? Are they
back in Puerto Rico?

JAVIER

They um, they passed away when I
was young. I have only my siblings
left, but most of them are back in
the island.

MERCEDES

I'm so sorry.

Waitress comes back with the food and places it on the table.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)

How many siblings do you have?

JAVIER

8.

MERCEDES

8?! I'm sorry but that's insane!

The two laugh.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)

And they all came for your mother?

He nods.

JAVIER

Technically 9 if you include my
twin sister who died when my mom
gave birth to us.

Mercedes eyes go wide.

MERCEDES

Your poor mother.

The two laugh again.

JAVIER

Sometimes I wonder if she's
disappointed in me. This is
definitely not the life she
expected for me.

MERCEDES

There's still time to change, Javi.
You don't have to stay in this
life, if you don't want.

JAVIER

Yeah but I owe it to Carion.

Javier leans back into the booth.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Man I screwed up, Mercedes.

Mercedes caress Javier's arm.

MERCEDES

It's alright, Javi.

Javier looks at her. They stare at each other, slowly moving
in. They kiss.

EXT. OUTSIDE MERCEDES' BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

The two stand in front of the building.

MERCEDES

Thank you for tonight. I had fun.

JAVIER

Thank you for saying yes.. Does
this mean we'll go on another date?

MERCEDES

I wouldn't be opposed to it.
Goodnight Javi.

JAVIER
Goodnight hermosa.

The two share a kiss. Mercedes goes inside the building and Javier heads to his car.

INT. JAVIER'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Javier, still smiling, enters the apartment. He reaches for the light and gets punched to the ground. Carion stands in front of him. He grabs Javier's shirt and throws another punch.

Javier manages to push Carion hard enough before the next punch. Javier stands up, and wipes the blood from his face.

JAVIER
What the fuck is your problem?

CARION
No what the fuck is your problem? I fucking told you to do your fucking job and you couldn't even do that?

Carion goes to punch, Javier moves in time. Carion misses.

JAVIER
So I miss a job, big fucking deal, I can do it tomorrow.

CARION
No, you fucking can't because your dumbass friends fucked up.

JAVIER
W-what are you talking about, they don't fuck up.

CARION
Oh yea? Your drug addict of a fucking friend had a fucking breakdown and disappeared, and then the cabrón ese Raul, got the cops fucking called on us and we almost got arrested.

Javier facepalms and mutters 'Shit' over and over.

CARION (CONT'D)
Yes, shit indeed, so tell me fucking again where the fuck where you, and you better not say that date.

Javier looks down. Carion takes a big deep breath.

CARION (CONT'D)

You have three seconds to get the fuck out of here before I fucking kill you. I can't even look at you in the face.

Javier stares at him.

CARION (CONT'D)

Javier, por el amor de dios, vete!
[Javier, for the love of God,
leave!]

Javier speeds walk out of there. Carion grabs the lamp and throws it across the room.

EXT. OUTSIDE JAVIER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Javier exits the building, Raul is waiting for him at the bottom of the steps, badly beat up and hyperventilating.

RAUL

I-I'm sorry, I'm so fucking sorry, you, you and Carlos were right, I'm not cut out for this. I shouldn't have joined, I-I

Javier shushes him.

JAVIER

It's okay, I'm not mad, It's okay. Where's Carlos?

RAUL

I-I don't know, he got a call and just went ballistic before everything went down. I don't know.

JAVIER

Let's go to his house, see if he's there.

Raul nods and the two run off.

INT. CARLOS' FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Javier bangs on the door. No answer.

RAUL

Carlos! Carlos open up!

No answer.

JAVIER
Screw it.

Javier hits his shoulder repeatedly until he breaks the door open. He and Raul enter the apartment.

INT. CARLOS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They look around and see a mess everywhere.

JAVIER
Carlos!

They walk towards the bedroom.

INT. CARLOS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carlos lays on the ground, his skin almost blue, his breath gets more shallow with each inhale and exhale. Raul and Carion runs towards Carlos. They try to shake him, no response.

JAVIER
Quick grab his leg, we need to go.

