

***EXHAUSTION:***  
*Dancin' Trees in the Ravine*

***ARROYO:***  
*En el Barranco*

A psychedelic comedy

by  
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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
<b>ACHIOTE "CHIO"</b> REGIONAL MANAGER	bi-lingual, ESP and ENG	25+	he+   they+
<b>APESTOSE "APÉ"</b> THE ROBBER CORPORATE INSPECTOR	bi-lingual, ESP and ENG	25+	they+
<b>TAQUACHE "TAKI"</b>	English, learning Spanish	25+	she+   they+
<b>SHROOM</b> LA KAREN FRANCESCA LA ROCA	A multi-dimensional being	?	Fluid

Casting Note: This is a QT,BIPOC show. These foos are inspired by queer, trans, fat, disabled, brown, and black persons. Please take care of the cast in and outside of process and honor their relation to the earth, sky, and one another.

## SETTINGS

1. May 28, 2020 in the Santa Cruz Mountains. A hidden waterhole in the Garden of Eden at the base of a ravine.
2. A pizza place not unlike *Domino's* called *Dante's*.
3. An administrative office.
4. A liminal space that exists and connects all realities, time, and space. Where SHROOM and the trees (audience) exist to perceive, interact, and/or ignore. The immersive quality of the space.

## SUMMARY

Three friends escape into the Santa Cruz mountains in search of a place to swim and BBQ. They packed for the beach without realizing they had a treacherous hike down a ravine. Once at a waterhole the consumption of some shrooms sets the stage for a heartfelt adventure between friends too tired to know how to rest.

SCENE ONE.

In darkness. The forest wakes up. The floor is damp and spongy. The air is pure and fresh under the canopy. The sun begins to rise. The trees sway in the breeze.

Then, the soft humming of fuel-efficient cars, doors slamming, and people preparing for their hiking adventures.

A car with three friends backs-up and parks at the top of the ravine. Only the trunk and rear lights can be seen as CHIO, APÉ, and TAKI exit the car to start their day trip adventure. They begin to stretch and walk around as their bodies feel the relief of movement after hours of sitting. CHIO and APÉ find a place to discretely pee as TAKI takes in the beauty of nature and the fresh air blessing their lungs.

TAKI

Wow. (To audience) I forgot how pretty trees can be.

CHIO and APÉ return from behind the trees.

APÉ

I'm glad I wore crocs . . .

CHIO

This is nice.

APÉ

There's twigs everywhere!

TAKI

I thought this place would be easier to find.

APÉ

It's nice . . . but it isn't what I . . .

TAKI places their hand on APÉ. They both breath.

TAKI

I know.

APÉ

¡It's just that we/ planned for the . . .

CHIO

/Aye Apestose, chill. Look! Que hermosura.

A moment of calm and curiosity as they continue to stretch, fill their lungs with fresh air, and explore their immediate surroundings.

TAKI

I'm starving.

APÉ

Me too. vamos!

CHIO

Apé.

TAKI

Apé ... our shit.

APÉ

Oh, right.

The trunk opens and they unload it.

CHIO

Aver . . . ¿Bien cargados y listos para el viaje?

APÉ

Yup.

TAKI

Uh, Chio. Did you just ask if we are good and shitted?

CHIO

What?

APÉ

No, that would be, "bien *cagados*"

CHIO

Oh yes, it's *cargados* not *cagados*. We're . . . loaded-up.

APÉ

With all our shit.

TAKI

Ahhhh, okay. *cargados*. So. . . Andamos bien cargados?

CHIO

Si! And ready to trip.

APÉ

And ready *for* our trip.

CHIO

Ah, okay. *For*.

TAKI

Pues. Both.

CHIO

En serio?

TAKI

Not if we don't secure our spot. Let's goooo.

APÉ closes the trunk.

CHIO

ahwoooOOooooOOoooUUUuuuuUuu!!!! Mi mano! (ad lib)

APÉ

Oh, no! I'm soooo so so sorry! (Realizing the weren't actually hurt) ai, Achiote - why?

CHIO

Ni siquiera te fijaste, Apé.

APÉ

Um, okay. But I didn't actually do it tho-

CHIO

Casi lo hiciste . . .

APÉ

Hmmmmm. Just like, casi me das un infarto

TAKI

Yeah yeah yeah. Vamonos already. Always fight'n. Can't take you no where.

CHIO

Perdón.

They all approach the ledge that leads into the ravine with all of their luggage.

CHIO

Jajajajajaja no mames güey. Andamos bien mal. Qué bajada!

APÉ

Oh, no. Oh, no no no no no.

TAKI

It's fine. The other hikers went down this way.

APÉ

The hikers?!

CHIO

It's still early. We can still try the beach.

APÉ

I thought that was what we were doing!

TAKI

No, remember - I said, "y'all wanna try going to this water hole?" and *then* y'all foos said, "yeah. Sure." . . . That was it.

APÉ

Right. But we *planned* for the beach. Like, we were on our way *to* the beach.

CHIO

It sounded cool when we googled it though. Como se llama?

TAKI

The *Garden of Eden*.

CHIO

Ahh, Pues si, con ese nombre teniamos que venir. Fuck la playa.

APÉ

Santa Cruz equals beach for me.

TAKI

Even if we're going to a waterhole in the redwoods?

APÉ

I thought it was a waterhole. In the forest. *Next* to the beach.

TAKI

We're kind of *near* the beach . . .

CHIO

Si, estamos justo al lado de la playa,- ¡pero en lo alto de una montaña. . .

TAKI

Not helping.

APÉ

Ja. Ha. Ja.

TAKI

That's not helping either.

CHIO

Pues, we're already here so . . .

APÉ

Okay okay. How are we getting all of *this* down?

TAKI

We'll figure it d'fuck out. That's how.

APÉ

Fine. Let's do this.

CHIO

Hey! I think we can go down from here.

FADE TO BLACK.

## SCENE TWO.

We're at *Dante's*, a pizza place not unlike Dominos, but instead of a cute table-top game theme. The seasonal theme rotates and at *Dante's*, *it is always* hell on earth. You can hear the notification sounds as online orders are being received.

THE ROBBER

(Via God Mic)

Attention! This. Is. A. Hold. Up. Do not move and keep your hands where I can see them!

Lights up. TAKI is standing still next to the pizza oven and the make-line. THE ROBBER is wearing a Ski mask and pointing their "gun."

TAKI

Yeah sure. Whatever you say. Just please don't shoot.

THE ROBBER

(via God Mic)

This is a taser.

TAKI

Oh . . . Okay, then don't tase me?

THE ROBBER

I won't. Don't worry. Just

(Via god Mic)

give me all your money . . .

TAKI hands THE ROBBER all the money in the register.

TAKI

There you go.

THE ROBBER

This is it-Where's the rest!?

TAKI

Most people pay card now.



THE ROBBER

What about the safe?

TAKI

Oh, yeah. Well - I can't give you that money.

THE ROBBER

Give it to me.

(Via God Mic)

Now!

TAKI

Okay - but you will have to wait ten minutes for it to open.

THE ROBBER

Ten Minutes?!

CHIO enters. They are a delivery driver returning to the store.

CHIO

Que pasa aqui?

TAKI

It's another robbery.

CHIO

Oh no! Otro robo, tan pronto?

TAKI

Yup.

CHIO set down the pizza delivery bag and begins to put on an apron.

CHIO

Oh, okay. Do you need me to give you the money in the register, or?

THE ROBBER

No, I already have that money. I am waiting for the safe to open.

TAKI

What? No. You're not. I haven't put the code in-- You didn't let me know if you wanted to wait the ten minutes.

THE ROBBER

It's fine. I'll wait.

TAKI

Okay, cool.

TAKI bends down to put in code for the safe that's under the register.

TAKI

There you go! (to Chio) Hey!

CHIO

Mande!

TAKI

Go grab me some medium sized dough from the walk-in and help out on the make-line. (to Robber) you wanna wait in the lobby or?

THE ROBBER

Uhhh. Yeah. Sure?

LA KAREN is spotted offstage.

TAKI

Oh Fuck! Not her again.

THE ROBBER

Oh shit--She's gonna see me.

CHIO

Ohh, She'll for sure call the cops.

TAKI

Get in here.

THE ROBBER

What?

LA KAREN enters

TAKI

(to the Robber) Heyyy you're late. Hurry up and put an apron on, clock-in, and help me make food . . . (to Karen) Sorry about that. . . "Welcome to Dante's, where the pizza is hot 'nd only hell is hotter. Someone will be right with you. . ." *Chio* help her please.

LA KAREN

Is my food ready yet?

CHIO

... how can I help you?

LA KAREN

My food. Is it ready?

Virtual orders begin coming in. Upstage, TAKI and THE ROBBER get into high-pace work mode. They clown trying to keep up with the orders.

TAKI AND THE ROBBER

(Repeat and incorporate breath as needed) Stretching dough, saucing pizzas, topping pizzas, throw them in the oven. Cutting pizzas. Boxing pizzas. (faster) Stretching dough, saucing pizzas, topping pizzas, throw them in the oven. Cutting pizzas. Boxing pizzas. (even faster) Stretching dough, saucing pizzas, topping pizzas, throw'em in the oven. Cutting pizzas. Boxing pizzas. (faster yet) Stretching dough, saucing pizzas, topping pizzas, throw'em in the oven. Cutting pizzas. Boxing pizzas.

