

# DOS COYOTES

a play

by

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## Characters

Carlos      A Mexican laborer, 25 to 35 yrs old

Piper      Upper-class suburban girl, about 25

## Set

Upstage center is a garbage dumpster or a cardboard crate roughly five feet wide and four feet tall. The top is half open. (The side toward the audience, one of the wide sides, is cut away so that everything inside is visible.)

There is a streetlight above one side of the stage that does not shine straight down into the dumpster, but in at an angle. It is just visible that the floor of the dumpster is lined with blankets and cluttered with a few personal items, not garbage.

Piper, dressed down and comfortable, as an affluent teenager might be while watching TV, clean white socks and no shoes. Curled up on the bottom of the dumpster, her face is in the shadow, looking up at the sky. She is lying perfectly still, some of the audience may not even notice her.



**Act 1**

**Scene 1**

Carlos [Enters with several collapsed cardboard boxes. He sets them down beside the dumpster and lifts the one closed lid to the dumpster, revealing Piper's face.]

Piper Happy New Year.

Carlos Jesucristo!

[jumps back in surprise or spins around]

Piper [stands]

Shit. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to freak you out.

Carlos Chinga!

Holy shit.

Piper I'm sorry. I didn't think anyone would be around tonight. So I just, you know.  
[gestures]

Carlos [surprised, not confrontational]  
What the fuck are you doing?

Piper Uh. Reading.

Carlos Reading?

Piper I know, it seems weird.

Carlos That depends on what you're reading.

Piper I'm sorry. I'll move out.

[Begins to rummage around and get her things]

together]

You need your dumpster.

Carlos "Move out?" When did you "move in"?

Piper Today.

Carlos [Walks over to dumpster and looks inside.]

Look at this. You have made a nest.

Piper [standing aside, to show it off]  
Well, you know. I just bought a couple of blankets at the Big Box to make it more cozy. I liked this picture of Ghandi. The milk crate was over there, so I just put it in here.

Carlos Very nice.

Piper [somewhat proud]

It has a pretty good energy to it now.

Carlos So much nicer than before.

Piper Well.

Carlos But you know, I will need it again.  
Eventually.

Piper Of course. I'll move out.

[begins to gather things together again]

Carlos I hate to be a home wrecker.

Piper I'm really sorry.

[still gathering things]

Carlos I'm curious. You are not dirty like a bag lady. You don't look like you're high. You have money for blankets...

Piper [stops gathering. Gives Carlos a non-comprehending look.] What?

Carlos Why are you hiding in my dumpster?

Piper I'm not hiding.

Carlos Reading.

Piper I'm homeless.

Carlos Come on.

Piper Well, I have a home, but this is my home at the moment.

Carlos Now you live here?

Piper I'm sorry, I didn't think anyone would mind.

Carlos Sure. Who would be here on New Year's Eve?

Piper Yeah. Shouldn't you be at a party?

Carlos I'm partying.

Piper No, I mean right now.

Carlos Every day is a party in America!

[Pulls a flask out of his pocket, lifts it to the sky as in a toast, and takes a swig. Then offers it to Piper, who declines with a grimace.]

You don't drink?

Piper Sure I do, sometimes.

Carlos When do you drink, if you don't drink on Nochevieja?

Piper I'm doing a detox right now.

Carlos Rehab?

Piper        No, no. I don't do drugs. Not now. I mean, not any more. [pause] I don't do drugs. I'm doing a full-body bio-purge with a focus on the Vishuddha chakra.

Carlos        [Pause]

              Me too! Same thing!

              [lifts the flask to the sky again and takes another swig]

Piper        Do you work here?

Carlos        These are my buildings. One, two, three.

Piper        You're the manager?

Carlos        Owner. I'm a real estate mogul.

Piper        [Looks surprised]

Carlos        I come here in the evenings to clean up, you know, I have to "keep it real".

Piper        [mildly condescendingly] Well, you're a humble mogul at that.

Carlos        Thank you... What's your name?

Piper        [extending hand] Piper.

Carlos        [Grasps her hand.]

Piper        And you are...

Carlos        Carlos.

Piper        Glad to meet you, Carlos. I'll be gone in just a few minutes.

Carlos        Oh don't worry about it. It's New Year's Eve. Stay here tonight. And all day tomorrow too, if you want.

Piper        Thank you. That's fine. This is all temporary.

Carlos        I understand. This is all temporary for me, too.

Piper        This shopping complex?

Carlos        Yes. Well.

              [Sits down on bucket.]

              This country, really.

Piper        Where are you from?

Carlos        Chihuahua.

Piper        The place, not the dog.

Carlos        Yes and no. I'm from the place, but it's a bitch. [laughs, as though he says this joke often]

Piper        Why did you come?

Carlos        [suddenly serious]

              You know. The usual.

Piper        Really. Why would you come HERE?

Carlos        Everybody comes to the US. Everybody but the losers and the winners. If you can get the money for a coyote.

Piper        For what?

Carlos        The coyote. That is what we call the people who take you across the border into the "land of the free."

Piper        You have to pay?

Carlos       Of course you have to pay. It's not as easy as it used to be. You don't just walk across the border anymore.

Piper        But what's the point?

Carlos       Come on.

Piper        No really. Why the hell would someone want to come here? [gesturing around]

Carlos       For everything! Everything is here.

Piper        Sure. The malls, the traffic, the sprawl, the consumer culture that is sucking our souls out of our bodies and taking our planet straight into the sewer.

Carlos       It is better the hell than Chihuahua.

Piper        You've GOT to be kidding me. You've been here long enough to see it. This is just a big plastic copy of the same thing ten miles down the road. Look at the people. They're robots. Go to work, go shopping, take out the trash. Go to work, go shopping, take out the trash.

Carlos       OK. You're crazy, right? You stopped taking your medications, didn't you?

Piper        I was crazy. Yes, I was. But I'm not anymore.

Carlos       Of course.

Piper        This is phase one of my spiritual transformation.

Carlos       [standing] Mine too! This is such a coincidence. Can you see me transforming? Soon I will be Donald Trump.

Piper        That's not nice.

Carlos I'm sorry, chica linda. You're right, it's New Year's Eve.

I don't care what your party is. You just do it. Go ahead. I don't mind.

Piper [a bit testy] Gee thank you, Carlos.

Carlos Not at all.

Piper What's your party, then?

Carlos My party? I told you. [raises his flask again, but does not drink]

Piper [un-amused] Really.

Carlos Piper, to be honest, I have no party. This [gesturing around] is my party. You are my party.

Piper [Both are uncomfortable.]

Your friends are out of town, I'm sure. It's a busy time.

Carlos I've been to plenty of parties. This year, I don't need a party.

Piper Me neither.

Especially New Year's Eve. There's so much pressure to have a good time. I can't do anything if I feel pressure.

Carlos I have that problem, too.

Piper Problem? It's not a problem. It's just who you are.

Carlos Tell that to my ex boss. And my ex ex boss, too. And my ex ex ex ex ex ex //ex ex ex ex ex...

Piper /ex ex ex ex ex ex  
It sounds like you're saying "sex sex sex"

Carlos My sex sex boss? I wonder what that would be like.

Piper That would suck.

Carlos [laughs]  
I have a feeling I wouldn't like it.  
  
Shit, I can't believe all the jobs I've had. So much work and so much nothing to show for it. Look at this [lifts his arms or something, to show lack of free movement] that's as far as I can go. A crane dropped a pallet on me. Now I'm fucked up forever. I'm never going to become a millionaire like this.

Piper [eyes closed, meditatively] All in its time.

Carlos What is this? Yoga?

Piper Just being in the moment, that's all.

Carlos Being in the moment? What do you mean? What choice do you have?

Piper Experiencing the present with your whole consciousness. It's not that easy.

Carlos There are times for consciousness, and times for unconsciousness. [takes another swig]

Piper That's not what I mean.

Carlos Well, at the MOMENT, this is a party, just you and me. You have whatever consciousness you have, Chica.

Piper OK. I can accept that.

Carlos [Holding out the flask to her]  
Please, have a drink.

Piper [pause]  
What's in there?

Carlos It won't kill you. I promise you.

Piper [takes the flask, takes a sip, grimaces, but doesn't cough, hands it back to Carlos]

Carlos [laughs]  
Now how is your consciousness?