The two lift him up and carry him out.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Javier sits in the chair, covering his head. Raul taps on his shoulder, bandaged up.

RAUL
Any updates?

JAVIER
None yet.

Raul sits next to him. They sit anxiously. DOCTOR 2(30s) comes up to them.

DOCTOR 2
Are you guys relatives of Carlos De Leon?

They jump up and nod.

JAVIER
Yes we are, how is he?

DOCTOR 2
 He overdosed. He almost didn't make it, but luckily you brought him in on time. He's okay.

The two boys let out a big exhale of relief. Doctor 2 looks down at the notepad. Her expression changes.

JAVIER
 What is it?

Doctor 2 looks sincerely at them.

DOCTOR 2
 You're able to go and see him.

RAUL
 What's wrong?

DOCTOR 2
 I'm sorry, I'm able to disclose private information.

RAUL
 What do you mean you can't tell us? We're his family!

JAVIER
 What room is he in?

Raul glares at Javier.

DOCTOR 2
 318.

JAVIER
 Thank you. Raul lets go.

Javier walks away. Raul glares at the doctor and follows.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Carlos lays on the bed. Machine are hooked up to him. Raul and Javier enter the room. They each stand by different side of the bed. Carlos slowly opens his eyes.

JAVIER
 Cabrón, you're alive.

CARLOS
 What you didn't think you could get rid of me that easy.

RAUL
What were you thinking? What happened?

CARLOS
Well I was thinking, "Hey, I'm dying anyways, why not go out in my terms."

Silence.

RAUL
What are you talking about?

Carlos starts to tear up.

CARLOS
I got AIDS.

Silence. Javier stares at him. Raul starts pacing around.

RAUL
How did- What- Why-

CARLOS
Carion.

Javier's face hardens.

JAVIER
What?

CARLOS
That's what he whispered in my ear. He's know for a couple of months now, and so he switched my needles with people that he knows that had AIDS. Including the one he injected me with.

Silence.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
I've showed symptoms for a while but always assume it was the cold or I overdid it. Then after he told me that, I got tested and that's what the call I got before the job was. I found out and I.. I lost it.

Javier looks at Carlos.

JAVIER

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. This is all my fault. *I brought this to you. Both of you.*

CARLOS

Ah get off your mighty horse, Javi. I did this to myself. *I chose this, you didn't force me to it.*

JAVIER

But I gave you the choice.

CARLOS

No, where we live, gave me the choice. I mean look at Diego, he was the one who left, and look what happened. He fucking hung himself because he was all coked up. This isn't on you.

Javier leans back into the chair.

RAUL

I want out. I want out before this gets worse, I'm done.

JAVIER

I'll help you.

RAUL

You should leave too.

JAVIER

It's harder for me, I'm in to deep, but I can help you. From here on out, the three of us, we're done with this, deal?

They agree.

INT. JAVIER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Javier and Mercedes lay in bed cuddling with each other.

MERCEDES

I can't believe Carion would do that.

JAVIER

Yea, well I can. I should've know better that to trust him.

MERCEDES

He wouldn't do anything to you right? If he finds out you're trying to leave, he wouldn't hurt you, right? I mean you're like a son to him.

Javier sits up and rubs his face. He lets out a sigh and stares up at the ceiling.

JAVIER

I honestly don't know. I wish I can be sure, Merce. Before, he would do anything for me. People said I was definitely his weak spot. He lets me get away with things he would kill someone else if they do it, but this.. leaving him, he.. he's not going to take it well.

Mercedes rubs his back.

MERCEDES

I'm here for you, mi amor. Whatever you need, I'm here. Te amo.

Javier smiles and kisses her hand.

JAVIER

Te adoro. [I adore you].

He scoops her in for kiss.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Thank you for being by my side in this. I'm sorry that this is my world.

MERCEDES

Hey, I knew what I was getting myself into. I will be by your side. Always.

Javier kisses her again. The two lay back in the bed and continues to kiss.

INT. RAUL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Carlos, Javier, and Raul smokes their cigarettes by the window. Furniture is all covered and a suitcase in the corner.