Then, a sudden return. As the scene continues, TAKI and THE ROBBER's rhythm relaxes and becomes *almost* a dance.

CHIO

Sorry- (beat) What's the'uhm . . . What's the name on the order?

LA KAREN

I was just in here.

CHIO

I need your name to look-up the order.

LA KAREN

I wasn't asked for a name. Is it ready?

CHIO

Oh, okay. What did you order?

LA KAREN

(exhales) I ordered two pizzas.

CHIO

Ok. Can you be more specific? I have a few orders that are just two pizzas.

LA KAREN

One cheese. One pepperoni.

CHIO

I am sorry m'am. There's three orders just like that one ready for pick-up.

LA KAREN

Just give me my food.

CHIO

Oye Taki. Tomaste su orden?

TAKI

No. I don't think so-

LA KAREN

I'd appreciate it if you spoke to me in English.

CHIO

Y tu güey, la ayudaste?

THE ROBBER

En serio güey... ni ando trabajando.

LA KAREN

Excuse me!

CHIO

Ohh! eres . . . ai -- whoever took your order put it under "smelly patata."

LA KAREN

You / took my order!

CHIO

Do we have an order for Smelly Patata ready?

THE ROBBER

What?

LA KAREN

Excuse me!

CHIO

Check for a smelly patata.

THE ROBBER

Aye cabron. . .

LA KAREN

Helloooo... My food?!

CHIO

No güey. Es el nombre de la señora.

THE ROBBER

Aye que nombre, pues. I have an order for a Vivi and Livi pero / not one for

CHIO

/Oh, la Livi y la Vivi son esas famosas de la area que se pelearon el otro dia. Casi me meo cuando entraron una despues de la otra hace media hora.

LA KAREN

I can't believe this!

THE ROBBER

Me either! Que paso!?

CHIO

Valentina, la mama the Vivi, siempre anda chismeando con su amiga Rubi en instagram live de todo lo que esta pasanda en sus vidas.

TAKI

Hey, it's on the screen.

CHIO

Oh! (pointing at the monitor with all the orders) It's highlighted on the screen. We haven't made it yet. (to La Karen) It'll be another 30 minutes.

LA KAREN

Thirty minutes!

While CHIO speaks to THE ROBBER, LA KAREN breathes in and out like a bull ready to charge, taps her foot louder and louder, and continues to try to nonverbally capture their attention.

CHIO

Yes - thirty minutes. (to The Robber) No creo que llegen a recojer sus pizzas *porque* Livi empeso a llorar cuando vio que estaba aqui la Vivi.

LA KAREN

Seriously?!

CHIO, THE ROBBER, AND TAKI

(to La Karen) MmmHmMMMM!!!

CHIO

Yes! (excitedly to Robber) Valentina le dijo a Rubi en instagram live - que Jōb le dijo a Alex que Livi se junto una noche con Penny - la prima de Vivi! - y cuando Vivi se enteró le puso uno putisa a Penny.

THE ROBBER

Oh, wow. Por eso tronaron?!

CHIO

Si güey! Puro pinche drama en el *Onlyfans* the Vivi. Te lo recomendo--menos los videos cagosos de Jefe. Esos si que no los considero arte *verdadero*.

LA KAREN

Give me a goddamn refund!

CHIO

Oh, do you not want to wait for your food? I can cancel your order and give you a credit for next time?

LA KAREN

Credit? No, I want a goddamn refund!

THE ROBBER start to record LA KAREN on their phone.

CHIO

Okay. Sure. I can do that for you. Do you have your receipt?

CHIO starts to record LA KAREN on their phone -- with the flash on.

LA KAREN

Oh wow. Woooooow! You don't even care -- do you? This is *terrible* customer service. You're just standing around talking about me like if I wasn't even here! Let me speak to your manager.

CHIO

Taquache, *La Karen* wants to talk to you.

TAKI  
Who's La Karen?

LA KAREN  
(to herself) Figures. That *she's* the manager.

THE ROBBER  
I think they're talking about smelly patata.

TAKI  
Great. Well, *m'am* - how can I help you?

LA KAREN  
I want a refund. And. I want my food made immediately.

TAKI  
I'm sorry / but we can't do that.

LA KAREN  
/No. No. *I* want an apology from *him!* (pointing at Chio) He was rude. He called me names. He lied to me about my wait time and I am not leaving until he apologizes or you *fire* him. You know what, what's your name, son?

CHIO  
Soy Achiote.

LA KAREN  
Coyote? Uh huh. I wanna give a call to Dante's corporate office and I'll make sure you get fired for infringing on my god given rights and hiding your identity from me. Let me see your ID.

TAKI  
Dante's phone number is area code 734. 930. 3030. Feel free to give them a call. Our store number is 6669. I'm gonna let you know now that they're not going to give a single fuck. But please, do me a *favor* and tell them how understaffed we are and how broken all of our equipment is.

LA KAREN  
I'm not gonna do shit for you. But I am gonna call the cops.

CHIO AND THE ROBBER  
Oh fuck.

LA KAREN

You're denying me my refund. You're refusing to make the food that I paid for. And you have undocumented people working here.

TAKI

M'am. That's uncalled for.

LA KAREN

You should know better . . . actually no, I guess you wouldn't. That's why you're *here* . . . making pizzas.

THE ROBBER tases LA KAREN. She falls unconscious on the lobby floor.

TAKI

Dayum. . .

THE ROBBER

What?

Pizzas are falling out of the oven as they stand over LA KAREN.

TAKI

I just wish I would have done that.

THE ROBBER

You can do it next time.

CHIO

Y yo que? Tambien lo quiero ser.

THE ROBBER

Paciencia güey.

TAKI tries opening the safe.

TAKI

Fuck!

THE ROBBER

What happened?

TAKI

I put the wrong code in. You're gonna have to wait another 10 minutes.



THE ROBBER

(devastated) Nah, foo I just want my money!

CHIO

I thought it was longer with that whole second code thing.

TAKI

Oh right, so more like 15 minutes.

THE ROBBER begins to panic. TAKI places their hand on them to calm them.

TAKI

You're good. You'll get your money.

CHIO

(mocking) *Paciencia güey.*

TAKI

Not helping.

CHIO

Okay, so what do we do about this lady.

THE ROBBER bends down to check LA KAREN's pulse.

THE ROBBER

Oh my god! She's dead. I killed her.

CHIO

Hijole

TAKI

Fuck.

FADE TO BLACK.

## SCENE THREE.

The Ravine. As they descend down the mountain side into the ravine; the car trunk begins to lift and the forest begins to reveal itself.

Perhaps the mountain side is expressed as a jungle gym, a series of ramps, a rock climbing wall, projections of a video game level, a Ninja Warrior obstacle course, the magic of pantomime, et cetera . . .

TAKI and APÉ attempt to carry the cooler together. CHIO carries the beach chair and a large reusable grocery bag. They all carry backpacks full with their beach supplies.

TAKI

These handles suck.

TAKI and APÉ attempt to coordinate their steps together, while CHIO finds their paths.

APÉ

Wait wait wait wait wait! You're going too fast.

TAKI

I'm just trying not to slip.

They slip. They fall.

CHIO

Esta bien pesada esta bolsa

APÉ

It's full of food.

TAKI

Es la *sandía*?

APÉ

Yeah, that's the word.

TAKI

Cool. Then la *sandía* esta en la bolsa.

CHIO

En serio, wow. Quién fue?

APÉ

It was on sale and I wanted to try it grilled.

CHIO

Ah, okay. Pero que suerte que no esta la sandía el la llelera, eh?

TAKI

We can switch.

CHIO

No, It's okay.

They proceed down the mountain. TAKI and APÉ drop the cooler and CHIO drops the chair and the bag. The watermelon rolls downstage a little in its bag.

CHIO

Okay, maybe we can switch.

TAKI

Sweet - cause Apestose just cannot.

APÉ

Yeah, . . . Okay.

They exchange items. CHIO carries the cooler. TAKI carries the beach chair, and APÉ carries the large reusable grocery bag with the watermelon inside.

TAKI

Is it too heavy Achiote?

CHIO

It's heavy. But, easier to carry.

CHIO begins to leap around while carrying the cooler with both hands--finding paths quicker. Paths that are very ambitious for TAKI and APÉ.

APÉ

I can't. It's too steep!

APÉ is petrified and unable to move.

TAKI

Chio! Yoh--how are you doing this?

TAKI carefully finds their footing then falls on their ass and realizes it's easier to slide down. APÉ follows TAKI's lead. CHIO leaps and explores gracefully like a goat.

They arrive to train tracks. They set their things down for a moment of rest.

TAKI

Train tracks? Out here?

CHIO

I think I saw people walking in that direction.

APÉ

I hear water running.

TAKI

Where?

APÉ

Directly below us.

CHIO

Si güey, pero - no cres que deberiamos perseguir la gente que sabe llegar?

APÉ

Queda más lejos. Miranos. Andamos bien cansados.

TAKI

Si, y tengo hambre.

APÉ

Oye!

CHIO AND TAKI

Oigo!

APÉ

No! (whisper) Escucha.

The three friends listen. An ear firmly pressed on the cool forest floor. The sounds of the stream become more clear.

TAKI

Yo (unable to think of word) I agree.

CHIO

Si, andamos de *acuerdo*.

One big collective step downstage and they have arrived to the waterhole.

APÉ

Porfin! Llegamos.

TAKI

Sweet! This is perfect.

CHIO

Si, aunque no creo que sea el lugar que encontramos en el google, huh?