Piper Improving. I feel more present.

Carlos Call me Santa. I bring you presents.

Piper Don't get me started on consumer culture and the corporate capture of the holidays.

Carlos Again with this. Are you a politician?

Piper I'm sorry. You're right. This is a party, isn't it?

Carlos Thank you.

Piper What can we do?

Carlos Tell me a story.

Piper A story?

Carlos A story, please.

Piper What kind of story?

Carlos I don't care what kind of story. It doesn't matter.

Piper Sure. [pauses to think for a moment]

Carlos [sits again]

Piper OK. Once upon a time, there was a princess who lived in a very upscale village. She was nice to her friends, and she got anything she would ever need before she even knew she needed it.

Carlos [comes up with a big piece of paper from the trash and begins to work with it]

Piper She had a hot convertible, and a mega-platinum unlimited charge card, and she bought herself so many cute clothes she never had to wear the same thing twice. As far as she could tell, she was perfectly happy.

Then one night at a very trendy club, she had just a little bit too much to drink and she went out for a smoke by herself and before she knew it she found herself on the back of a big black motorcycle with a man she'd never seen before.

He took her to his girlfriend's place and they had a couple of beers and he made love to her like she hadn't realized it could be like. It was like a whole different universe.

The princess was completely under the motorcycle man's spell for hours and hours until his girlfriend came home and the two of them had a huge fight and he left with the princess and bought her breakfast at an all-night diner that didn't have fruit salad and then took her home at eight AM and never even tried to contact her again.

Carlos Pendejo.

Piper It was all very exciting, really, but when she sobered up and thought about what had happened, the princess fell into a self-loathing pit of longing and depression.

Her friends tried to help her, but she didn't want to talk to anyone about it, even to her four-hundred and fifty-dollar an hour shrink.

Carlos [under his breath] Cuatrocientos!

Piper But at the same time, she couldn't get that man out of her mind. He was rough. He was insensitive, but she kept thinking of herself completely under his power. Just one thought of his greasy hair and the dirt under his fingernails made her horny.

But all the while, like I said, she was completely disgusted with the whole idea. Completely.

[pause]

This is a longer story than I realized.

Carlos I have a couple of after parties to go to later, but I can stick around for a while more.

Piper OK, well, I'll wrap it up.

Carlos Take your time, princess. I want to hear your story.

Piper It's just a story.

Carlos Of course. I want to hear the story.

Piper So. Now nothing in the princess's life was interesting to her anymore. Not her friends, not her clothes, not her MySpace page, nothing. Not only was her perfect world boring as shit; now she saw that it had been rotten and artificial the whole time. And she should have known it, too.

And now, as everything that was pink turned to black and closed in around her, she

realized that only the disgusting motorcycle man had the solution to the darkness of her life.

But of course the motorcycle man didn't sneak into her room and have his way with her in her puffy pink bed. He didn't call the princess. He didn't text message her. He didn't send her an email.

Carlos [half to himself] He was probably doing it with her friends.

Piper Sh!

Well, the princess went in search of the motorcycle man. She looked for him online. She went back to the club where she met him. She asked everyone who might know him, but no one knew how to find him.

She didn't know what to do. She knew she couldn't live in her stupid plastic world anymore. So she decided that if she couldn't have her motorcycle man, then she didn't want anything at all.

Carlos [stops his work on the paper thing and pays more direct attention to the story]

Piper So the princess went to the medicine cabinet and she took out all the pills and she dressed herself all in black, and looking quite sexy and dramatic, she got into her convertible and drove out into the night.

[holds her hand out to Carlos, for the flask]

Carlos [stands, unscrews the lid of the flask, hands her the flask]

Piper [takes a swig. Wipes her mouth. Hands the flask back to Carlos.]

What's to tell? She kills herself. She

drives her convertible to the top of the hill overlooking the castle, and she takes the pills and she dies and the motorcycle man reads about her in the paper and he cries. He cries from the bottom of his heart because he loved her but he believed he wasn't good enough for her and that he didn't have a chance. And all of the princess's friends were sorry and they felt bad and they were embarrassed, but they got over it and everything went back to normal. The end.

Carlos [Takes a swig.]

Happy New Year.

Piper I'm sorry. That's not a very nice story.

Carlos Who needs a nice story? We can go to Disneyland for that.

Piper I'm not a very good party, am I?

Carlos We're a party, Piper. Not just you.

Piper Well you're a good party partner.

Carlos I'll do whatever is required.

Piper [Trying to be upbeat] You tell me a story now.

Carlos [laughs] I don't know any happy stories, either.

Piper Hm...How about a joke?

Carlos A joke? I have jokes.

Piper OK.

Carlos Why are there no Mexicans in the fire department?

Piper What do you mean?

Carlos       Why are there no Mexicans in the fire department?

Piper        I didn't know there weren't any.

Carlos       I don't know, maybe there are. This is a joke.

Piper        It's not very funny.

Carlos       I'm not finished. It's not supposed to be funny yet.

Piper        But it's racist, and it's probably not even true.

Carlos       You tell a joke, then, princess.

Piper        NO---- I want you to tell me a joke.

Carlos       All my jokes are racist and untrue.

Piper        Come on...

Carlos       OK. What do you call a little American girl in a dumpster?

Piper        Fine. I'll tell a joke.

Carlos       You wanted a joke. This is my joke. What do you call a little American girl in a dumpster?

Piper        I don't like that joke.

Carlos       It's not racist.

Piper        OK.

Carlos       It's not untrue.

Piper        I just don't like it.

Carlos       OK then, tell me what you really are doing.

Piper        You heard my story.

Carlos       The princess in the story killed herself.  
Did she come back to life?

Piper        That story was just a story.

Carlos       All of it?

Piper        Parts of it are true.

Carlos       Which parts?

Piper        OK. Let's just say -

Carlos       The motorcycle man was true.

Piper        Maybe. Maybe not.

Carlos       OK.

Piper        My story is just beginning. I'm looking for  
a new place. I'm starting my own business.  
I'll probably be making over a million  
dollars by my second year, but I'm going to  
use it all to create a non-profit  
organization to reverse the damage of global  
warming on the planet. -- And urban sprawl.

Carlos       Good. That sounds good. [Sits down again,  
takes another swig, realizes the flask is  
empty. Looks a bit bored.]

Piper        Carlos, do you have some music?

Carlos       There is a boom box inside.

Piper        Go get it.

Carlos       There is no power cord.

Piper        Are there batteries in there?

Carlos       Yes.

Piper        Then do that. Come on.

Carlos [exits]

Piper [crosses her legs in a meditative pose,  
closes her eyes]

Carlos [returns with boom box and a six-pack of  
beer]

[turns it on. Music plays.]

Carlos How is that?

Piper I really just came out for a walk, you know.

Carlos What do you mean?

[opens one bottle of beer, hands it to  
Piper]

Piper I mean, I didn't decide to come here. I  
just went for a walk.

Carlos Sure.

[Opens a beer for himself, has a swig.]

[From here on, Carlos and Piper each drink  
at their own pace and gesture for fresh  
bottles, etc. as they see fit]

Piper Really. I was having a terrible day. I had  
a headache, so I took two pills and that  
didn't do anything, and I took two more, and  
it still didn't do anything. I had to meet  
Tammy and Po for lunch, but when I went to  
get dressed there was nothing in my closet I  
wanted to wear. Not a single thing.

And then I realized, it wasn't about the  
clothes. I didn't want to go to lunch. I  
didn't want to go to lunch today, or  
tomorrow, or to dinner either. I was done.

Carlos Uh...

Piper [without stopping] So I took my keys  
[reaches into her pocket and jingles them]  
my wallet  
[points to her purse]  
and a book.

Carlos You went for a walk.

Piper I needed to get out.  
[pause]  
I wasn't used to walking around in my neighborhood. There isn't anywhere to walk to, really, so I had to walk for a long time. Then I came to some trees and I sat down and then I fell asleep and then when I woke up I realized I didn't want to go home ever again.

Carlos You had a bad dream.

Piper I had a good dream.

Carlos Your dream told you to go and live in a garbage can.

Piper This isn't garbage. It's recycling.

Carlos Sure.

Piper And I don't live here.

Carlos Where do you live, then?

Piper I don't know, Carlos. I just know that I'm done with it.

Carlos Done with what?

Piper The modern world.