RAUL
Last smoke together for a while.

CARLOS
Don't get all sentimental now.

RAUL
Hey, I have every right. We've been
by each other's side since we were
kids.

Javier raises his cigarette.

JAVIER
To a new life.

Raul and Carlos raise their cigarettes.

RAUL CARION
To a new life. To a new life.

Loud bangs on the door. The three of them quickly puts out
the cigarette.

RAUL (CONT'D)
Who is it?

POLICE 1
NYPD, OPEN UP!

CARLOS
(whisper)
Shit, we gotta run.

RAUL
No, I'm not running, I have nothing
to hide.

Raul opens the door and POLICE 1 (30s) and POLICE 2 (30s)
stands in front of him.

POLICE 1
Are you Raul Gomez?

RAUL
Yes, how can I help you?

Police 2 takes out his handcuff.

POLICE 1
You're under arrest for Grand Theft
Auto. You have the right to remain
silent.

RAUL

What? That makes no sense!

POLICE 1

Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have a right to an attorney.

Police 2 handcuffs Raul.

JAVIER

This has to have been Carion. He knew you were leaving.

POLICE 1

If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you.

Police 1, Police 2, and Raul walks out of the room. Javier yells from the doorway.

JAVIER

Don't say anything! I'll figure this out for you but keep your mouth shut!

Javier walks back in the room.

CARLOS

What do we do?

Javier walks towards the landline phone and dials.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Who are you calling?

CARION (O.S.)

Hello?

JAVIER

Why'd you do it?

CARION

I'm sorry, who is this?

JAVIER

Cut the bullshit, you know who this is, why did you do it?

CARION

See you sound a lot like someone I used to know. I haven't seen him in, hmm a month? Two?.

JAVIER

Carion, no estoy jugando, por que lo hiciste! [Carion, I'm not playing, why did you do it!]

CARION

Oh Javi, don't you know by now? No one leaves unless I want them to leave. On that note, when you're done throwing this tantrum, I have a job for you. Bye.

Carion hangs up. Javier throws the phone across the room.

JAVIER

Fuck me!

CARLOS

Did he say why?

JAVIER

Because he's a psychopath, that's why. Let's go see how we can help Raul. That kid won't last 5 minutes in that place.

INT. JAIL VISTING ROOM - MORNING

Glass wall booths with phones attached to it, across the room. Javier enters and sits at a booth. Raul comes out, he has a black eye. Javier and Raul grabs the phone.

JAVIER

What happened?

RAUL

Cellmate. I didn't know that was his pudding.. where's Carlos?

JAVIER

He's meeting with a the lawyers, look we're going to get you of here.

RAUL

Javier, I'm a resident. I could get deported.

JAVIER

And it won't come to that. I'll make sure of it. Ok? Just trust us.

Buzzer.

RAUL
I have to go now.

JAVIER
I'll be back.

Raul and Javier hangs the phone. Javier stays as he watches Raul leaves.

INT. CARION'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Carion sits on the couch, counting his money. Javier barges in the house and stands in front of Carion. Carion laughs and claps his hands.

CARION
The prodigal son has return.

JAVIER
Are you proud of yourself?

CARION
I am actually.

JAVIER
You didn't even want him in here to begin with! Why get him arrested?

CARION
So you'd learn.

JAVIER
Learn what?

CARION
There is no friends in the games. There's only pawns that you use, and when you don't need them, dispose them. It's better you learn now than later.

JAVIER
So you get my friend arrested and the other AIDS? You are psycho!

CARION
Hey, this is the life. This is what you'll be taking over.

JAVIER
What if I don't want to?

Carion stands up. He slowly moves towards Javier.

CARION

What?

Javier moves closer.

JAVIER

What if I don't want all of *this* anymore? I don't care about the money or the power if it means the people I care about has to suffer for it.

Carion inhales and exhales. He pushes Javier to the couch. Javier gets up midway.

CARION

Sit your ass down!

Javier sits.