TAKI

Really? So we found our own private spot.

APÉ

Yes, I think so!

Relief-joy Sighs.

TRANSITION.

## SCENE FOUR.

Still in the ravine. They set up camp. Like a camp camp . . . but beachy: lots of towels, blankets, a beach ball, a big parasol. One of the backpacks holds a small grill and some charcoal. TAKI and CHIO begin to set up for food making as APÉ rummages through one of the backpacks. They begin to cook. They pass around a cartridge of some fire sativa.

TAKI

You know . . . Maybe we should't be grilling out *here*

CHIO

Llovió toda le semana pesada. Tenemos suerte que no hay tanto lodo.

APÉ

It's hot as fuck today sure, but we're right next to the water and everything is green 'round here. . . Yes!

APÉ has found what they were looking for. From one of the backpacks APÉ pulls out a ziplock bag full of dried magic mushrooms.

TAKI

You found 'em?

CHIO

That's what we're doing?! Si hubiera sabido, habría traído el té de hongos que hice.

APÉ

Estos son algunos de los que nos diste.

TAKI grabs the bag of shrooms from APÉ

TAKI

Yes they are. I saved 'em for us. There's enough right?

TAKI hands the bag to CHIO. CHIO nods

APÉ

Great. How should we eat 'em? We can wait for the papas con mantecilla, ajo, y romero to be ready.

TAKI

Uh huh. . . *Or* we can eat them with that french loaf and the hummus.

They begin to tear apart the loaf, dip it in hummus and top it off with heavy shroom coverage.

CHIO

Okay, y la piña nos puede dar la cítrica.

TAKI

I thought orange juice was best . . .

APÉ

Should'uh grabbed some from the grocery store, Chio . . .

CHIO

Pues-- tal vez lo hubiera hecho . . . si me hubieras dicho . . . que *hoy* íbamos a comer hongos . . .

APÉ

Era sorpresa!

TAKI

. . . Surprise!

CHIO takes the first bite. Loves it. APÉ and TAKI follow suit. They make more and eat more until there is no more shrooms left to eat.

APÉ

This is sooo goood.

TAKI

Mmmhhmmmm

CHIO grabs a container from a bag near them. From it, they deliberately place a piece of precut pineapple in their mouth. Anticipation. It hits hard and good. They're speechless. Attempting to communicate via pantomime, but they can not.

TAKI

It's good?

CHIO hands the container to APÉ. APÉ gestures to drench the pineapple in *Tajin*. They all nod. APÉ obliges happily.

APÉ

Oh, guau! Wow. Guau! Ggua. *Que rico!*

APÉ hands the pineapple to TAKI.

TAKI

Oh, it's soo juicy.

A moment of them all sit dancing from enjoying their food. Foodgasm until completion. Food porn for the audience. Not sexual, but just about ~ in a clowny way.

APÉ

We should take another hit.

TAKI

Uh, yeah no. I don't think so Apé. We're already *hella* zooted.

CHIO

Si, nos deben de llamar los zorrillos

APÉ

So no? You could have just said no.

TAKI

How about some music?

APÉ

Sure, the bluetooth is in the bag I found the shrooms.

TAKI retrieves the speaker and connects their phone.

CHIO

We should wait for our food to settle. Van a pegar pronto.

TAKI

How will we know? It's been a while for me.

APÉ

I can feel it already.



TAKI

I just feel . . . happy.

CHIO

That's it. Vamos a trippiar bien agusto aqui en la naturalesa.

TAKI

Que bien. . . Oh, fuck. I don't have service for the music.

A subtle shifts in the space and in reality. The trees sway in the breeze with a little more groove. Then the first wave hits. A tsunami of colors. Everything has newfound interest. TAKI, APÉ, and CHIO melt as the canopy transforms and speaks to them. As they lay and sit there, they reach to the sky, embrace the earth, and are moved by the wind; just like the trees surrounding them. A true moment of rest for the performers and the audience.

TAKI's phone finds service and techno funk music begins to play.

ALL

Yas./yees/hhhmmmm

They get up to *feel* the music. They each establish their signature clown dance moves. Dance moves that make perfect sense with the music and their specific bodies and personalities-- and finally they dance.

FADE TO BLACK.

## SCENE FIVE.

At Dante's. Online order notification sounds. Lights up. TAKI is alone in the store rhythmically *stretching dough, saucing pizzas, topping pizzas, throwing them in the oven. Cutting pizzas. Boxing pizzas.*

A customer is illuminated in the lobby. TAKI notices, but gives no physical indication of breaking their rhythm only/

TAKI

/"Welcome to Dante's, where the pizza is hot 'nd only hell is hotter. Someone will be right with you."

Another customer is illuminated in the lobby. More online orders received.

TAKI

"Welcome to Dante's, where the pizza is hot 'nd only hell is hotter"

Another customer is illuminated. More orders online orders.

TAKI

"Welcome to Dante's, where the pizza is hot!"

Another customer. More orders.

TAKI

"Welcome to Dante's!"

Another. More.

TAKI

Welcome!

APÉ enters

APÉ

Thank you! It's my first day.

Hard shift. Trance Broken. No more customers.

TAKI

(dazed) What?

APÉ

I'm Apestose. I'm new.

TAKI

Oh! For real?! No one told me. (beat.) That's your uniform, yeah?

APÉ

Yeah.

TAKI

Cool. I'm glad they gave you the right theme.

APÉ

It's hella cold outside.

TAKI

Yeah, that's on brand. If you ever need extra swim trunks or tank tops or whatever - feel free to grab 'em from the box in the office. It's always hot as fuck inside the store so enjoy the cold outside. In the Summer, you'll have a choice between a leather or latex jumpsuit for your deliveries so . . . enjoy days like today.

CHIO enters. TAKI pokes a touchscreen monitor.

TAKI

Chio, I checked you in. We have a new driver. Take them on your next delivery and train them. Your order will be out soon so watch the oven.

CHIO

'ta bien.

TAKI

(to Apé) Help me on the make-line. The orders are on the screen. The number of toppings you need to add is right there above the ingredients.

CHIO

My next one is a double.

TAKI

Good. Make Apé. .s . (trying to remember name) . . .

APÉ

That works too.

TAKI

Cool. Show Apé the ropes on the first delivery. Then have them deliver the next one with you.

FRANCESCA enters. A beat.

FRANCESCA

Heyyyyyy.

TAKI

(to Francesca) You're late.

FRANCESCA

Yeah, sorry.

TAKI

Clock-in. I need to pee!

FRANCESCA

Oh my god! Why didn't you go?

TAKI

The screen was full, I just cleared it. . . Bitch. Hurry-up! I gotta go.

FRANCESCA

Then go.

TAKI doesn't move. FRANCESCA attempts to clock-in. The computer asks for the managers code.

FRANCESCA

I need your code.

TAKI

Yeah. I know.

TAKI quickly puts in their code and exits. FRANCESCA finishes her clock-in and begins stretching dough. Online order begin to roll in again. APÉ is chaotically topping the pizzas. CHIO is boxing up their orders.

FRANCESCA

Hey Chio, do you have an order ready? (beat) Oh shit. Who are you?

APÉ

I'm Apé. First day.

FRANCESCA

oh . . .

CHIO

Yeah, my orders are ready now. Let's go Apé.

FRANCESCA

Shit. You're taking them with you?

CHIO

Yeah. Want us to wait until Taki is back?

FRANCESCA

No. You're good. The wait time is too long.

CHIO

Let's go, güey.

CHIO and APÉ exit with food orders in hand. APÉ returns to wash their hands from touching slimy meat and cheese and exits again.

A wave. A time skip and shift in space from APÉ's first day to FRANCESCA's last. TAKI enters. A beat.

FRANCESCA

Have anything to say?

TAKI stands motionless.

FRANCESCA

Right. You give me sooo much shit when it's me. But, now that it's you . . .

TAKI

Chesca/

FRANCESCA

/Taki. You're late. Today. Out of all days. What if I had to pee or something. What would I have done?

(inhale) . . .

TAKI

FRANCESCA

Taki, stop. We'll be fine.

TAKI and FRANCESCA hold each other in a tender embrace.

TAKI

(exhale) Fuck!

FRANCESCA

We'll be good. We'll figure it out, Okay?

TAKI

I only get to see you because we're both here. With you transferring- I'll never get to see you.

FRANCESCA

Taki, We'll figure da'fuck out. Okay? We have to.

TAKI

I don't get it. How did *they* even figure it out? Not even Chio and Apé know and we *love* them. . .

TAKI clocks-in.

FRANCESCA

It must have been fucking Becky with her white feminism bullshit. She played it cool, but she for sure caught us.

TAKI

We should have been more careful. (beat) How have you been handling it?

FRANCESCA

Me? Oh, I'm . . . Fuck, it's hot! Isn't it hot in here? Dayum, the AC off?

TAKI

Yes, but Chesca/. . .

FRANCESCA

/Why is it off?

TAKI

We can't turn it on.

FRANCESCA

What? Why?

TAKI

Its gotta be over a hundred and five degrees in here.

FRANCESCA

What the fuck? Since when?

TAKI

Like a week ago . . .

FRANCESCA

That's why?

TAKI

Yes. How are/ (you though, like actually?)

FRANCESCA

/and it's not that hot right now? It feels like it. Or even hotter, to be real.