Carlos Done?

Piper It's a cage. We're living in cages, all of us. And mine was a very nice cage. Luxury, friends, parties. All cushioned and velvety, like one of those little boxes that diamond rings come in.

Carlos [subtly sarcastic] It must have been terrible.

Piper It sounds good at first, doesn't it? Until one day you're crashed out there on your pillow listening to your iPod and you don't even hear your box SNAP closed.

Carlos That would be time for a nap.

Piper But one day, if you're lucky, you wake up and you realize it's all dark and you want to go out into the world again.

Carlos The world doesn't look all that bright to me.

Piper Come on! At least it's real.

Carlos It's real dark.

Piper Look at that. A real tree.

Carlos Yes. It's very nice. Look. A real lamp post.

Piper Listen. I was living in wonderland. The people on the TV, they're not real. Even the actors playing the people on the TV aren't real. The music isn't real. The food we eat might be real but the packaging is poison. My whole house, there's not one thing that's real in it!

Carlos I'm not real, either. I'm a robot.

Piper Yes. You are. You're a tool of the marketplace. They use you to maintain the

flow of commerce and push the economic juggernaut.

Carlos You're not a tool?

Piper Not anymore! I'm free!

Carlos Free? Free from what? Where is your jail? You're not a prisoner unless there is a lock on your door that you don't have the key.

Piper There are locks that you can't see.

Carlos There are keys that you can't see, too.

Piper Yes! That's true!

Carlos But if you are free you are free to do what?

Piper I'm just free!

Carlos You have to be free to DO something. You can't just be FREE. Freedom is nothing.

Piper [joyfully] I am nothing!

[climbs out of dumpster]

Carlos Where are you going?

Piper [triumphantly] Nowhere!

Carlos You're crazy.

Piper I'm free! [begins dancing]

I'm free! I'm free! [says it repeatedly, as she dances. She begins taking off her clothes, down to her underwear, starting with her socks, and tossing the articles up and away as she dances wildly and freely]

I'm free of people!

[more dancing]

Carlos [laughing] Go girl!

Piper I'm free of things!

[etc.]

Carlos Woo hoo!

Piper I'm free of money!

[now undressed as far as she's going with it]

I have nothing!

[dancing as wildly as ever]

I'm free of everything!

[continues dancing]

I'm so fucking free!

[SOUND OF CAR OR TRUCK. PERHAPS HORN. PERHAPS HEADLIGHTS.]

Piper [Shrieks. Leaps back into dumpster.]

Carlos [Laughs heartily.]

Piper [standing in the dumpster]

What's so funny? Hand me my clothes.

Carlos [Picks up Piper's clothes, holds them up for her, but out of her reach. She jumps up and grabs them.]

Piper [pouty] You're not nice.

Carlos You're a pretty good dancer.

Piper [getting dressed]

Why weren't you dancing?

Carlos I guess I'm not free.

Piper Your energy isn't flowing. I can see it in your aura.

Carlos What do you mean?

Piper Your aura. Your energy field.

Carlos Hey, I worked hard today. I'm just resting now.

Piper This is different. It's cosmic energy.

Carlos I'm beginning to understand. You're an alien, aren't you? You come from Mars. You are observing American life.

Piper Now you know.

Carlos So, enlightened being, tell me about this aura.

Piper Your aura surrounds you and protects you, and it reflects your own energy back into the world. Most people can't see them, but I can. Yours is orange.

Carlos What is wrong with my aura?

Piper Your aura is beautiful, but your energy is blocked.

Carlos Blocked.

Piper It's really blocked. You need some energy work.

Carlos Yeah, it's been months since I've been to my energizer.

Piper I can clear you, but it's going to all come back if you don't seal it with some meditations.

Carlos        You can clear me? Thank god. I thought I was going to be blocked for the rest of my life.

Piper        [once she's dressed, climbs out of the dumpster and goes over to Carlos]

Stand up straight. And close your eyes.

Carlos        [complies]

Piper        Put the beer down.

Carlos        [complies, then stand straight again, eyes closed, facing stage left or right, so the house can see him in profile]

Piper        [stands facing Carlos, begins twiddling her fingers in the space all around his body, not physically touching him]

Clear your mind of all thoughts.

Carlos        What are you doing?

Piper        I'm clearing your blocks.

Carlos        [opens his eyes]

Really. What are you doing?

Piper        [stops her energy work]

Can you trust me? For just a few minutes?

Carlos        [closing his eyes]

Sorry.

Piper        [resumes energy work]

Now clear your mind.

Don't think about the past.

Don't think about the future.

Don't think about the present.

Let go of everything you're holding on to.

Just be here.

Carlos [begins to cry]

Piper That's right.

Let it go.

Carlos What is happening?

Piper Just let it go.

Carlos I don't understand.

Piper It's OK.

Carlos Why am I crying?

[sits down]

Piper Here, let me get you a blanket.

Carlos [gets up and climbs into the dumpster]

Piper OK. Sure.

Carlos [still crying, but more quietly. Curls up on the floor of the dumpster]

Piper [climbs into the dumpster. Takes off Carlos's shoes. Soothes him with caresses.]

Just let it all go.

[Curls up next to Carlos, holding him.]

**Scene 2**

Some time later

Carlos [Awakens. Slowly sits up. Leans against side wall of dumpster.]

Piper [Slowly sits up, after Carlos.]

How are you feeling?

Carlos I feel like shit.

Piper Sometimes that happens.

Carlos What did you do to me?

Piper You had a lot of knots.

Carlos You untied my knots?

Piper You untied them yourself. I was just a facilitator.

Carlos I didn't untie nothing.

Piper Well something happened.

Carlos I cried like a baby.

Piper That's a very good thing.

Carlos Not for a man.

Piper Why not for a man?

Carlos A man is not a baby.

Piper Sometimes he is.

Carlos Yes. You're right. A lot of the time he is.

Piper        If you accept that, then you're more of a man.

Carlos        If I can be more of a baby, I can be more of a man.

Piper        Not more. Just accept what you are. It's enough.

Carlos        I can accept. [Takes piper's hand.]  
Tell me about the baby.

Piper        Babies need a lot of attention.

Carlos        Yes. All the time.

Piper        The baby needs love. Care.

Carlos        Yes. A man needs that, too.  
[moves closer to Piper]

Piper        Hey.

Carlos        [Moving in closer.]  
You can give me some more love, Piper.

Piper        That's not what I meant.

Carlos        [Reaching for her, as she fends off his advances]  
We all need love.

Piper        You're misinterpreting me.

Carlos        Let me be your baby.

Piper        [Puts a move, a martial arts hold, or some such assertive action on Carlos that causes pain and stops his advance.]  
Cool it!

Carlos     Aii!  What?  What?

Piper     No!

           Do you understand?  No!

Carlos     I understand.  I understand.  I'm sorry.

Piper     Get out.

Carlos     I'm sorry.

Piper     Get out.  Get out.

Carlos     OK.  Bueno, pues.  [Climbs out]

           I'm sorry.

Piper     No means no.

Carlos     I understand English.  Shit.

Piper     What makes you think you can pull that kind  
           of shit?

Carlos     [half to himself]  Fucking crazy woman.

Piper     That was way out of line.

Carlos     Oh come on!  Who are you?  The princess of  
           the trash now?  Forgive me for trying to  
           kiss you.

Piper     How about some respect?

Carlos     Oh, for you love is disrespect?

Piper     Love?

Carlos     Sure.  What do you call it?

Piper     That was love?

Carlos     Open your heart to it.

Piper     You love me, is that what that is?

Carlos        Can you accept that?

Piper        You're not answering the question.

Carlos        What question?

Piper        Are you saying you love me?

Carlos        What is this, a trap?

Piper        Because it felt to me like you just wanted to get into my pants.

Carlos        You don't call that making love?

Piper        Call it this, Go fuck yourself.

Carlos        Cristo.

                 [turns and goes back into the store]

Piper        [after some time] Dammit.

                 [starts to put her things together to leave]

Carlos        [returns]

                 Listen, little girl, I'm not going to feel bad for trying to kiss you.

Piper        Fine

Carlos        [sits down on the bucket]

Piper        [Thinks about it a bit.]

                 Well. I can see where you got some ideas.

Carlos        Maybe?