CARION (CONT'D)

I *did* not waste 10 years of my fucking life training you, just for you to come with this bullshit.

JAVIER

I'm done, Carion! I'm done.

CARION

YOU'RE DONE WHEN I SAY YOU'RE DONE, DO YOU HEAR ME?

Pause.

CARION (CONT'D)

That is unless you want something to happen to, what's that waitress name again? Oh yeah, Mercedes.

Javier tense up.

JAVIER

Don't you dare touch her.

CARION

Then do what you're asked. Disrespect me one more time and watch what will happen.

Carion opens his door.

CARION (CONT'D)

Now get the fuck out of my house.

Javier gets and walks towards the door. He stops and glares at Carion.

JAVIER
This isn't over.

CARION
Feels like it is.

Carion slams the door in Javier's face.

INT. RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Mercedes writes on the chalk board 'Happy Hour Specials'. Javier walks into the restaurant and speed walks up to her. She spots him and smiles.

MERCEDES
Hey, what are you are doing here?

Javier pulls Mercedes into a hug. Mercedes hugs him back, and he hugs tighter.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)
What's wrong, honey?

JAVIER
Everything.

INT. RESTAURANT TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

Javier sits at the table, and Mercedes brings him a glass of water. She sits next to him.

MERCEDES
I can't believe he did that.

JAVIER
I don't know what to do.

Mercedes holds his hand.

MERCEDES
What if you reached out to your family? Maybe they can help.

JAVIER
I don't want to trouble them.

MERCEDES
But what if they can help. Help you get out of here.

Javier takes a sip of his water and shrugs.

JAVIER
Worth a shot. I have a sister,
Isabella, she moved to Connecticut.
Maybe we can pay her a visit.

MERCEDES
We?

JAVIER
Yeah, is that ok?

MERCEDES
Yes, that's okay. I'm off tomorrow,
we can go in the morning. Now, I
have to go back to work.

Javier kisses her cheek.

JAVIER
Thank you, hermosa.

EXT. OUTSIDE ISABELLA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Beautiful single family house, a car parked in the driveway,
and a basketball hoop attached to the garage. Javier and
Mercedes gets out of the car and hold hands. Mercedes rubs
the back of Javier's hand.

MERCEDES
You got this.

Javier smiles and gives her a kiss. The two walk up to the
door. Javier, hesitantly, knocks on the door.

ISABELLA (O.C.)
Coming!

Isabella opens the door. She stands there frozen, eyes starts
to water.

JAVIER
Hola Isa.

Mercedes lets go of Javier's hand. He walks closer to
Isabella and she embraces Javier.

ISABELLA
Ay mi hermanito [Oh my little
brother].

Isabella lets go of the embrace and looks over to Mercedes.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
And who's this beautiful lady.

Javier holds Mercedes and brings her closer.

JAVIER
Mi novia, Mercedes.

MERCEDES
It's so nice to meet you!

Mercedes and Isabella hug each other.

ISABELLA
You as well! Please come inside.

INT. ISABELLA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Javier and Mercedes enter the house. They sit on the couch.

ISABELLA
Can I get you something to drink?
Water? Coffee? Beer?

JAVIER
No it's okay Isa, we won't be long,
I just needed to talk to you.

ISABELLA
Okay...

Isabella sits on the chair next to them.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
Díos mío, she's pregnant?!

Hell no.

MERCEDES

No no no.

JAVIER

Pause.

ISABELLA
What's wrong then?

JAVIER
Carion.

Isabella scoffs and rolls her eyes.

ISABELLA

Todavía Javier? En serio, todavía?
[Still Javier? Really, still?]

JAVIER

I know, I know, but I'm trying to
leave, I-I want to! I just don't
know how.

Isabella stares at him in disbelief.

ISABELLA

What does he have over you?

Javier looks at Mercedes.

JAVIER

He hurt Carlos and Raul already.
She's next if I don't obey him.

ISABELLA

So obey him.

Javier looks back at Isabella.

JAVIER

What?

ISABELLA

I'm not saying stay with him, but
work a few more jobs to get him off
your back, save the money, and come
move here. He won't suspect it.