TAKI

A hundred five where the sensor in the back of the store. But, /Francesca-

FRANCESCA

/Oh, shit. That's next to the walk-in . . . It'll *never* get hot enough next to the fridge door. I'm gonna turn it on. It's m'last day here. You can blame me. I'm going from one hell hole to another. At least I got you here.

TAKI

No, we actually can't. They added a *real* camera pointed there. Now/

FRANCESCA

/They don't have anything better to do than watch us all day! I wanna enjoy my last day here with you. (beat) Please?

TAKI nods no.

FRANCESCA

Wow. They really got us all fucked-up in here. First it was the camera on the coke refrigerator and now this. Sure! We can still grab water. But for a motherfucking dollar. A dollar! These ovens are at 400 something and we can't even get a drink on the house.

FRANCESCA stress stretches dough.

TAKI

Chesca. I wanna know how you are. Right now. Please, stop dee/(deflecting)

FRANCESCA stops stretching dough.

FRANCESCA

/I am not deflecting or whatever . . . I am actually upset about those things.

TAKI

Really? That pizza dough is all fucked-up because of the AC and the water? Your transfer has nothing to do with how you mangled that dough? I have to tell you. . . I didn't know we were adding Pretzels to the menu.

TAKI and FRANCESCA laugh in their familiar comfort.

FRANCESCA

Okay, the transfer hella got me.

TAKI

I'm devastated.

A beat. FRANCESCA lovingly observes TAKI.

FRANCESCA

Me too.

They embrace. They kiss. FRANCESCA rests her head on TAKI's shoulder.

FRANCESCA

I am still turning the AC on.

TAKI

Ugh. Fine. "*gopher it.*"

FRANCESCA shows her front teeth and gives a thumbs-up. Then she goes to turn on the AC. A wave begins. CHIO and APÉ enter as the CORPORATE INSPECTOR (Dom Zaddy) and the REGIONAL MANAGER (Sub Pup).

REGIONAL MANAGER

Excuse me! What *are* you doing?



The CORPORATE INSPECTOR vigorously scribbles on their clipboard.

FRANCESCA

I was/ turning on the AC. . .

The REGIONAL MANAGER places their nasty ass finger on FRANCESCA's lips.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Shh. Francesca. Darling. That was rhetorical. (to inspector) Perdonala. Es su último día antes de su transferencia y creo que la emoción se le ha subido a la cabeza--Como un insecto sin antenas, una rana sin piernas. una jirafa sin cuello!/  
/

CORPORATE INSPECTOR

/(clears Throat)

REGIONAL MANAGER

(begging flirtatiously) ¿Podemos empezar la inspección de nuevo?

The REGIONAL MANAGER begs on their knees. When it's not enough, they wiggle their butt to persuade the CORPORATE INSPECTOR.

CORPORATE INSPECTOR

(a long beat) Si.

The CORPORATE INSPECTOR rips out the page with notes on their clipboard. The REGIONAL MANAGER frantically catches it.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Oh, thank you, *sir!* (beat) Taki. Come here. Let me introduce you to our new corporate inspector. Yo soy el supervisor regional. Taki es la supervisora de la tienda. Y Francesca es la asistente de Taki ... pues era, estará como supervisora de otra tienda a partir de mañana.

FRANCESCA

I'm actually starting next Monday. I requested a few days off.

REGIONAL MANAGER

No. No, you're not. They were denied. You start tomorrow as the Store Manager of your new location and we don't have anyone to cover you.

TAKI

Wait. That can't be right. They just notified us that/ they were approved.

The CORPORATE INSPECTOR scribbles in their notebook.

REGIONAL MANAGER

/Oh! (Collecting themselves) Francesca, give this marvelous human a tour of the facility since it's their first time here. Taki, *darling*. Let's have a chat.

FRANCESCA's tour begins. A Pantomime sequence of odd obstacles, strange levers, knobs, and buttons -- mixed in with things you would expect to find at a Pizza Place and functions you'd expect to perform during an inspection (like demonstrating how the food is made or how the dishes are washed.).

TAKI

What's going on? Inspections from corporate *are* random. *But*, we usually have a few days notice and . . .with Francesca

REGIONAL MANAGER

/Listen. (almost growling, but with a smile) You better not fuck this up for me. I brought him to your store first because it's not as much of a shit show as the other locations.

TAKI

That can't (be true)? Have you (seen this place)? Are you for *real*?

REGIONAL MANAGER

Yes, I'm "for. real." Right now you're a level two manager, but ever since Francesca started you've gotten lazy.

TAKI

I'm here almost everyday. I even stay on-call on the one day I have off every week.

REGIONAL MANAGER

No no no. You *were* averaging eighty *plus* hours a week and now I'm lucky *lucky* if you work seventy-five.

TAKI

Am I in trouble or?

REGIONAL MANAGER

No. You're not. I am just... (beat) disappointed. I thought you could take my place when I am promoted.

TAKI

I'm up for Regional Manager?!

REGIONAL MANAGER

Yes, you could be making forty-five thousand a year . . . *plus* bonuses in six to sixty-six months.

TAKI

That . . . would be life changing.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Yes, darling. But it comes with sacrifice. Here's the secret. I am being fast tracked to a level 8 manager in corporate. Regional manager *could* just be the start for you if you're able fix your . . . *situation* here.

TAKI

What do I have to do?

A gentle wave begins. The REGIONAL MANAGER sssounds and kind of movessss like a ssssnake in a way that's subtle and menacing. FRANCESCA and the CORPORATE INSPECTOR are synced and mirroring the beats to follow.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Get. Me. Those. Bonuses. Darling. And soon they will be your bonuses. It's simple: *Don't* run up that damn electricity bill with the air conditioner, *don't* waste any supplies, and *Do* run on a skeleton crew.

TAKI

I don't - I mean, . . .how?

REGIONAL MANAGER

For the A.C. and food waste . . . just say . . . it's for the environment. The drivers will eat that shit up. My favorite trick is finding that golden staffing ratio where it's *just* busy enough that no one can take a break and *just* busy enough that no one can have more than *just* one day off a week. That's simple enough right? You can do that? I believe in you.

TAKI

I . . . I'm not sure.

REGIONAL MANAGER

I'm sticking my neck out for you because I came to you with this opportunity - not any of the other managers. *You*. So you gotta cut some corners here and there . . . So what? You can't even tell mushrooms are rotten after they've gone through the oven or that some of that the pepperoni fell on the floor. No one actually cares. Why. Do. *you*? It's cheap pizza. People get what they paid for and *you* and I climb to the top. *You* and *I* could become branch owners within a few decades. We got what it takes.

TAKI

I do?

REGIONAL MANAGER

Yes, *we* do. Everyone else here just comes and goes, but we stay. Don't jeopardize your future for some random person. Got it? (beat) Good.

The REGIONAL MANAGER turns to exits. The wave becomes more intense.

TAKI

Wait! What about his inspection.

The REGIONAL MANAGER laughs like a donkey.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Oh, darling. You're not passing that! At most you'll get two stars out of thirteen stars. Three if you're lucky. Don't look so surprised. I can see you scrubbed the walls and cleaned every corner of this place. You must have put in extra hours during closing. That's what I like to see. But, you're short-staffed -- that's a deduction. You're delivery times are terrible -- that's another deduction. The air conditioner is off -- that's another deduction. What's important is that you and I impress this corporate pawn, so he reports that we are doing well with less resources. I think we've done that. Congratulations! You're really working your team down to the bone. Squeezing every last possible minute out of there schedule to be *here*. Working. It's a true talent. (As unsettling as a dog about to bite, a snake about to strike, and a donkey about to kick) How do you do it?

TAKI

They're my . . . friends.

REGIONAL MANAGER

Wow. . . Absolutely amazing, darling. Absolutely. *Amazing*.

ALL, but TAKI exit.

A bad trip as TAKI becomes overwhelmed by emptiness. Now in the Ravine. SHROOM appears as an onlooker in the distance.

TAKI

We'll be. . . Oh, *my* god. Why? I'm so sorry. (exhausted) I'm *so* so sorry.

APÉ and CHIO enter.

APÉ

Hey Taki. You doin' okay?

TAKI

Apé! I'm sorry! I fucked up!

CHIO

Que pasa? Oh, shit. Taki is just having a bit of a bad trip. Dale agua. Con prisa, güey. Con prisa.

APÉ grabs some water for CHIO. The wave recedes.

TAKI

No, I'm good. I'm feeling better. Sorry about that. It just kind of hit out of nowhere and took me somewhere.

CHIO

Ese es el aspecto mágico --Te hacen pensar en cosas que necesitas pensar -- o recordar de las que ni siquiera te das cuenta.

APÉ

Are you feeling better?

TAKI

Yeah, the good vibes are coming back.

CHIO

En que piensas Taki?

TAKI

En la chamba y en Francesca. La extraño.

CHIO

Valgame Dios! Pero, hoy no es dia de pensar en el trabajo. Es dia de celebrar nuestros exitos. Y, Aunque no pudo venir Chesca, está aquí en *espíritu*.

APÉ

Oh my god! Porque hablas de ella como si murió?

CHIO

Ay, güey, eres taaan dra. mat. tic. co!

APÉ

Me?

CHIO

Si, tu güey. (beat) ¿Venimos a nadar o que?--O, vamos a seguir como vacas desparramadas?

TAKI

You're right. Let's swim

APÉ

Cool. It's gettin' kinda toasty.