Piper        It wasn't ethical of me to physically get into your personal space with you when you were in that vulnerable energy frequency.

Carlos     Yeah.

            Exactly.

            [Hands her a beer. She accepts it.]

            You're free now.

Piper     [Quietly] I'm free.

            [long pause]

            Why did YOU come here?

Carlos     I don't really want to talk about it.

Piper     Why not?

Carlos     What are you, a shrink?

Piper     No. No. I'm sorry. I just...why would anyone want to come here.

Carlos     Just one thing.

Piper     What?

Carlos     Dinero.

Piper     Did you make enough dinero here?

Carlos     Enough for what?

Piper     Enough to go back?

Carlos     To Pastores? Sure.

Piper     Do you want to go back?

Carlos     Yes.

Piper     What's keeping you then?

Carlos     I'm too damn rich. If I go back now, everyone will hate me.

Piper        Really?

Carlos       No. Not really.

Piper        Don't you miss your family?

Carlos       I miss them very much. Don't get me started. I will cry again.

Piper        How long?

Carlos       I can't go back.

Piper        Why not?

Carlos       I just can't.

Piper        Of course you can. What's keeping you?

Carlos       People.

Piper        People in your home town?

Carlos       Well. People who are not in my home town anymore.

Piper        Things have changed.

Carlos       [stares blankly]

Piper        Well, I don't miss my family at all. Sure, it's only been eighteen hours, but I don't miss them one little bit.

Carlos       How about your friends?

Piper        I do miss my friends. [pauses and thinks of them] I miss them.

Carlos       But you can see them. You are still in town.

Piper        No, I can't see them. They would shit! They would fucking shit!

Carlos       Probably.

Piper I should call Elle, though. I really should call Elle. And Timmy. He's gonna wonder where the hell I was last night.

Carlos Your boyfriend?

Piper No no no. Timmy's harmless, he's just a friend. But I need to call Tiana and Joseph and let them know what's up, too.

Carlos You can use the phone inside, if you want. And the toilet.

Piper That's my toilet.

[points to the bucket Carlos has been sitting on]

Carlos [jumping up] Conyo!

Piper Just number one. Just number one.

Carlos Well, princess, you're not a princess like I thought.

Piper I'm not a princess!

Carlos Well, if you want the phone and if you want number two, you can go inside.

Piper I can't call them, I don't know their numbers, the numbers are in my phone.

Carlos We have a phone book.

Piper Not for cell phone numbers.

Carlos Where is your phone?

Piper On my nightstand.

Carlos In your house.

Piper Yup.

Carlos I never do that.

Piper Do what?

Carlos Leave my cell phone on the nightstand.

Piper Shut up.

Carlos I don't.

Piper Because you don't have a nightstand.

Carlos Because I don't have a cell phone.

Piper Shut up.

Carlos Really.

Piper Shut the fuck up!

Carlos Tiara and José are freaking out about me all the time.

Piper I would die.

Carlos You seem to be fine so far.

Piper I know. It's weird.

But I'm going to need to do something.

Carlos You're going to have a new adventure in peace and quiet. Close your eyes and imagine a silent place. There is no ringing.

Piper Carlos, would you do me a BIG favor?

Carlos [looks at her cagily]

Piper Would you go get my phone for me?

Carlos What?

Piper I really do need it. I didn't exactly plan for this.

Carlos Do I look like a courier?

Piper Yes.

Carlos Well, I'm not a courier. Would you like to call a courier?

Piper Yes.

Oops. I don't have a phone.

Carlos There's one inside.

Piper Carlos.

Carlos You can get your own phone, chica.

Piper I can't go back yet. I'll look like an idiot.

Carlos Uh, when is it going to look smart for you to go back?

Piper I don't know. I just need a break, you know?

Carlos They don't need to know you were out here kissing me.

Piper I wasn't.

Carlos Perfect. Even I believe you.

Piper I WASN'T!

Carlos See. Now you can tell them that. And trust me, if they ask me tomorrow at lunch, I won't say anything.

Piper It's not far away...

Carlos [thinks about it]

Piper Please please PLEASE.

Carlos All right, all right. I'll get your phone. I need a break from the crazy homeless woman.

Piper [more coolly] Great. [digs around for a scrap piece of paper] Do you have a pen?

Carlos [Starts looking for a pen in his pockets. Fails to find one.]

Piper Here. I have one. [writing] It's 1414 Paxton. It's off of Palomino Drive, turn left at the third Starbucks. Shit! [hands the paper to Carlos]

Carlos OK.

Piper [digs her keys out of her pocket and hands them to him] It's the big flat one with the red top.

Carlos This is for the front door?

Piper Yes. Push down on the handle. [taking back the slip of paper and writing on it] This is the combination for the gate. [hands it back to Carlos]

Carlos Your phone is on your night stand.

Piper When you go in, go down the hall, through the living room, and then on your left.

Carlos [rolls his eyes] I can't believe this.

Piper There is a tourmaline crystal on the night stand, too. Bring that.

Carlos Will that be all, princess?

Piper Thank you Carlos.

Carlos Ay madre. [exits]

Piper [in a louder voice] There's some brown rice vegan sushi in the fridge that somebody

should eat.

[in a yet louder voice] And some socks. A pair of clean socks.

### **Scene 3**

The visiting room in a jail.

Piper is waiting at one of the conversation stations.

Carlos [Enters, sits across from Piper. He is resigned, tired and somewhat serious.]

Happy New Year.

Piper [She is shaken and concerned]

Oh my god. How are you? Are you all right?

Carlos I'm fine.

Piper How are they treating you? Are you being abused?

Carlos No,...

Piper How about meals? Is there enough fresh fruit?

Carlos Don't worry. This isn't Guantanamo.

Piper I'm so sorry!

Carlos [gesture of resignation]

Piper I told them that you had permission to be in my house, but they say that doesn't matter. They say you're an alien.

Carlos Yes. It's my big mouth. I told them I came from Mars.

Piper I'm SO sorry.

Carlos Your people missed you. They were waiting for you to come home. They called the police as soon as they saw me.

Piper I tried to bail you out, but they say they have to deport you.

Carlos I have no papers.

Piper I'm going to get you a kickass lawyer.

Carlos Don't even bother, Piper.

Piper No. We can fight this.

Carlos I'm not worth it.

Piper Don't say that.

Carlos Don't waste your time.

Piper We have to get you out of here!

Carlos I'm getting out of here tomorrow.

Piper Tomorrow?

Carlos They have a great travel agency here.

Piper Don't joke about this. And don't talk to the police. I'll call a lawyer the minute we're through talking...

Carlos [leaning back, hands behind head, as though enjoying himself] I'm not kidding. They have arranged for everything, all expenses paid. Transportation directly to Pastores.

Piper They're deporting you?

Carlos I have asked for a window seat and a kosher meal.

Piper Holy shit.

Carlos My people will finally find out that I'm not dead.

[pause]

I deserve to go to hell for leaving them in the first place. Maybe this will give me a chance at redemption.

Piper No-----!

Carlos Relax, Piper. It's good. It's a good thing.

Piper Don't leave me here!

Carlos You're going to miss me?

Piper Fuck you.

Carlos The police will give you back your phone. You can call your friends.

Piper I can't explain this to them. Everyone will give me a lecture. I mean - [freezes in thought]

Carlos They might not understand, but they'll forgive you. This can't be the only crazy thing you've done.

Piper Don't leave me!

Carlos Believe me, I don't want to go.

Piper Are you afraid?

Carlos Yes.

Piper It will be good to see your mother.

Carlos      Of course.

Piper        So you can be happy about that.

Carlos       No, not even that.

Piper        Why not?

Carlos       I told you. I am going to hell for this.

Piper        Come on.

Carlos       What about you? Don't you love your family?

Piper        That's different.

Carlos       What is different?

Piper        You don't get it.

Carlos       Be easy on yourself, Piper.

Piper        Oh Jesus.

Carlos       Can't you see how lucky you are?

Piper        Lucky? If I were lucky I'd have been born a million years ago.

Carlos       Look. Really. If you want to escape from your fairy tale, you have to move into the real world. How long do you think you can live in the garbage?

Piper        Recycling.

Carlos       Why are you punishing yourself? None of this is your fault.

Piper        I'm as guilty as anyone. I have been participating in the whole...