JAVIER

What about her?

ISABELLA

Bring her too.

MERCEDES

I-I can't just up and leave, I have
a job, my sister-

ISABELLA

You can all come here. The money is
better, the housing is better, You
are welcome to stay here until you
can get your own place.

JAVIER

What if he finds us?

ISABELLA

He won't and if he does, we'll be ready.

Javier looks at Mercedes and holds her hand. She gives him a soft smile and nods.

JAVIER

Alright. Sounds like a plan.

INT. CARION'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Javier sits on the couch. Carion comes in and place a cup of whiskey in front of him.

CARION

Glad you finally came to your senses.

JAVIER

Yeah, whatever. What was this job you had for me?

CARION

Lorenzo need you to pick up some parts he got.

JAVIER

Alright, I swing by.

Javier gets up.

CARION

That's it? You're leaving?

JAVIER

Don't you need me to do this?

CARION

Yeah but let's catch up, tell me about Mercedes.

JAVIER

Look, if we're doing this, her name, *never* leaves your mouth, ok?

Carion takes out his cigarette. He motions to Javier.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

I'm good. I'm quitting that. Anyways, I'm heading out now.

Javier walks out the door.

CARION

Unbelievable. You raise the kid and now you get treated like the dirty mistress.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Tires piled up all around, Javier walks through the gate.

JAVIER

Lorenzo? Hello? I'm here for the parts you had.

Javier keeps walking. DETECTIVE SMITH (30s) enters through the same gate Javier entered. Javier stops his tracks.

DETECTIVE SMITH

Javier DeJesus?

JAVIER

Nah wrong person.

Javier attempts to walk away.

DETECTIVE SMITH

I just have some questions. Does Carion ring a bell?

Javier starts to run. Detective Smith chases him. He speaks through his walkie talkie.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)

We got a runner! I repeat, we got a runner!

Officer 1 runs from the other side of the junkyard. Javier stops abruptly. He tries to go the other way and Detective Smith stands behind him. He sighs and raises his hands up. Detective Smith walks over to Javier and handcuffs him.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)

Javier DeJesus, you are under arrest for resisting arrest. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have a right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you.

Detective Smith takes Javier into the police car.

INT. JAIL CELL - MOMENTS LATER

Dirty floor and bars, a guy passed out on the bench, and another pounding on the bars. Javier has his head on his knees. The bars open.

POLICE 1

Javier Dejesus, you're up.

Javier stands up and follows the officer.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Javier enters the room and sits on the chair. The officer exits the room. Javier stares blankly at the mirror in front of him. Detective Smith enters the room with a folder in hand. He sits across from Javier and puts down the folder.

DETECTIVE SMITH

Hello Javier, I am Detective Smith, I'd say it would be a pleasure to meet you, but this is a good circumstance is it.

Javier stays quiet.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)

Silent? That's alright, maybe this will help you talk.

JAVIER

I did nothing wrong. Let me go, you can't hold me here.

DETECTIVE SMITH

Then why did you run?

JAVIER

Instinct.

Detective Smith pulls out photos of Javier taking apart cars, hot wiring, and breaking into stores. Javier looks down at the photos and back at the Detective.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

I want my lawyer.

DETECTIVE SMITH

No need, we're letting you go.

Javier looks shocked.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)
Let's make a deal.

JAVIER
What kind of deal?

DETECTIVE SMITH
Well, we don't really want you, we want Carion. He's smart, he's avoided us for years, and now we're so close to getting him and that's where you come in. We need you to wear a wire, and catch him saying something incriminating.

Javier stays quiet.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)
If you don't do this, you will be going to jail for a man who sold you and your friends out. Think about it. We're going to put an ankle monitor so you don't think about leaving town, and you have until tomorrow night to decide.

Detective Smith gets up and leaves. Javier looks at the photos once more.

EXT. OUTSIDE POLICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Javier anxiously puts a quarter in the payphone and dials a number. It rings.

MERCEDES (O.S.)
(sheepishly)
Hello?

Javier's body relaxes and he smiles.