APÉ, CHIO, and TAKI begin to grab towels from around the camp to place closer to the water. SHROOM brings an apple to the attention of TAKI. TAKI goes to take a bite, but "sees" something on it and drops it. SHROOM gleefully smiles as TAKI joins the others downstage -- at the edge of the water.

TRANSITION

## SCENE SIX.

At the water's edge. SHROOM chills sunbathing while wearing her mushroom cap sunhat, sunglasses, a mixed drink, and fan while observing APÉ, CHIO, and TAKI being too themselves to enter the water.

APÉ  
We got this. Si se puede! Oh my god, no!

CHIO  
Apé.

APÉ  
Chio.

CHIO  
Apé!

APÉ  
Chio!

CHIO  
Just go!

APÉ  
I don't see you trying.

CHIO  
Taki, you go.

TAKI  
Oh no. I'm not going in first.

CHIO  
Juntas?

TAKI  
That never works.

APÉ  
On the count of three. One. Two/

CHIO AND TAKI  
/No.

Why?  
 APÉ

TAKI  
 Apé, why we playing this game? We know it's gotta be you. It's always you.

CHIO nods passionately in agreement.

APÉ  
 What do you mean?

CHIO  
 Nomas tenemos que esperar. (to Apé) *Sin paciencia . . .*

APÉ  
 Oh, just 'cause i'm the new bad bitch in town, huh? (to Chio) *Chillón*

TAKI  
 How do you do that?

CHIO  
 What?

TAKI  
 Insult each other all day, but not upset each other.

APÉ  
 Ohhh, you'll get it soon.

CHIO  
 Es porque cuando chantajamos, lo hacemos con cariño.

APÉ  
 (hella melodramatic) Y es facil cuando me siento *abandonada* por mis amigas.

TAKI  
 Apé. We're gonna get in the water too. We just have to mentally prepare for the impact a bit longer.

APÉ  
 Fine, I'll wait for y'all to be ready.

TAKI  
 No!

CHIO  
 Noooooo.



APÉ

What? Why?

TAKI

We need the social pressure.

CHIO

Si! *Y*, si ya estás en el agua, entonces me siento celosa y siento que también tengo que entrar al agua.

APÉ

Pero no quiero estar sola

TAKI

Right. We'll be here with you . . . Just not in the water . . .

APÉ

Okay. Pues. Nomas me voy a meter mis pies un poco.

TAKI

How is it?

APÉ

Ay que rico. Se siente maravilloso.

CHIO

¿Qué tan profundo crees que se pone?

APÉ

No se, but it feels amazing. Se siente como . . . la primera mordida de una tortilla hecha a mano o el primer tragito de atole en una noche fría con familia o como cuando ponen la primera cumbia en la pista para bailar.

APÉ does a lil dance.

TAKI

Maybe we can put our feet in too?

TAKI and CHIO join APÉ in submerging their feet in the water.

TAKI

What the (squeel)!

CHIO

Tramposa!

APÉ

(laughing) You'll get used to it. Después de un ratito, el sol y la agua se sentirán bien suave juntos.

SHROOM blows her fan towards the clowns. The breeze makes APÉ lose balance and become completely submerged underwater. Then CHIO. Then TAKI. A psychedelic wave hits. A blanket of shimmering pyrite dust swirls around them. A fever dream dance sequence.

They emerge. The pool of water is only waste deep. They balance precariously on boulders as they commune. SHROOM channels *thē* most glamorous boulder.

LA ROCA

It's been years since anyone has come and spoken with me. Or should I say could speak to me?

CHIO

I think "can".

LA ROCA

Oooo perfect! You can? Wow. This is a treat.

APÉ

Nos esta hablanda esa roca, güey?!

TAKI

Wow. I've never talked with a boulder before.

LA ROCA

Oh my gosh! Y'all are soo sweet. I haven't been a boulder for hundreds of thousands of years. Oh! I knew I was gonna like y'all. I'm just La Roca now. I mere pebble in this marvelous stream.

APÉ

I hear you, but I don't "*hear* you," hear you.

LA ROCA

That's because you needed *help* to listen-to reconnect with the minerals and the roots. We've been calling, but no one is answering. Literally no one. . . . Actually we've been screaming, but we do it in shifts now-- we're really finding a balanced dynamic of panic and minding our own goddamn business--except at this point it's our business too (sigh of relief) But enough of that - tell me about you!

My last visitor was a bear, but that must have been... what ... over 100 years ago now- Haven't seen another bear since-Not long for me, but long for them.

CHIO

Creo que te concosco.

LA ROCA takes a closer look at CHIO.

LA ROCA

Oh, yes. We've met. But I was in a different body and so were you. Wow. Y'all grow and shrink so much faster than me.

TAKI

Oh my god, how do you know her?

CHIO

Cuando yo era un niño. Mi vecino me dio un huevo de tortuga para que lo cuidara. Todos los días lavaba el huevo, le contaba cuentos antes de dormir y lo dejaba en el sol para que se calentara. Esperé y esperé a que naciera mi amiga la tortuguita. Hasta le cantaba (singing) "*Tor tu gē\_ē tah, como te quiero tortugita*"

LA ROCA

Ah!!! That's my song. I was so taken care of. That's why I am in this riverbed now. To be washed by the stream everyday like you took care of me my lil' Achioté.

CHIO sings their lullaby sweetly as they all learn to be at rest in the mountain spring.

CHIO

*Tor tu gē\_ē tah, como te quiero tortugita.*  
*Tor Tú, Gē Tah, eres el cielo tortugita*

LA ROCA

Oh, wow. It's been years since I've been sung that song. Entire mountains used to sing to me. Oceans. Valleys. The Sky.

CHIO

Y ahora?

LA ROCA

Chio, I'm here because this spring arroyo still rumbles with my song and I don't want to say goodbye. I've seen timelines like this before.

Where Rocas like me get turned into concrete, (and) our stories (become) buried as a foundations for buildings who's realities cannot rest on us without breaking us. My song . . . (is) at a cadence and I'm (too) scared it isn't gonna resolve as this (final) movement (in the symphony of life) ends.

As CHIO sings. The others join (even LA ROCA) knowing the lyrics and SATB harmonies via *shroom magic* -- Happily perched on sturdy boulders, half floating so the force of them slipping doesn't destabilize the placement of their new Roca friends. Friends they praise and sing to in gratitude for their support. Urging the trees to join (*as they always do*) and find a resolution.

(Rinse, repeat, and condense as needed)

#### CHIO AND FRIENDS

*Tor tu gē\_ē tah, como te quiero tortugita.*

*Tor Tú, Gē Tah, eres el cielo tortugita*

*Tor tu gē\_ē tah, como te cuido tortugita?*

*Tor Tú, Gē Tah, eres la tierra tortugita*

*Tor tu gē\_ē tah, como te spero tortugita*

*Tor Tú, Gē Tah, eres la vida tortugita*

#### LA ROCA

(to trees) Our time in this stream will only be remembered by foos who are listening enough to acknowledge us. Consider us. But that's not what I need right now. I need you to sing with me so I can be heard and remembered as a I was before all of this change that's to come. I'm worth fighting for. (lingering beat) (Only to and *if* trees participated) Thank you for giving me hope.

The wave recedes. LA ROCA shifts back to SHROOM.

#### APÉ

Wait, what?

#### CHIO

Oh, si. Pues resulta que . . . Mi vecino me hizo una broma. No me dio un huevo de tortuga. Me dio una piedrita.

#### TAKI

(seriously) Oh my god. Seriously? An actual pet rock?

CHIO

What do you expect? Tenía cuatro años. I had never seen a turtle egg before. I still haven't.

APÉ

Ay que tierno. Somehow. This explains soo much, con tú, “el medio ambiente nos necesita!”

CHIO playfully splashes water at APÉ. SHROOM approaches TAKI and brings their attention to the trees.

TAKI

Oh *whoa*. The trees look funny now. They're like vibrating or something.

TAKI begins to imitate they're movement.

TAKI

No, actually. It's more like shimmering. They're like blowin' in the wind but I feel like I can feel it now.

APÉ, CHIO, and SHROOM join.

APÉ

Almost like they're breathing and we can breath with them.

Collective inhale. Beat. Exhale.

CHIO

Los arboles estan baliando juntos.

The gently dance as they sway in the breeze.

SHROOM

They're vibin' and thrivin' -- talking to one another. Sending each other love.

They vibe, dance, and breath with the trees for a moment. After another moment of vibin' and thrivin,' everyone becomes cold, exit the waterhole and dry themselves off.

TRANSITION

## SCENE SEVEN.

CHIO, TAKI, and APÉ hang their towels after they've finished drying themselves off. SHROOM observes.

CHIO

Que es lo mas "homo" que podriamos ser?

TAKI

Lo mas *homo*?

CHIO

Si, lo mas *homo*.

APÉ

Aver, I think that if we're talking homosexual, then, ya ganamos con solo existiendo . . . Pero! If we're talking about *Homo Sapien* . . .

TAKI

So "Homo" without the "Sapien?"

APÉ

Si.

CHIO

"Homo" sin lo "Sapien?" Nunca lo pense.

APÉ

(Shakespearean) Ser sapien o' no ser sapien . . . Esa es la pregunta

CHIO

No! Not "ser o ne ser" or "be or not be." Creo que it's cuando!

TAKI

Why not how?

APÉ

Hmm (beat) it's both! It's cuando and how!

TAKI

What's it like being a "Sapien" without the "Homo"? Do you *not* feel like we need the "Homo" still?

CHIO

I'm a Homo, you're a Homo. Todos somos Homos.