Carlos       Piper, you are a little rocket. You are headed for the moon. You are full of fire and you are blasting away. But if you don't

have enough fuel to escape the gravity, you will crash back to earth.

Piper I have plenty of fuel.

Carlos Listen to me. Go home now. You've had fun. It's not safe there.

Piper Shit, Carlos, when did you suddenly become my dad?

Carlos Hey, this isn't a lesson, it's just common sense.

Piper Well thanks, Dad. I hadn't realized how stupid I really am.

Carlos Come on. If you keep this up, you're going get worn out. You'll give up and go home to your soft wonderful bed and everything and you'll surrender to your life and you'll never leave again.

Piper You don't know me, do you?

Carlos No, I don't. I don't know you. Maybe you're a little magic fairy. Maybe you have powers to escape the world where the rest of us are prisoners.

Piper Maybe I am. Maybe I do.

Carlos Do me a favor. Go home now. To your house. Be safe tonight. Get a good night's sleep, and in the morning go into the internet and buy yourself a condominium in Sweden or somewhere and then move to there.

Piper [head slightly down. silence.]

Carlos Piper. Please. Tell me you'll go home tonight.

Piper [quietly] Shit!

Carlos        You are free.  You are free to go anywhere.  
                 You are free to go home.

Piper        [pause]

                 They say you had two thousand dollars on you  
                 when they arrested you.

Carlos        [pause]

                 [quietly]  Piper...

Piper        Sh!

Carlos        I'm sorry...

Piper        Sh!  That's good.  You'll need it.  I won't  
                 miss it.

Carlos        I'll pay you back.

Piper        Sh!  We are probably being recorded.  Don't  
                 make things worse.  Keep it.  I won't even  
                 miss it.

Carlos        I'm sorry...

Piper        [a bit angry.  scolding.]  You should have  
                 just asked.  I would have given you much  
                 more than that.

Carlos        I'm going to hell.

Piper        Oh give me a fucking break.  Now listen.  
                 I'll tell them that you were getting my  
                 phone for me, but you have to do me a favor.

Carlos        A favor?  What?  Do you want some more  
                 socks?

Piper        Did you get me socks?

Carlos        Sure.  You didn't say what color.  I got  
                 yellow.

Piper [smiles] Nice. Now. Did you get the crystal?

Carlos The purple one?

Piper Yes.

Carlos Yes.

Piper You have to keep it for me. For now.

Carlos Piper...

Piper I'll tell them that it's yours.

Carlos I'll make sure they give it to me tomorrow. But tell me this, what about your boyfriend?

Piper I don't have a boyfriend.

Carlos There were man's clothes in your bedroom.

Piper My husband, Royal.

Carlos You ARE a princess.

Piper That's his name. Royal.

Carlos You didn't tell me you were married.

Piper I'm not. I mean, I'm not anymore. I mean. I'm going to get a divorce. That's my past life.

Carlos And it's not my business.

Piper It was a nothing marriage. It was really more like having a roommate, but except you can't sleep with other people. I mean, you're not SUPPOSED to sleep with other people. I mean, I didn't. Not normally.

[pause]

Anyway, it's over now, I guess. I'm through with it, that's for sure. I'm finished.

Carlos        You're free.

Piper        I'm free. You're not free, though. You're  
              in jail. I'm SO sorry!

Carlos        There's nothing we can do.

Piper        Stand up. [stands up]

Carlos        [looks up at her. doesn't stand]

Piper        Stand up!

Carlos        [stands]

Piper        Hold your arms out.

Carlos        [holds arms straight out]

Piper        [begins to perform energy work on him,  
              (through the glass if there is glass)]

Voice        [offstage. perhaps through intercom  
              speakers]

              Miss! You must remain seated.

Piper        [to the person offstage]  
              This will only take a couple of minutes.

Voice        Miss!

Piper        What is the problem?

Voice        Guards.

              [lights fade]

**--Intermission--**

**Act II**

**Scene 1**

Mexico

The cluttered inside of a truck. (Looks remarkably like the dumpster, but larger.) Sun is setting. There is a small light inside the truck. Carlos and Piper are having a sort of picnic on a milk crate. [They often hand each other items, pour beverages, etc.]

Piper [absent-mindedly, almost to herself] *Dónde está Carlos Dominguez? Dónde está Carlos Dominguez?*

Carlos *Did you understand the answers?*

Piper *The people in your town speak better English than you realize.*

Carlos [laughs] *They will have something to talk about for the next five month. Gringo girl drives up in a truck and takes Carlos away.*

Piper *Tell them I'm your coyote.*

Carlos [laughs] *They know I don't have the money for a coyote right now.*

Piper *Yes you do, I'm free.*

Carlos [laughs] *Yes, you're free.*

*Congratulations to be free, by the way.*

Piper        Thank you.

              In fact, I owe you.  You're MY coyote.

Carlos        How?

Piper        I was just squatting in a dumpster when you came along.

Carlos        But I didn't come out to get you.  I came to take out the trash.

Piper        Recycling.

Carlos        What's the difference?

Piper        Come on.  It's not gross.

Carlos        Forgive me.

Piper        I might still be there if you hadn't come.

Carlos        You're not still there, but you're still crazy.

Piper        I'm crazy?

Carlos        You're definitely crazy.

Piper        Well you're a thief.

Carlos        That's true.

Piper        Thank you for robbing me.

Carlos        [laughs]  I can't rob you now.

Piper        You can't rob my house.

Carlos        How does it feel, to be without a home?

Piper        Like a rolling stone, you mean?

Carlos        Like a rock star?

Piper        Like a shining star.

Carlos Under the stars.

Piper With the stars.

Carlos I'm a star, too?

Piper We're both stars.

Carlos I am Carlos Santana, who are you?

Piper Piper Sandoval.

Carlos Who is that?

Piper That's me.

Carlos Sandoval. That's your family name?

Piper Yes. It was. I mean, it is. It is my name. [pause] for now.

Carlos Dominguez will always be mine.

Piper It must have been good to see all of the Dominguez's.

Carlos It was very sad.

Piper Sad? Why was it sad?

Carlos Well. [pause]

They were happy to see me. [pause]

But I cried again. I cried like a baby.

Piper Tears of joy.

Carlos I don't know. There were real tears.

Piper You're getting old.

Carlos I am getting old. It's only eight month, but they were all surprised at how I look. My brother Luis kept calling me "old man".

Piper        See, you're growing up. You can cry again. You cry when you're a baby, but you're not an adult until you can cry again.

Carlos       I don't know if I'm grown up or not.

Piper        I cry a lot, but I'm sure I'm not grown up. I'm probably still a baby.

Carlos       OK, now tell me, baby: you are free from your family, your house, your friends, your husband. You can go to anywhere in the world. Why do you come here? There is nothing here.

Piper        Exactly.

Carlos       No, I mean, why did you come here?

Piper        You said it, there is nothing here.

Carlos       You want nothing.

Piper        I'm looking for a place with nothing. No suburbs. No shopping centers. No Wal-Mart. No bullshit.

Carlos       I don't know. That's one thing we do have. Bull shit. We have plenty of bull shit.

Piper        Yes, the real kind.

Carlos       We have both kinds, believe me.

Piper        Yes. I'm sure there is some of everything here. But it's different. We still have a chance. It's not ruined yet.

Carlos       Piper, don't misunderstand, I love my town. But there is NOTHING here. Believe me.

Piper        It's perfect BELIEVE me.

Carlos       What happened when you went home?

Piper       After I visited you in the jail?

Carlos       Yes, after that.

Piper       Well... I didn't go home.

Carlos       You told me you would.

Piper       When I left the jail, I was ready to. You made me see how stupid I was being. I realized I just was a kid, running away from home, and I knew it was just a matter of time before I lost my way and came back home.

[pause]

So I WAS going to go home. But I wanted to get my book from the dumpster, so I went there first. And when I got there it was starting to get dark and I was tired, and it was so cozy in there, I climbed inside to take one last nap, but I was so tired I just kept sleeping.

I woke up in the middle of the night and thought about going home, but I just curled up and kept sleeping. It felt great. It really felt great.

Carlos       Like camping?

Piper       Yes. Like camping. Like camping out in the backyard. In my FORT.

Carlos       I know what you mean. In your little cabaña.

Piper       But in the morning, I woke up and there were some people messing around outside my dumpster. I just held still and didn't move, so they'd just go away, but they didn't go away and then someone came over to the dumpster and knocked on the side and it was my MOM.