JAVIER
Mi amor.

MERCEDES (O.S.)
(more alert)
Hola my vida [Hi my life], it's later, are you okay?

JAVIER
Better now that I'm hearing your voice.

MERCEDES (O.S.)
What's going on?

JAVIER
Yeah, yeah.. No, no not at all. I
need to see you. We need to talk.

INT. MERCEDES' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mercedes sits up on her bed, landline phone in her hand. She gets up and walks over to her dresser. Pregnancy test lays on top and has a plus sign on it.

MERCEDES
We definitely need to talk.

JAVIER (O.S.)
I need to see Carlos, but then I'll
stop by your house.

MERCEDES
Be quiet, my sister and nephew are
sleeping.

JAVIER (O.S.)
I will. I love you, mi reina.

MERCEDES
I love you too.

Mercedes hangs up the phone and picks up the stick. She stares at it and smiles.

INT. CARLOS' FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Javier bangs on the door. Carlos opens it, sheepishly and yawning. Javier barges in and closes the door behind him.

CARLOS
Cabron, it's 4am why are you here?

Javier place his leg on the table and raise his pants, showing the ankle monitor. Carlos eyes goes wide.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
You got arrested? What happened?

JAVIER
Carion, who the fuck else? He
must've found out I was leaving.

CARLOS
But how?

JAVIER
I don't know!

CARLOS
How are you not in jail?

JAVIER
They want me to turn him in, in
exchange for my freedom.

Carlos plumps on the couch.

CARLOS
You have to do it.

Javier stops prancing and turns to him.

JAVIER
Are you crazy? I can't do it.

CARLOS
Why not? He did it to Raul, hell he
did it you! And you can make a deal
that you help both you and Raul.

Javier pause.

JAVIER
I need to go.

Javier leaves the apartment.

CARLOS
It's 4 in the morning, where the
hell this guy going?

EXT. OUTSIDE MERCEDES' BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Javier throws rocks at a window. Light turns on. Mercedes
peeps through the curtains and then opens the window.

MERCEDES
(whisper)
Javi, what are you doing? This is
not being quiet.

JAVIER
Sorry! Come down, please.

MERCEDES

I'll be down in a second.

EXT. MERCEDES' BUILDING'S STEPS - MOMENTS LATER

The two sit in silence. Javier stares at Mercedes. She stares at the ground.

JAVIER

Please say something.

MERCEDES

I don't know what to say, I mean, if you don't turn him in, you're in jail for who knows when, and if you do turn him in, you could get hurt. His people could hurt you, could even kill you.

Mercedes starts choking up. Javier pulls her in to a hug.

JAVIER

I should have never pursued you. You don't deserve this life. I don't deserve you.

MERCEDES

Don't say that. I'm glad that I met you. I'm glad that you're in my life. Besides..

Mercedes sits up.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)

This isn't how I expected to tell you, but given the circumstances..

Mercedes takes out the pregnancy test from her pockets and hands it to him. Javier stares at it confusingly.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)

Javier, I'm pregnant.

Javier looks at her and then at the test. He smiles and hugs her tightly.

JAVIER

Mercedes, this is amazing! I'm going to be a dad! I'm going to be a dad.

(slowly realize)

I'm going to be a dad, and I might not be there for their life.

Mercedes rubs his back. He stands up.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
 You should get some sleep. You have to go to work soon, and I have to go. There's one more person I need advice from.

Javier helps her up. She kisses him.

MERCEDES
 Whatever you decide, I love you.

She puts his hand on her stomach.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)
 We love you.

Javier smiles. He stands as Mercedes walks in the building.

JAVIER
 (whisper)
 I'm going to be a dad.

INT. JAVIER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Javier holds the phone in his hand. He paces back and forth, then sits on his bed. He dials and places the phone against his ear.

MANUEL
 Ello?

JAVIER
 Manny! It's Javier.

MANUEL
 Javier! I don't have much time, but how are you? Haven't heard from you in a while, is everything okay?

Javier plays with the chord.

JAVIER
 Yes? No? It's a lot going on.

