

Llorona

by

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DESCRIPTION

A young woman is abandoned by the father of their child when he goes to marry someone else, and she exacts her revenge for his betrayal.

CHARACTERS

- Luisa
- Don Carlos

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As lights ease in, we see, we hear, we smell LUISA and DON CARLOS' ecstasy and passion.

LUISA

You will never leave me.

CARLOS

Of course I will—never leave you.

LUISA

What was that?

CARLOS

What was what? Don't stop—

LUISA

That, in your voice—

CARLOS

What?

LUISA

Your hesitation.

CARLOS

I didn't hesitate.

LUISA

Yes you did, between "will" and "never."

CARLOS

I was catching my breath—you take away my [breath]—

LUISA

(in two voices)

"You will never leave me." "Of course I will—never—" You hesitated.

CARLOS

Come back.

LUISA

To what?

CARLOS

To me.

LUISA

Can you understand why?

CARLOS

It was nothing—a catch in my voice—

LUISA

Your leaving always threatens me—

CARLOS

But I'm here now—

LUISA

It's in your clothes, your hair—

CARLOS

And I've told you, our differences—

LUISA

Are differences, no matter what you tell me—hard borders, can't be crossed—difference in your hair, my hair, your clothes, my clothes—in our child—

CARLOS

I won't [leave]—

LUISA

Then marry me—

CARLOS

I can't—you know I can't—

LUISA

You say "can't," but I won't stop wanting it.

CARLOS

Wanting it won't change anything about my "can't."

LUISA

That's where you're wrong—I've heard the rumors, the buzz-buzz-buzz-buzz-buzz—why do you think you had me easier than ever tonight? I was on my back before you even unbuckled—I was unbuckled before you were! I was going to lock you down with my legs, keep you hard in me by hard against me. But buzz-buzz, buzz-buzz, buzz-buzz, buzz-buzz—zzzzzzzzzzzz all around—and you say nothing to me. My voice in your ears, my tongue, my fingers, giving you every chance—but—nothing to me. Not one word. They must be true.

CARLOS

Yes. They are. Within the month.

LUISA

And your tongue doesn't rot.

CARLOS

You have always known.

LUISA

My mistake was hoping that you would behave better than what you keep telling me I know. Who is she?

CARLOS

Someone my parents have decided is fit—they fit her to me, I get fitted [to her]—

LUISA

And you never said “don’t” to the fitting, “don’t” to your parents.

CARLOS

No. Because I did not want to.

LUISA

You chose.

CARLOS

I chose.

LUISA

Not forced.

CARLOS

Not forced.

LUISA

Not me.

CARLOS

You were never a choice.

CARLOS’ words are knives.

LUISA

Start forgetting me—now. Start now because I have already finished forgetting you—I have completed it, it makes me complete. Don’t, don’t even—just go—choose choose choose choose—buzz buzz buzz buzz—choose buzz choose buzz choose buzz—and away the fly flies! Buckled up and gone!

Nothing but silence accompanies the solitary LUISA.

LUISA

Wanting it—wanting—wanting!—will always change everything.

* * * * *

A church. Echoing whispers from the wedding service at the altar. LUISA enters, shawl over her head, and a baby in a sling hanging from her shoulders across her body. She raises her hand.

LUISA

Yes—yes yes yes—there is a reason why this marriage should not happen!

LUISA unslings the baby and holds the bundle over her head.

LUISA

Here! This! I am his first, and this is his child! This is our child!

Murmurs, shouts, a scream as someone faints. LUISA lowers the bundle into her arms. CARLOS marches up to her.

CARLOS

What are you doing?

LUISA

Wanting.

CARLOS

To ruin me.

LUISA

By one already ruined. Have I ruined you?

CARLOS

Yes!

LUISA

Then come back to me—you have nothing to lose and so much to win.

CARLOS

We are not ruined in the same way.

LUISA

That's your money talking, your breeding—

CARLOS

And it's not talking in your favor. I have to go.

LUISA

Then go with this.

LUISA holds the baby overhead again.

LUISA

Here! This! This is our child!

Taking the two ends of the sling, LUISA slams the baby into the ground again and again until the sling holds nothing but a bloody pulp.

One last time, LUISA holds the bloody bundle overhead, then flings it into the darkness.

LUISA

Now you can call me—you can all call me—La Llorona because I will do nothing forever except weep and gnash my teeth for the butchery you have all made me do.

LUISA glares at CARLOS.

LUISA

That you have made me do.

CARLOS turns and walks away, finally devastated.

Blackness.

* * * * *

Sounds of water fill the darkness and continue as the light rises. In a centered light, LUISA appears standing in a wooden or metal washtub, naked. Behind her, on a stepladder above her, is CARLOS, dressed simply, now a stagehand holding a watering can. A towel hangs from one of the ladder's rungs; a rough cotton dress hangs over another.

He tilts the can over her, and a gentle rain falls. When done, she takes the towel, dries herself, steps out of the tub, then puts on the dress. CARLOS disappears into the darkness.

CARLOS re-appears, holding a baby in a sling, which LUISA drapes across the front of her body. He then goes back up the ladder, watering can in hand.

LUISA

Did you think I really would? Did you, to spite him? Them? To round-off the fucking tragedy of it, concoct a fucking Medea out of it? A pig's heart and guts in butcher paper—smash 'em down hard enough and they weep blood. Why should the innocent suffer for our cock-ups and soap operas? I wanted him gutted but by the sharpest knife ever tempered—remorse, guilt, and infinite loss. So I cheated on the deal—so what? So what? When people see me cry, they may think it's because I am a tragic figure searching for the soul of my murdered child, but, shit, they are tears of triumph. La Llorona, yes, but crying at my secret joke, my cosmic con-job—but most of all for my fierce love of the thing that deserves it most, this weight across my heart. Fuck 'em all.

LUISA leaves the stage. CARLOS rains out the rest of the water as lights go to black.