APÉ

I think we're trying to forget. Like, I *like* being homo. We're apes.

TAKI

We don't talk about it enough. We're so focused on being Sapiens that we forget that we're from the earth.

CHIO

Si, ser Homo es ser de la tierra como toda la naturaleza. (beat) Ahora la pregunta original - *que es!*

TAKI, CHIO, AND APÉ

/Lo mas "Homo" que podriamos ser?

A moment of pause where they get lost in thought and maybe begin to observe themselves and life around them.

CHIO

Hay algo en como me siento cuando camino bien agusto.

CHIO stands up and begins to pace. As they walk, they begin to slowly transition into their clown walk.

TAKI

Yes! I think, I *think* better when I walk.

CHIO

Because you can! Cuando caminamos, nuestras pantorrillas trabajan como nuestro segundo corazón y es por eso que podemos pensar mejor. All our blood is in our cerebros is . . . hella oxigenada.

APÉ joins CHIO in their pacing.

APÉ

Oh my god, it's working!

TAKI

Really?

TAKI joins. They all pace in a circle together.

TAKI

I can feel my second heart beating!

A shift. SHROOM is now walking alongside CHIO, APÉ, and TAKI. As they walk and become new to their surrounds, they become “prehistoric” humans who are hunting and gathering. CHIO is the pathfinder. APÉ and TAKI are having trouble keeping up. SHROOM is shadowing and unnoticed. Night falls.

APÉ

(shaking) What era eso?!

TAKI

I heard it too.

CHIO

Creo que era el viento.

APÉ

No! Era the *monstro*!

SHROOM

(as the wind) Shhhh Shhhhhh

TAKI

Oh no! We should stop.

APÉ

Yes, estoy de acuerdo.

CHIO

Ay no! Siempre con, “oh, we should stop,” o’ “I’m tired,” o’ “oh nooo, se robaron mis zapatos.” No. Ya basta. Segimos.

APÉ

Pero Chio/

CHIO

/Pero Chio nada. Let’s go. Vamonos!

TAKI

Where are we even going, Chio?



SHROOM snaps a branch. Panic. The HOMOS are back-to-back and surrounded.

APÉ

Si güey. A donde vamos--Porque. . . no quiero quedarme aqui.

CHIO

Ahhhh ahora sí, verdad? Que genio tienen . . .

SHROOM snaps more branches.

SHROOM

(an owl call),(a wolf howling at the moon), (an ominous ghoul sound), and /

*Extended Clowning beat.* The HOMOS run around the stage frantically screaming and hiding like they do in ScoobyDoo montages.

SHROOM

(via God Mic)

We've been trying to reach you concerning your earth's extended warranty. You should've received a notice in the mail about your earth's extended warranty eligibility. Since we've not gotten a response, we're giving you a final courtesy call before we close out your timeline. Press 2 to be removed and placed on our does-not-care list. To speak to someone about possibly extending or reinstating your earth's warranty, press 1 to speak with a warranty specialist. . .

The HOMOS find themselves once again back-to-back and terrified.

SHROOM

(via God Mic)

*Or . . . ignore this call because you know it's a lie! There is no extended warranty and it's not the earth that needs it. It's us. . .it's life.* We need it--our time here to be extended (to trees) Pick up the phone. Pick it up! Stop ignoring it. This floating rock will move on without us. Pick! Up! The! Phone! *This* is your final courtesy call before we close out your timeline. . .

*Then,* sounds trigger designated movements/reactions from the HOMOS. They dance to them with SHROOM's orchestration.

The sounds are produced via foley, vocalizing, and SFX (drum beats/thunder, animal calls, and ethereal electronic funk beats). The HOMOS discover fire (the portable grill). In celebration of the warmth and in erupting joy, HOMOS join in the vocalizing and continue dancing to the rhythmic foley sounds.

SHROOM AND HOMOS

(howl)

In resonating joy the TREES join.

THE HOMOS, SHROOM, AND TREES

(howl)

As their howling ends, so does the life of the fire.

The HOMOS are now exhausted and resting on the cool forest floor.

TAKI

Please Chio! Let's keep going.

APÉ

Also, Chio . . . I am kind of hungry. Like *muchisma hambre. Muchisima*. So if you could figure that out. It would be great.

CHIO

¿Algo más, o es todo?

APÉ

Pues, algo dulce porque- no creo que my no me cayó bien el palo seco que me comi hace rato

TAKI

. . . and I'm thirsty.

CHIO

Solo eso? Claro que si.

SHROOM rolls the watermelon in-between the HOMOS.

APÉ

Lo lograste Achiote!

That's perfect.

TAKI

APÉ takes the watermelon. Cracks it on the point of a boulder and tears it open. They pass one of the halves around. APÉ then takes the remaining half of the watermelon and holds it up to the sky in gratitude.

APÉ

Thank you!

TAKI

We should do something with it.

CHIO

Like?

APÉ

I want to use it to show gratitude.

A ritual commences that the three friends have created that is like a harmonious dance.

APÉ

Luz de alma  
Dios te protege

CHIO

Refugio de amor  
Amparo en contra del dolor

TAKI

Brighter. Stronger.  
Source of life.

CHIO

Let hope guide you.

TAKI

Love you.

APÉ

Ease you.

TAKI

Gratitude and love uplift you higher

CHIO

Con intencion pura y el destino trascendente

APÉ

Evolving la amor you've inspired

ALL

Tiera Santísima.

They place what's left of the watermelon as an offering.

TRANSITION

## SCENE EIGHT.

Back in the ravine

TAKI

So y'all feel the most homo when you're walking?

CHIO

Yes. Soy homo cuando uso mi cuerpo. Si no lo uso, no existo. Como la vida! Solamente tenemos una y la voy a disfrutar . . . incluyendo los momentos dolorosos.

APÉ

Masoquista . . .

CHIO

Bien santo que eres Apé . . . aver, tu que?

APÉ

No, se. That feeling in-between faith and hope. ¿Qué podría ser? ¿Hay una palabra para describir el sentimiento entre la fe y la esperanza?

CHIO

¿Podría ser confianza?

APÉ

Si, algo asi. Pero connected, you know? It's vibin' with something I don't understand and it feels nice. It's . . . a feeling. (beat) It's the same feeling I got when I met y'all foos. Like, we were meeting again.

TAKI

I feel that.

CHIO

Me too.

APÉ

Y tu Taki? What makes you feel the most homo?

TAKI

No se. I'm thinking and I think it's thinking (beat) not thinking. Learning. I like learning things that make me think. Things like, (referring to audience) how trees can send nutrients to their saplings. They can recognize them and send them food using the network of fungi under the forest floor. And it doesn't even have to be their sapling. . . They all work together to send nutrients to trees who need them because it makes their ecosystem stronger to support one another.

APÉ

Wow. I wish we could figure that out.

TAKI

Well, at least the three of us do. . . Right?

APÉ

Yeah. But, the world is scary right now. It can't just be homos like us. It has to be all of us.

CHIO

Tienes razon Apé. (to audience) Quiero la oportunidad de poder disfrutar de la naturaleza. Esta podría ser una de nuestras últimas oportunidades de ver árboles por un tiempo si no nos convertimos en buenos cuidadores de la tierra.

TAKI

Right now it sucks because, (to audience) trees love growing in close proximity to one another and right now it's the biggest threat to their existence. There's less water, diseases, parasites, viruses, pollution . . . Everything right now is against them. We've gone from fire prevention season to fire management season and it's Homo Sapiens' fault.

APÉ AND CHIO

Fuck.

TAKI

"Fuck" is right. I watched a video about how trees cracked the system when they first evolved on earth. There was nothing around to decompose the organic structures they built because they hadn't evolved to yet. . . so for a while, forests were kind of eternal. That's what some of our fossil fuels are from. Now, organisms like mushroom have evolved to decompose trees.

APÉ

So what's around to decompose us? . . . or I guess, what's around to decompose our structures?

CHIO

We'll be the next coal if we don't find our mushroom.

TAKI

Oh my god, or oil.

APÉ

Oh, like the petrified forests.

CHIO

Dijieron los arboles, (hella melodramatico) Aver - yo aqui mando putas, Cren que me van a destruir?! (beat) No! Yo Aqui Mando! Que dije?

TAKI AND APÉ

Tu, aqui mandas!

If you have some groovy trees have them join in this call and response too.

CHIO

Que dije?!

TAKI AND APÉ

Tu, aqui mandas!

A wave hits. They are now in administrative office with their manager, LA KAREN. TAKI and CHIO are neighboring cubicle buddies to APÉ.

LA KAREN

What?!

APÉ

Que tu aqui mandas perra!

APÉ hums and chuckles.

LA KAREN

What did you say?

APÉ

Oh *shit*. Um. Sorry. - said? Uh. . . I said, “yes. sir! ... uh, mam ... boss”

LA KAREN

How do you say it?

APÉ

Say what?

LA KAREN

You’re the boss, but in *Spanish*.

APÉ  
 “Tu, aqui mandas.”

LA KAREN  
 I thought I heard. . .

APÉ  
 Oh, right. (beat) I said, “pera”

LA KAREN  
 Excuse me? So all together that would be?

APÉ  
 Uh um. It would be, “Tu aqui mandas, pera.”

LA KAREN  
 Right. . . So. Then. *That* would mean?!

APÉ  
 (laughing) Oh my god! I mean gosh. No! Nononono It means *pear*. Not. . . It’s pear. It’s literally a saying meaning, “you’re the boss *Pear!*”

APÉ shimmies.