MANUEL
 What's wrong?

JAVIER
 I'll try to be quick with everything, but good news, I'm going to be a dad.

MANUEL

That's amazing, Javier!
Congratulations!

JAVIER

Thanks Manu.. and then um there's
the issue with Carion-

MANUEL

Say no more, look, Javier, hearing
everything I've heard about that
man, I knew one day he will cause
something. My advice to you, is
your child comes first. Whatever
you decide, let it be because of
your kid and no one else, ok?

Javier lays down on his bed.

JAVIER

Yeah.. you're right.. Thanks Manu.

MANUEL

No problem, I have to go, but call
me later, okay?

JAVIER

Will do.

Javier hangs up the phone. He grabs the pillow and covers his
face with it.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Javier taps on the table. Detective Smith and Police 1 enters
the room and sits across from him with a pen and paper.
Javier takes the paper and reads through it.

DETECTIVE SMITH

I already sign my part in this.
Raul Gomez will be released as soon
as you sign those papers.

Javier signs the paper and passes them to Detective Smith.
Smith hands the paper to Police 1.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)

Release Gomez.

Police 1 nods, takes the paper, and leaves the room.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)
 All right, now the plan is we will
 attach a wire underneath your
 shirt. We need you to get him to
 confess to as much crime as you
 can, the most gruesome the better.
 We'll be near by to arrest him.
 Sounds good?

Javier nods.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)
 Let's get this show on the road
 then.

INT. JAVIER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Javier paces his room anxiously. He sits on his bed and looks
 up to the sky.

JAVIER
 Mami, if you're watching me, I'm
 sorry. I'm so sorry for getting
 myself involved in this crap. I'm
 sorry for leaving the family. I'm
 sorr- I'm sorry for not going to
 your funeral.

Javier looks down. Tears rolling down his cheeks.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
 What am I doing? Betraying Carion?
 How am I going to do this? I- I
 can't! I just, I-

He looks up and sees his mom in the corner of the room. More
 tears rolls down.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
 Mami, am I doing the right thing?

Catalina walks over to him and places her hand on his cheeks.
 He closes his eyes and puts one hand on his cheek. He opens
 them, and she's gone. Javier sinks face into hands.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Javier sits on a can. He looks around. Carion enters and sees
 Javier.

JAVIER
 Took you long enough.

CARION

What do you want? Are you here to explain why you never showed up to Lorenzo's?

JAVIER

Something came up.

Carion scoffs.

CARION

Really? "Something came up"? When I ask you to do something, you do it!

JAVIER

Whatever.

Carion gets closer to him.

CARION

Whatever nothing, when I give you orders, you do them. You understand me or do I got to teach you a lesson?

Javier and Carion stare each other down.

JAVIER

The lesson like you did to Eladio?

Carion chuckles.

CARION

I don't know what you're talking about.

JAVIER

Or what you did to Carlos? Giving him needles used by druggies with AIDs?

Carion shrugs.

CARION

It's a shame that your friend's drug addiction led to that happening. Sucks for him.

Carion stares at Javier's shirt and sees a wire poking out. He raises the shirt, pulls the microphone out, and steps on it. Javier steps back. Carion looks at him, fist clenched.

CARION (CONT'D)

I took you for a lot of things, but
I didn't take you for a rat.

Javier scoffs.

JAVIER

I'm no different than you. I'm just
removing one of my pawns from the
game.

Carion lunges at Javier and tackles him to the ground. He
punch once, then again, then again. Javier grabs Carion's
shoulder and bumps his head on his nose. Carion gets off of
Javier. Javier kicks Carion in the face, he falls down.

Javier stands in fight position. Carion stands up.

CARION

This is stupid.

Carion pulls out a gun, so does Javier. The two points at one
another.

CARION (CONT'D)

So this is how it ends. Out of
everyone in my crew, you were the
one person who I didn't expect to
do this to me. I gave you
everything, Javi. I taught you
everything, and this is how you
treat me?

JAVIER

I didn't do anything to you. You
changed. You hurt my friends. My
family.