I thought I hadn't woken up yet and I was dreaming, but it was really her. "Piper. Wake up. Darling, we all want to talk to you."

Carlos Ah.

Piper My parents were there, my big sister, Royal, one of my teachers from high school, my dentist, my friend Owen, and my mom's shrink. They set up a fucking intervention there outside the dumpster.

Carlos A convention?

Piper Yeah. A Piper convention.

"Piper, we are afraid that you have taken a turn off the highway and we want to bring you back from the wilderness" -- blah blah blah blah blah! They were trying to suck me back into their pathetic world.

Carlos But it's nice that they care about you.

Piper It's nice. Yeah. It's nice. Like a boa constrictor that wants to hug you to death.

They thought I was taking ecstasy and coke and prescription pills and all kinds of crap. They wanted me to go into rehab.

Carlos So you told them to fuck off.

Piper Nah.

Carlos You chickened it?

Piper No, my friend. I'm wilier than you think. I foxed it.

Carlos You can fox?

Piper I can totally fox.

It was obviously an escape pod out of their plastic paradise. I'm like, "Rehab? Sure I'll do your rehab. But you have to promise me you'll leave me the fuck alone while I'm in there, and I can leave any time I want." And they were like, "Oh, of course, we want this to be a good experience for you. You're doing the right thing. This is just a temporary thing. We love you and we just want the best for you."

Carlos     You're kidding me.

Piper     No shit. I went in.

Carlos     How long was that?

Piper     Three weeks.

Carlos     What was it like?

Piper     Not so bad, actually. Peace and quiet. Vegan meals. No TV. I took the pee tests and watched the videos and they signed my papers and I was out of there.

Carlos     Then what?

Piper     Serena, the shrink they gave me in there turned out not to be a total bitch, and she helped me understand why my family is so crazy. They're on their own trips, you know. It's not about me, it's about them. But for me, you know, it's not about them, it's about me.

I'm much clearer now. I had a chance to sort things out and now I know what I really want.

Carlos     What do you want?

Piper     I want you.

Carlos     [pause ] [laughs nervously]

[pause]

You want me?

Piper [cuddling up closer to him] Don't laugh.  
That's not very nice.

Carlos But. [pause]

I. [pause]

Piper You're perfect for me. You're everything  
that I don't have in my life. You're  
normal, you're grounded. You come from a  
real place with real people.

Carlos You've only been to my town for three hours.

Piper I can tell. I can just tell. It's a real  
place.

Carlos You're being crazy!

Piper Don't you want me?

Carlos There's no point to want something you can't  
have.

Piper You CAN have me. You DO have me.

Carlos Ay. Maybe. For right now. But I can't  
keep you. How can I keep you?

Piper We are together, Carlos. If you don't  
believe me, I'm going to make you see.

[pause]

Carlos I'm not ready for this.

Piper It's nothing to be ready for or not ready  
for. It just is. We just are.

When I was in [finger rehab I had a vision  
and together you and I are going to make it  
manifest.

Carlos     A vision? Did they give you special drugs  
            in there?

Piper      I'm clean. I'm sane. I'm very sane. I've  
            probably never been more sane in my life.

Listen: A tropical resort. A refuge for  
humans. A place where people can escape the  
insanity and live the way our species was  
meant to live.

Can you see it? A hundred grass bungalows,  
no electricity, no connectivity, no  
commerce. Raw food chefs, yoga, meditation,  
massage, energy therapy, trance dance,  
holistic workshops.

And of course, net carbon zero output to  
global warming. Completely off the grid.  
Everything sustainably built, no  
exploitation, no depletion.

Paradise. A return to the garden.

[sits calm and proud]

Carlos     This is your vision.

Piper      OUR vision.

Carlos     I didn't see this vision.

Piper      OK, it was through me that the vision came  
            to us, but together you and I are going to  
            actualize it.

Carlos     Uh --

Piper      You don't see it yet. I know. But you  
            will. I'll make it real for you and then  
            when you see it, you'll be as excited as I  
            am.

Carlos     You mean I'll be as crazy as you are.

Piper       Sanity looks like craziness to the insane.

Carlos       And vice versa. I don't know which I am,  
but I know your idea is loca.

Piper       It's not an IDEA. It's a vision.

Carlos       Cariño. People don't want a grass house for  
a vacation. They want luxury, they want a  
nice hotel room with a big pool and steak  
and margaritas.

Piper       Not everyone.

Carlos       No electric? No TV? No computer? No  
gameboy? What kind of resort is that?

Piper       People want escape. They want to get away  
from the rat race, the commercial world.

Carlos       Look at the REAL world, little one.  
Everyone is trying to get INTO that.

Piper       Yes! It's insane. You know it is. You see  
what I'm talking about.

Carlos       They'll go crazy. No commerce? How can you  
say no commerce? Look at you. It's your  
money that is buying you your freedom, your  
truck, your resort. Don't tell me that's  
not from commerce.

Piper       If I use it for good, then it's good. Money  
doesn't carry Karma. Only actions do.

Carlos       If you use your commercial money to make all  
of this vision, then you are still binding  
to the same binding from before.

Piper       You can buy freedom. In America, some of  
the slaves bought their own freedom.

Carlos       Maybe you can buy freedom from slavery, but  
you can't buy freedom from money.

Piper        Freedom is freedom. And I'm free. I'm on  
              the road and I'm free.

Carlos        You're free and you're crazy.

Piper        [sings] Crazy for you...  
              [snuggles up to Carlos]

Carlos        [accepts her embrace]

Piper        Carlos?

Carlos        Hm?

Piper        Don't you want to make love to me?

Carlos        [alarmed, holding her, but facing her]  
              Chica!

Piper        Well?

Carlos        You can't just ask me that. Out of the  
              blue.

Piper        I know you want to.

Carlos        [letting her go, distancing himself  
              physically]  
              Maybe I do. But it's not that simple.

Piper        Yes it is. [starts to take off her clothes]  
              Come on.

Carlos        Stop that. Don't do that.

Piper        [stops disrobing]  
              Why not? What's wrong?

Carlos        I don't know. But something.

Piper        Don't you love me?

Carlos      Yes I love you, but --

Piper       Then make love to me.

Carlos      Ay! Don't talk like that.

Piper       What's wrong?

Carlos      I'm not used to women talking to me like that.

Piper       What should I say? PLEASE make love to me, Carlos?

Carlos      It's something else.

Piper       Tell me. Tell me. You can tell me anything.

Carlos      I'm not sure what it is.

Piper       Tell me what you know.

Carlos      I don't know. But I'm sure as hell not used to women who ask you to sleep with them. Even the whores in Pastores would never say like that.

Piper       Did it turn you off when I said that?

Carlos      No. In fact, it kind of turned me on.

Piper       So that's not the problem.

[LIGHTENING STRIKES. THE SOUND OF RAIN BEGINS.]

Carlos      [stands]

Piper       Can we keep the door open? I want to watch the rain.

Carlos      Believe me, we're not going to close this door.

[Opens a blanket, sits, and puts it over

Piper and himself. They quietly watch the rain.]

Piper [Caresses him, somewhat seductively.]

Carlos [after some time] This is difficult to say.

Piper I'll listen deeply.

[sits in a meditative pose, eyes closed]

Carlos It's not that I don't love you. It's crazy. But maybe I do. But this is the problem. Because if I didn't love you, then I would...just go ahead.

Piper [eyes still closed] I feel your love for me. And I appreciate your honesty. Thank you for your love and your honesty.

Carlos This is stupid. All of this.

Piper What is?

Carlos We are two completely different people.

Piper Of course we are.

Carlos I mean, we come from completely different worlds.

Piper Yes. First you were the alien. Now I am the alien.

Carlos Look. We're just fooling ourselves. You're going to leave me. Sooner or later I know you will. I don't blame you. I would if I were you.

Piper [eyes now open wide] Wow. That's usually what the woman says.

Carlos Great. I was a baby, now I am a woman.

Piper I'm sorry, baby. I understand.

Carlos      Argh. I don't know. Things are different now after I've come back to Pastores. I'm different. I can tell I'm not a young bull anymore.

Piper      I understand. [pause]

             Eventually you'll see that my love for you will last forever, and you'll trust me. For now, I have no choice but to accept your rejection of me.