APÉ  
 The boss pear! Everyone in Santiago Papasquiario-where my family is from- says it. . . But not a lot of people from Durango immigrated to this part of the country. More like Chicago, Reno, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles. . . But not many here. . . ooo y’know . . . Maybe it’s not something the Spanish speakers *here* say? Have you heard of it?

LA KAREN  
 No, I don’t think I have.

APÉ  
 Wow. . . MmmHmm then. . . That must be it then. They don’t say it around *here*. . .

LA KAREN and APÉ stare almost longingly at each other for a beat. Another beat. And then another beat.

LA KAREN  
 I like it.

CHIO and TAKI fall over in their chairs. APÉ nearly does too.



Really?!  
 APÉ

LA KAREN  
 Yeah! Can you say it again? (deliberately for ease-droppers) I want to practice my Spanish; I am trying to learn!

Oh, sure. “Tu. Aqui”  
 APÉ

Tookee.  
 LA KAREN

Wait. Uh . . . I’ll say it slower. (beat and a deliberate inhale) “Tu.”  
 APÉ

Tu.  
 LA KAREN

Tu (beat) Aqui  
 APÉ

Toooo Wahkee  
 LA KAREN

LA KAREN smiles proudly

Yeah. Gooood . . . “Tu. Aqui. Mandas.” Mah an dAh s  
 APÉ

Man does.  
 LA KAREN

Uh, yes! And then, uh . . . “pera”  
 APÉ

Uhpehra  
 LA KAREN

No. Sorry. It’s “pera.” Hmm. actually. it makes more sense to say, “Aqui tu mandas, pera”  
 APÉ

Aqui tu mandas pera?  
 LA KAREN

APÉ

Oh wow. That sounds good. Really good. Say it again.

LA KAREN

(with as close to the right pronunciation and attitude) Aqui Tu Mandas Perra!

APÉ

Aye, gracias. Ya lo se. . . Oh, but careful with that “r” roll. It can get you in trouble in the wrong neighborhood. (whispers) “perra” means B.I.T.C.H.

LA KAREN

Oh my gosh. I thought that’s what you said in the beginning! And I was like, did I hear them right? Remember?

APÉ

Yeah! I am glad it was a huge misunderstanding . . . (beat)

LA KAREN

Okay, good. Aqui tu mandas, *pera!*”

APÉ

Oooo maybe don’t say this to other folx? *Especially* if it’s not used around here. When you say it, it still sounds like you’re rolling your “r” and saying profanity.

LA KAREN

Oh really. Wow. I have been practicing my “r” rolls. I must be doing it now without even realizing. What does, “aqui tu mandas, pera” mean again?

APÉ

You’re the boss bih...puh puh (cough) pear. You’re the boss pear!

LA KAREN

(Accusing) Really? I can’t believe you--This whole time?!

APÉ

(exhaling) yeah, I know / It’s hard to believe . . .

LA KAREN

/This whole time I have been calling *you* the boss?!

LA KAREN fraternity bro punches APÉ’s shoulder.

APÉ

Ou(ch)ee (through teeth) Oui! . . . Si! . . . Yes.

LA KAREN

How would I say I am the big boss . . . the big pear? Oh my gosh, I get it. It's like saying the big apple. Or, like, the apple of my eye!

APÉ

Yes. Exactly-- and what you would say is "Soy la mas pera." If you want to be the big pear.

LA KAREN

"Soy la mas pera"?

APÉ

Yeah, but that "r" roll tho-- Might still get you in trouble with HR. Try a dental "d" instead. They sound basically the same to Spanish speakers. Feel free to use that "r" roll with me though. I won't tell anyone if you call me a (whispers) "perra."

LA KAREN

Ooooo naughty. Oh, okay. . . so "Soy la mas peda?"

APÉ

Yes! You got it!

LA KAREN

(gleefully) Soy la mas peda!!!

APÉ

Wow. Perfect. Marvelous. Maravilloso.

LA KAREN

And?

APÉ

"y"

LA KAREN

Y aqui tu mandas perra!

APÉ

Wow. Yes!

LA KAREN

(jumping) Soy la mas peda y aqui tu mandas, perra!!!!

Yaaas! Bitch!!!

APÉ

LA KAREN and APÉ high five. A shift back to the ravine. SHROOM locks eyes with APÉ. SHROOM laughs and enters her liminal space along with the receding wave.

TAKI

I can't believe you left Dante's for *that* place.

CHIO

Yeah foo, I was so upset with you when you quit Dante's, that I was happy when they fired you from that cool office job.

APÉ

Well (beat) That's not nice. Y'all foos were really mean to me when I left.

CHIO

What do you mean? No we weren't. I was so sad.

TAKI

Our lil crew was broken up. We were hurtin'

SHROOMs ears have perked.

APÉ

Oh, no! Don't gaslight me. Y'all foos were soo mean. You said you hated me.

CHIO

No es sierto güey.

TAKI

We would never say that shit. You're our friend.

A wave. SHROOM positions the trio back at Dante's.

CHIO

I can't believe you . . . you're quitting?

APÉ

Yeah.

TAKI

Seriously--What are you still doing here?

APÉ

I put in my two weeks.

CHIO

(beat) and you're actually working them? You're an asshole-- uh'fucked-up one.

APÉ

I thought it would be more fucked-up not to.

TAKI

No, Now we gotta have to think about you leaving while you're still around.

CHIO

Yeah, foo-- you're supposed to quit and go. It's the most decent thing you can do.

TAKI

Rip off that bandaid.

CHIO

Da'fuck you doing warning us about it?

TAKI

We can't be your friends anymore. You're *dead* to us.

CHIO

Dead. Absolutely dead.

APÉ

I thought we were friends.

CHIO

Si somos amigas. Eso es el problema. Keep up. Damn. I thought you were supposed to be smart or somethin'.

TAKI

You're leaving us in this shithole.

APÉ

Oh/ I-

CHIO

/For real, Why d'fuck did you get to know us if you were just gonna quit like that? Actually workin' your two weeks, puta'madre, who even does that shit, man -- it's hella fucked.

APÉ

Shit. I'm sorry y'all / I didn't know

CHIO

Here we go con tu "y'all" -- se me pega todo lo que dices güey. *Fijate* en el putaso que me dio mi hermano cuando se le dio cuenta que se le pego a el tambien. Pinche plaga güey, con tu, "hey foo" y tu "y'all foos."

TAKI

For real -- I'm stuck with that shit too. *Especially* when I am zooted, "y'all foos wanna hit or wut?"

TAKI actually takes a hit from their dab pen. TAKI passes it to CHIO. CHIO takes a hit.

CHIO

Nah, *y'all foos* better quit with that smoking shit. (exhales) They might catch you in the cameras.

APÉ

I thought they were busted.

CHIO

They are. Keep up foo'. We're playing pretend -- were you ever a kid?

APÉ

I don't remember. I had to look after myself a lot of the time and I started workin' early.

TAKI

Who the fuck di'nt have to do that shit tho . . . You're something else.

CHIO

Todos aquí han trabajado toda su vida. You ain't special. Fuck, (to audience) this foo here di'n't even finish highschool because he had'ta work. That foo there has a Master's and is here too. Workin' *this* job -- underpaid as fuck. That foo there splits there time between here and the corner to support the kids they had young. But you know what -- At least no one expects anything of us here. You're fucking your shit up by going and tryin' to do something. So, I'm good. You go. Do *your* thing. Enter the world were people expect you to be prompt. Save face. Do your mutherfukn' job well.

TAKI

That aint here. Our standards here are. Show up. Give enough of a shit that no one from corporate is up our ass and don't give enough of a shit that they'll be up our ass trying to figure out what's workin' here. It's a special balance that we have to a "t" here.

A snap back to the ravine

CHIO

Damn. Okay. To be fair, Apé. We never said we *hated* you.

APÉ

My bad. You're right. I confused "We hate you" with "You're *dead* to us."

TAKI

Is that worse?

SHROOM becomes FRANCESCA

APÉ AND FRANCESCA

Yes.

APÉ

Cuando los deje.

FRANCESCA

I felt alone.

APÉ

Sin el trabajo en donde andábamos juntos.

FRANCESCA

I was lost in a place where I couldn't be myself.

APÉ

Tuve que actuar con un respeto que nadie me mostró.

FRANCESCA

Even though I see you outside of work. I feel like/

APÉ

Algo cambió. Y, que todavía hay resentimiento porque sienten que los abandoné,

FRANCESCA

But I am the one trying stay connected.

APÉ

Pero esa es la parte más brutal de dejar el trabajar por otro.

FRANCESCA

It's harder to support each other now.

APÉ

Ahora es más difícil apoyarse unos a otros.

FRANCESCA rests her head on TAKI's shoulder. APÉ sits in-between CHIO and TAKI and holds their hands.

FADE TO BLACK.



## SCENE TEN.

Back at Dante's

TAKI

I put the wrong code in. You're gonna have to wait another 10 minutes.

THE ROBBER

Nah, foo I just want my money

CHIO

I thought it was longer with that whole second code thing.

TAKI

Oh right, so more like 15 minutes.

THE ROBBER begins to panic. TAKI places their hand on them to calm them.

TAKI

You're good. You'll get your money.

CHIO

(mocking) *Paciencia güey.*

TAKI

Not helping.

CHIO

Okay, so what do we do about this lady.