CARION

I am your family! I raised you! Me.
Fucking me.

Carion shoots Javier's leg. Javier drops his gun and fall to
the ground. Carion gets closer and points the gun to his
head.

JAVIER

Wait, wait. Please, Carion. I'm
going to be a dad. Don't take me
away from my kid. Don't.

Carion hesitates and lowers the gun.

CARION
You're going to be dad?

JAVIER
Yes, I am.

CARION
Congratulations. Wow, at least the kid won't grow up with the disappointment of having you as a father.

Carion lifts the gun. Javier closes his eyes. BANG. Javier opens his eyes. Carion is shot in the chest. He falls to his knees, looks at Javier, and falls down. Javier looks behind Carion. It's Detective Smith.

DETECTIVE SMITH
(through walkie talkie)
Can I get an ambulance to the junkyard, we have two people with gunshot wounds. I repeat, two people with gunshot wounds.

Detective Smith check's Carion's pulse.

JAVIER
Is he alive?

DETECTIVE SMITH
Barely, it's getting weaker.

Detective Smith covers Carion's wound with his hand.

DETECTIVE SMITH (CONT'D)
Put pressure on yours to stop the bleeding.

Javier nods. He sits up and puts his hand on his leg.

JAVIER
Detective, I don't feel goo-

Javier passes out.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Javier lays on the bed. Mercedes holds his hand, Raul and Carlos sits on the other side of the room.

RAUL
I can't believe he did it.

CARLOS
I mean he had motive, that baby of
his.

RAUL
Thank God the detective got there
in time.

Javier slowly opens his eyes. He groans.

MERCEDES
Javi?

Raul and Carlos gets up and goes to him.

JAVIER
Wha-What happened?

MERCEDES
You lost a lot of blood, and you'll
be in a cast for a few weeks, but
other than that you're okay.

She starts tearing up and kisses his forehead.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)
You're okay.

Javier turns to the boys.

JAVIER
Raul, they let you out. A part of
me was worried they tricked me with
that.

RAUL
Nah cabrón, I'm out and it's
cleared from my record, thanks to
you.

JAVIER
And-And Carion? What happened to
him?

Mercedes, Carlos, and Raul looks at one another.

CARLOS
He's dead.

Javier looks straight ahead. Pause. He turns to Mercedes.

JAVIER
I'm free?

MERCEDES

Yes, we're free.

RAUL

We can finally start our lives,
start fresh.

CARLOS

Speak for yourself, I'm still
dying, remember?

RAUL

Yeah but you're in the trial, who
knows how long you'll live, hell it
might cure it.

Javier gazes in Mercedes eyes.

JAVIER

I'm happy to start a family with
you.

The two share a kiss. Carlos and Raul whistles. Javier flips
them off.

30 YEARS LATER

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Kids run around, playing tag. Different groups chatting and
eating around the yard. OLDER JAVIER(53), flips a steak at
the grill. OLDER RAUL(53) enters with a tray a food. He hands
it to OLDER MERCEDES(49) who place it down on the table.

Older Raul heads over to Older Javier.

OLDER RAUL

Que lo que, cabrón.

OLDER JAVIER

Hey, where's the missus?

OLDER RAUL

She's coming later with Yessica.
They're getting their nails done.
Where's Carlos?

OLDER JAVIER

Him and Veronica are stuck in
Canada, but they send their hellos.

Older Mercedes comes to hug Older Javier.

OLDER RAUL
Is that pernil?

OLDER JAVIER
Of course, I made pernil, arroz con
gandules, ensalda de papá-

OLDER RAUL
Say no more, my belly is ready for
this.

Older Raul leaves and grabs a plate. Older Javier and Mercedes laughs.

OLDER JAVIER
I don't say this enough, but thank
you.

OLDER MERCEDES
For what?

OLDER JAVIER
For saving me. For our children,
our grandchildren. Tu eres mi vida,
Mercedes.

The two kiss and smile. They look at their kids and grandkids. Older Javier looks out in the distance and sees the ghost of his mother smiling at him.

THE END.