Carlos      Rejection?!

Piper      That's what it is, and I have to respect it.

Carlos      [looks even more deflated]

             It's not because I don't love you.

             I just . . . I see that you are free, and I'm not so free. I don't want to tie you down.

Piper      [smiles]

             Well, I'm not one hundred percent free yet.

Carlos      What do you mean?

Piper      Well, I'm still married.

Carlos      I keep forgetting that. You don't seem like you're married.

Piper      I know. It doesn't seem like it to me, either. It never did. But I am. Still.

Carlos      But you can get a divorce in America, no?

Piper      Yes, it takes time, but yes. We are getting divorced. But that's not really the issue. It's the spiritual bond of marriage that needs to be broken. [looks coyly at Carlos]

Carlos [angry] Ahhh -- this?  
This is what you want me for? To be free of HIM?

Piper Not just that.

Carlos Well to hell with that. What do you think I am? One more tool of your escape? My dick is a key to unlock your velvet box?

Piper I'm sorry. You're right. You're right. It's terrible of me to say that.

Carlos Fuck!

Piper I'm sorry. If it were me, I'd be angry too. I know how it feels to be pressured. You're right.

Carlos I can't believe where you try to go with me, little one.

Piper I'm sorry.  
I wasn't respecting your boundaries. I love you, but I can understand.

Carlos Forget about it.

Piper Carlos, tell me a story.

Carlos You want me to tell you a story?

Piper Yeah. Tell me a story.

Carlos What kind of story?

Piper A bedtime story.

Carlos A bedtime story. OK. I don't know if you'll like it, but I have one.

Piper What's it about?

Carlos A journey to a new place.

Piper Perfect. Tell me that one. Please.

Carlos OK. I'll do my best.

There is a town in Chihuahua by the name of Pastores. The people there are good people and they have a nice life. Fresh air, open space, a good community.

But one day some of the people of Pastores decided that wasn't enough. They wanted more money, bigger houses, nicer cars, like everyone has in the country to the north.

So they got a group of twenty people together and raised many thousands of pesos, and they hired coyotes to take them north, across the border, into the land of opportunity.

When the day of departure arrived, they said goodbye to their loved ones and got into the coyotes' truck with their lunches and their drinks. They drove and drove all night and day and crossed the border into the land of the free.

Across the border, the coyotes drove them to a secret place, but it was not safe to come out of the truck. There were border patrols and helicopters and satellite cameras and they would be found for sure. The coyotes said, "Stay where you are and be perfectly silent, or you will be detected. We will come back for you soon."

Well, the coyotes didn't have to tell them to stay in the truck. The door was locked on the outside. But the people stayed perfectly quiet, for fear of their lives, there in the hot truck with no fresh air.

But the coyotes did not come back soon. As each hour passed the people grew weaker and

weaker, breathing the same hot air again and again.

Piper Oh my god. I would DIE.

Carlos After many hours they began to whisper. They were afraid that something had happened to the coyotes or that the coyotes had just abandoned them. They knew that if they stayed in the truck much longer they would die, so they decided to break out, at the risk of being discovered.

But breaking out of a truck is more difficult than breaking into a truck. The lock is on the outside. The latch is on the outside. Sticks and rocks are on the outside, and there is air on the outside. The people tried and tried, but they were too weak and the door was too strong.

Things were looking very bad for the people. Everyone was dizzy, and some of them had passed out trying to break the door. They only had one flashlight, and the batteries were weak.

They were about to give up all hope, but the youngest of the people, a boy who was only thirteen said, "Look! The light is shining through the wall." And he was right, like a miracle, the beam of light from their flashlight, weak as it was, was making the wall of the truck transparent.

They gathered around and looked out at a wonderful world. It was green everywhere, and there was a waterfall and a stream flowing just a few meters from the side of the truck. There were squirrels and birds and deer, and berries and fruits on the trees. It was more than an oasis, it was paradise.

"Ah! How lucky we are," the people said, "The coyotes brought us to a wonderful spot."

It will be great when get out of this fucking truck."

"What are you waiting for?" the boy said. He gave the flashlight to the strong one. "Hold it still," he said, and he leaped through the hole and ran to the stream and put his face into the water.

The people all looked in wonder. It was like a miracle. It was hard to believe, but it was true. Now they almost fought with each other to go through the hole into the new land, and the fresh air, and the paradise.

But the flashlight was weak, the hole was shrinking. The people squeezed through one by one, as fast as they could, until only the strong one was left. "Come on, come on!" they shouted to the man, but the hole was too small. He could only shout back to them, "I'll join you as soon as they unlock the door." Then the last flicker of the flashlight faded and the strong one was left alone in the dark in the truck.

[pause]

Well, later that day a rancher drove up and found the truck and cut open the lock and found the bodies of the people. Only one of them, the strong one, was still breathing. The rancher took him to his home and gave him food and water, and in the middle of the night the strong one woke up and slipped away. And to this day, no one knows what happened to the coyotes.

Piper Oh, that's such a sad story.

Carlos [pause]

Yes. If you look at it that way.

Piper       What are you talking about? All the people  
DIED.

Carlos       Weren't you listening? They escaped into  
the paradise.

Piper       But that's not what really happened.

Carlos       What do you mean REALLY? I'm the one  
telling the story. I told you they escaped.

Piper       But you said they found the bodies.

Carlos       The bodies, yes. The bodies.

Piper       Well, did they die, or did they escape?

Carlos       Sometimes there are two realities.

Piper       Your story doesn't make sense.

Carlos       No. It doesn't. But it's true.

Piper       That's so sad. I can't believe you would  
tell me such a sad bedtime story.

Carlos       Your reality is different from mine.

Piper       Is this story your reality?

Carlos       What do you think?

Piper       [hugs Carlos]

Carlos       You came from a very nice reality, pequeña.  
But it wasn't nice enough for you. Now you  
want my reality.

Piper       [caressing Carlos] I'm sorry. I'm so  
sorry.

[Piper continues to "comfort" Carlos.  
Eventually things heat up and become more  
amorous. Carlos takes the initiative, takes  
Piper, mounts her (under cover of the  
blanket) and somewhat roughly makes love to

her. The actors should be free to improvise some interjections, along the lines of "Yes" "Oh God" "Oh fuck". Whatever seems appropriate, without adding information or changing the nature of Piper and Carlos's relationship.

[They end, lying in each others arms, looking out the door of the truck into the desert night.]

Piper [after some time]

Now that wasn't so bad, was it?

Carlos [laughing gently]

You're right. That probably was a good idea.

[pause]

Piper Well, it turned out to be YOUR idea, too.

Carlos And now you're a free woman.

Piper [snuggling into his chest] I'm free.

[They close their eyes to sleep]

**Scene 2**

MORNING

[Piper is bustling about, packing her things. Carlos is asleep. He wakes, eventually grumbles and scratches about. Once Piper has taken her things out of the truck and packed them up into a backpack, she begins to arrange several items into a ritual space on the ground front center stage in back of the truck. These include a small pot of sand and some sprigs of sage. They may also include a piece of cloth, a dried flower inside a small jar, an old photograph, a vial of liquid, a plastic doll's head, a shoelace.]

Piper        Good morning, hombre.

Carlos       Buen dia, amorcito.

Piper        How are you?

Carlos       [non-committal grumble]

Piper        I need that crystal.

Carlos       [Goes to his things, rummages around.]

Piper        I'm going to give it back to you, but I need it for a little while.

Carlos       [Comes up with the crystal, wrapped in cloth. Unwraps it, hands it to Piper.]

Carlos       [Goes over to Piper, kisses her on the head.]

What are you doing?

Piper        Get your shit together. We're going to have a ceremony.

Carlos       What do I have to do?

Piper I'll tell you when the time comes.

[Takes his hand, pulls him down next to her, kisses him.]

Carlos, I had a vision last night.

Carlos A dream?

Piper Like a dream, but different. I saw it in a dream. But it came from the spiritual realm and I have to honor it.

Carlos OK.

Piper It was very powerful.

Carlos Good. Can you tell it to me, or is it a secret vision?

Piper There were two birds, sleeping in a white cage. A male and a female. They woke up and spread their wings and the cage fell apart. Then the female shook herself and all of her feathers fell off. The male picked up the feathers and flew away to his nest. Then she flew the other direction, low, over the desert.