THE ROBBER bends down to check LA KAREN's pulse.

THE ROBBER

Oh my god! She's dead. I killed her.

CHIO

Hijole

Fuck.

TAKI

THE ROBBER

What are we going to do?

CHIO

We? Yo no hice nada. Entraste y la mataste.

THE ROBBER

O, si. Pero tu bien listo para ser un plan, eh?

TAKI

Shut up!

THE ROBBER

So what do we do?

TAKI

We figure this out. (beat, a deep deep breath) Okay, so luckily the cameras in the lobby are duds. Even the one looking at the register. (beat) If we wanna get her out of here without anyone noticing. We have to take her out the back door.

THE ROBBER

Okay, sounds good to me.

THE ROBBER and CHIO carry LA KAREN to the back door.

TAKI

No, stop. It's next to the walk-in where the AC is. The camera there is real.

THE ROBBER and CHIO carry LA KAREN to the customer lobby.

THE ROBBER

So turn it off?

THE ROBBER and CHIO carry LA KAREN to the back door.

CHIO

Because that wouldn't be suspicious. Que menso eres.

THE ROBBER and CHIO carry LA KAREN to the customer lobby. They drop her.

TAKI

I got it. Apé take that damn ski mask off. Put it on her. Then you gotta go.

APÉ

What? How's that gonna work.

TAKI

Because *she's* the robber.

APÉ

Uh, no she's not. I am. Remember. We talked about this. We agreed.

TAKI

You're still taking the money, but we're framing her. I'm calling the cops.

APÉ puts the ski mask on LA KAREN.

APÉ

You're framing smelly patata?

TAKI

Yes! Take the money so we can still go on our beach trip, but leave some scattered around her. Yes. Make it rain a lil. Not that much. Less. Less. No less. That's perfect. Wait! don't leave a twenty. Exchange that for a one. Good. Okay go.

APÉ turns to exit.

APÉ

Next time, one of you is the robber and the safe is ready.

TAKI

I can't wait. Let's do it tomorrow?

APÉ

Then how are we going to go to Santa Cruz? I just bought a beach chair and a lil grill I want to use.

CHIO

Oh shit. We'll have to wait until after the trip.

TAKI

Oh right, It's gonna be a really good *trip*. Right Apé? All planned out.

APÉ

I got you. We're good to go. (beat) How do y'all have a day off together?

TAKI

We finally got a new hire.

LA KAREN starts to wake-up. APÉ impulsively responds and tases her again. She faints.

CHIO

No que estabe muerta, güey? Que paso?!

APÉ checks her pulse.

APÉ

Fuck! Esta vez si la mate.

TAKI walks over and checks LA KAREN's pulse.

TAKI

She's not dead. How are you going to kill her with a \$10 taser.

TAKI takes the taser from APÉ. TAKI tases APÉ.

APÉ

Ahhhhh!!! (beat) oh, wait. Apenas lo sentí.

TAKI tases CHIO.

CHIO

Da cosquillas.

They play a game of *chasing* and *tasing*.

LA KAREN wakes up. She isn't noticed. She sneaks up behind the homo with the taser; startles them. LA KAREN grabs the taser and chases the HOMOS with the taser. In all the commotion/

TAKI

/Oh my god! She tased herself and fainted again. Y'all foos good?

APÉ and CHIO nod bent over from running and laughing.

CHIO

Y ahora que?

TAKI

We're goood. We call the cops. (beat) I know, totally *not* the vibe, but *now* we have videos of her pinning and tasing Chio against the coke refrigerator and of her trying to hog tie Apé, *our customer*, next to the A.C. thermostat.

APÉ

Oh, shihhht.

CHIO

Toda via pienso que la chota no nos van a creer. Solo existen para proteger a personas como ella, no a nosotros.

TAKI

No necesitan creernos porque tenemos . . . proof.

APÉ

Tenemos *pruebas*.

TAKI

Thank you. tenemos pruebas en las cameras.

APÉ

That'll be enough?

TAKI

It has to be. We'll be safe. They won't hurt us. She'll be safe too. . . they'll take one look at her when they remove the ski mask, slap her wrist gently, and give her a police escort to her home.

The safe beeps and opens.

TAKI

(laughing) Oh Shit! Apé you better take that money, stick it in-between your cheeks, clench, and run and hide it in your car. I'm about to call some pigs and they'll probably want to question you most. You feel up to that? We'll go on our trip tomorrow and forget *this* ever happened.

APÉ

Yeah, I'll be good. Not my first rodeo. (beat) we better get turnt d'fuck up tomorrow!

CHIO

Si güey! Puro perriar en la playa!

APÉ begins stuffing stacks and racks in their pants.

FADE TO BLACK.

## SCENE ELEVEN.

The Ravine. SHROOM observes her lovely clowns. They sit around the grill trying to remember the warmth it provided earlier.

APÉ

I'm cold and if i'm cold, you must be freezing Taki.

TAKI

Yeah, I'm still kind of wet. Should we go?

APÉ

Oh my god! How have we been here nine hours!

CHIO

Si, antes que baje el sol.

They begin to pick-up the camp and get loaded-up with all their shit

TAKI

Are we leaving the watermelon?

APÉ

Yes, It's my offering for the waterhole.

CHIO

No! We're leaving this place like we found it. We have to take everything.

APÉ

Chio, Por favor, ten algo de compasión, tenemos que escalar mucho terreno.

CHIO

Apé, lo dejamos como lo encontramos. (beat) Dilo

APÉ

Lo dejamos como lo encontramos.

CHIO

Taki.

TAKI

Lo dejamos como lo encontramos.

CHIO

Además, podemos encontrar un nuevo camino.

APÉ

Yeah, we're good at that.

TAKI

Always having to figure d'fuck out.

APÉ

Hey! Maybe that's *cuando* and *how*?!

CHIO

Of what?

APÉ

El homo sapien. The when and como?

TAKI

It's "always having to figure it the fuck out?"

APÉ

Yes, because the when y cuando is "always." We never stop. Even if we think we have everything figured out. There's always more. Always more to (realization) *consider*. We must consider and continue considering to be homo! Ser homo es considerar las posibilidades de lo que observamos!!!

CHIO

Okay, y lo Sapien que? Sera "Figuring it the fuck out?"

TAKI

Yeah, it is. That's how we've survived and evolved. By figuring it the fuck out. It's the "how" we're sapiens.

CHIO

Ahhh, I don't know. All life figures it the fuck out and considers things always. Why do we have to be different from the rest of life? Sabes que? Lo único que nos hace humanos-- es no saber vivir. We've convinced ourselves that we're removed from all life. Separate from earth instead of a part of it. But, we're still connected.

APÉ

Uh huh, no cres que es kind of a stretch, eso?

CHIO

Que cosa?



TAKI

I think the part that's a stretch is what you said about us still being connected. We're connected *right now*. But that's 'cause *we* took some shrooms. I can feel the new pathways being built in my brain and I feel like I *belong* right now with y'all foos and the earth.

APÉ

Yeah, it does feel nice to belong. I love this feeling.

CHIO

Que chido se siente conocer y que me *conocen* conocen. To be real, nunca pense que iba ser tan amigo de ustudes. Porque, como enfadan! Dios mio, siempre una coso o otra. Que Foolano this and Foolana that-- Pero, los quiero un chingo.

TAKI

Creo que, to be homo sapien is to *querer conocer*.

CHIO

Sabes que, tienes razon.

APÉ

Si. Eso es!

SHROOM

Que es lo mas "Homo" que podriamos ser?

THE HOMOS

Querer conocer.

The HOMOS spend a moment acknowledging each others' existence. They've arrived to an opening in the ravine. A steep climb up, but it's the golden hour and it's absolutely stunning.

TAKI

Wow. What is this place?

APÉ

It's a ravine.

CHIO

Que es un *ravine*?

APÉ

Un lugar donde caen los árboles.

TAKI

It's dangerous and beautiful. Some of these trees are just barely keeping themselves up. There's even some that are only standing because they're leaning against each other.

APÉ

Look at the trees over there.

CHIO

Esos tres árboles sobreviven en este lugar por cómo se apoyan.

TAKI

That's what it takes to survive this place.

APÉ

They're here and survived this place because of each other.

SHROOM

Que es lo mas "Homo" que podriamos ser?

CHIO

Nos faltaba eso. . . en nuestra respuesta a la pregunta.

APÉ

El apoyo de uno a otro.

TAKI

We've been missing that in our answer for a long time.

CHIO

*Miranos.* Trajimos una maldita parrilla a un bosque en *California*. I don't wanna be a fire starter. I want to be a tree.

APÉ

Let's be motherfuckin' mushrooms. Nuestras ideas y cuentos spores in the wind. Connecting trees and decomposing their structures como los hongos chingones que somos.

They do their signature dance moves one final time.

TAKI

We keep on dancin'! (quick beat) Oh my god! Let's take a picture. I want to remember this forever.

TAKI coordinates a selfie picture with the APÉ and CHIO. SHROOM photobombs.

APÉ

Wait! The trees.

They do a one-eighty to include the trees in their selfie.

TAKI

Ready? Uno. Dos. Tres! (adlib for additional shots/poses)

A commemorative selfie is taken.

CHIO

Aver ... Bien cargadas y listos para el viaje?

TAKI AND APÉ

Si!

They take one last look at their waterhole. Then begin their climb up the ravine. As they ascend, the car trunk comes down to greet them.

FADE TO BLACK.

**END OF PLAY**