Carlos How did she fly without feathers?

Piper I don't know, but she did.

Carlos Strange dream.

Piper Vision.

Carlos Strange vision.

Strange woman.

Piper [brief laugh] Yes.

Carlos So...

Piper Well, the meaning is clear.  
[goes back to arranging her sacred items]

Carlos Clear to the medicine woman.

Piper [a bit distractedly]  
Well first, the truck is yours. [Puts the keys in his hand.]

Carlos [Tentatively holding the keys.] Uh...

Piper You know how you told me about those guys in Pastores you said have a good furniture workshop but they get screwed by the trucking company?

Carlos Yeah.

Piper Take the truck. You need to start a trucking company of your own.

Carlos You mean WE do.

Piper That's the other part of my vision.  
[pause]  
Like you said, I need to go my own way right now.

Carlos I said that before we --

Piper You were right.

Carlos [stands up]  
You gotta be kidding me.

Piper You were right. I can feel it. I'm still bound by the chains of my past. I have to free myself from them before I can go forward.

Carlos Oh come on. We are living in the real world. Those chains are all in your mind. If you're free, you're free.

Piper It doesn't matter. I had the vision.

Carlos The VISION? What about everything you said last night, "We will always be together." "I came here for you." What was that?

Piper It's true. This doesn't change that.

Carlos Well in your vision does the bird split into two pieces and go both directions?

Piper Carlos, don't take this that way.

Carlos Forgive me, I'm old-fashioned, but --

Piper I DID come here for you. We ARE together. We're bonded at the heart chakra for the next three lifetimes. I'm not abandoning you. I'm with you.

Carlos No you're not.

Piper We can't always be physically together, whether we live in the same town or not.

Carlos Fucking hell.

Piper Carlos.

Carlos I was right in the first place. Why did I believe you? You act weird, but you're just a typical American.

Piper Oh come on! [looks away, dismissively]

Carlos You really had me going there.

Piper Stop it.

Carlos You stop it.

Piper        This doesn't have to be permanent. Why are you being so possessive?

Carlos       You want to be alone. You want to follow your visions by yourself? Let me help you. I'll fly off to my home.

[puts the keys back in her hand, picks up his bag and heads off]

Piper        Jesus.

Carlos       Have a nice flight.

Piper        [over her shoulder, as she arranges her sacred items]

Before you go, how many people were in that truck?

Carlos       What truck?

Piper        No, the truck the coyotes took you over the border in.

Carlos       Madre.

Piper        [waiting, patiently, for his answer]

Carlos       Fourteen.

Piper        Counting you?

Carlos       Fifteen, counting me.

Piper        [sorts out fourteen sprigs of sage and ties them in a bundle]

Carlos       [Returns to Piper's side. Sets down his bag.]

Piper        [crosses her legs, closes eyes and puts hands in meditative position]

Ommmmmm Kamanditra parvat kum shanti.

[pause]

May the white light of the universe  
penetrate the darkness of our existence and  
be with us now. Ommmmmmmmmmmmmm.

[pause]

Carlos and I are here to honor the passing  
of fourteen beings from this earthly realm  
into yours.

[opens her eyes, lights the sage on fire and  
sets it to burn in the pot of sand]

These fourteen were on a journey to what  
they considered a better place. Now they  
are on another journey to another place.  
Please accept them with all of your love as  
we send them with all of ours.

[to Carlos]Would you like to say something?

Carlos [after a moment, closes his eyes and crosses  
himself]

Jesus, they were good people and they were  
just trying to find something better.  
Please don't be angry with them.

Please take care of my friends. Tell them  
that I am still waiting for the coyotes to  
open the truck, and I'll be joining them  
soon enough.

[begins to cry]

Piper [puts a nurturing hand on Carlos to comfort  
him, then closes her eyes and continues with  
the ceremony]

Kali, mother spirit of destruction and  
rebirth, be with us and be with our  
departed. You have claimed their bodies and  
freed them from the earthly realm. May we  
learn from their lives and be nourished by

all they gave to us. May we enjoy your spirit of liberation in every living moment.

[pause]

Om parvanitra shanti om.

[pause]

[opens her eyes, looks over to Carlos]

Carlos [looks back to Piper]

Piper [Stands.]

Stand up.

[He stands, Piper hands the crystal to Carlos]

This is my home stone. You are going to your home. My home is not my home now. You'll be the only one of us who has a home. Please do me this one favor now.

Carlos [pause] OK. I'll keep it for you.

Piper It needs to be in a safe place in your home, like on your dresser or your mantle. And visible, not covered up. And it needs direct sunshine once a week.

Carlos Of course it does.

Piper And don't let any metals come in contact with it.

Carlos Yes, dear.

Piper It's important to me.

Carlos OK.

Piper Now. I need your help.

[begins to undress]

Carlos      No. Don't do this.

Piper      [continues to undress]\*

This isn't about sex, Carlos. It's about liberation.

Carlos      Just tell me what you're doing.

Piper      A liberation ceremony.

[puts the keys to the truck into his hand]

Carlos      What do I have to do?

[almost absent-mindedly putting the keys into his pocket]

Piper      I need you to do some energy work on me.

Carlos      I don't know how to do that. I can't clear blocks.

Piper      It's not blocks. [draws a circle on the ground with a stick and steps inside it, puts her hands together as in prayer or meditation, closes her eyes]

Om namaha Duruga.

May the free spirit of the universe be with us and liberate us from all unwanted connection.

[turns slowly around 360 degrees]

I am here with Carlos, my liberator. He helped me escape from the world of excess, and we have bonded. I affirm my love for him and I attest to his love for me. My gratitude is deeper than the ocean.

[meditative pause]

OK, Carlos.

Carlos [pause]  
OK, what?

Piper Go ahead.

Carlos I don't even know what you're doing.

Piper My chains. I need you to remove the chains.

Carlos OK.

Piper [pause]  
You can't see them, can you?

Carlos [short laugh]  
I'm sorry, I --

Piper That's OK. That's OK.  
  
[raises her arms out to her sides]  
  
Imagine big strong chains connected to me,  
all around.

Carlos OK.

Piper Now take them and tear them away from me.

Carlos [composes himself, focusing on the imagined  
chains. Reaches out and grabs one, then  
yanks it forcibly away from her.]

Piper [synchronized with Carlos's action, as  
though feeling the chain being yanked away,  
deep from her soul, makes a sound, a groan,  
grunt, shout, whatever]

Carlos [surprised by Piper's outburst, pauses, then  
earnestly continues with another chain, then  
with other chains, some more difficult, some  
easier]

Piper [continues with the punctuated moans and yelps and groans, perhaps after one or two synchronized ones, it becomes more general]

Carlos [once he has stopped pulling chains away, and Piper has calmed down somewhat]

I don't see anymore chains.

Piper OK. OK, good.

[dropping her head] Oh my god.

Carlos Are you all right?

Piper Oh my god. I had no idea.

[after some time]

OK. Put your hands together, like for a prayer.

Carlos [complies, and closes his eyes]

Piper [puts hers together, too, and closes her eyes]

Om namaha Parvati.

Hear me pure spirit. I stand now open and liberated. Here I am. I am here. I have cast aside the remains of who I was. I am free to soar in the universe. Let it be known that Piper is a liberated spirit.

Carlos [after some time, crosses himself]

Heavenly father, I hope you don't mind Piper for her mumbo jumbo. Her heart is in the right place, no matter what she says.

Piper [snorts, but not too loudly]

Carlos Please take care of this girl. She was born into an easy life, but she has proven to be strong despite that. She has gone through a

lot of trouble and pain to get to this place. She left her family, her home, her husband, her money, and now she is leaving her man. She deserves an easy road now for a while. Please make that road clear to her.

En el nombre del Padre, del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo.

Piper [quietly, without looking up]  
Thank you, Carlos.

Carlos Adios, Pequeña.

[kisses her on the head, goes to the truck, gets in]

[truck pulls away, or curtain falls between the truck and Piper, leaving her alone on the stage]

CURTAIN

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Production Notes:

The amount Piper undresses should be adjusted to suit the community in which the play is being produced. She might get completely naked for a show in San Francisco, CA, or just remove her shirt for a show in Nephi, UT. Similarly, some of the more raw language can be adjusted. - KO

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