

CLARIN

ACT I

ACT I SCENE 1

The storeroom of a Vallarta Supermarket.

A mountain of food boxes and cartons.

We hear whispers echoed as if in a cave. The crackle and buzz of neon. The Vallarta logo is illuminated--a beach with palm trees.

Distant supermarket sounds. Muzak.

PA. (offstage) *garbled supermarket announcement* Wake up. (long pause) *garbled supermarket announcement*

The wind howls. The sun sets.

The ambient supermarket sounds continue.

Start

Darkness. The sun rises again, this time it's weird.

ROSAURA, dressed as a man, climbs over a mountain of boxes.

ROSAURA. Damn you, Vallarta. This fluorescent-hued backroom marks an ill welcome to weary travelers. Don't you know how long we've traveled--all the way from El Lago de Toluca? Up the 170, to the 5, to the 118, to the 210? Hardly have I voyaged in la pinche Toyota Corolla without struggles and torment-- 'Tis in my blood. Alas, but when have unfortunate souls like us ever been delivered mercy?

Clarín, Rosaura's servant, comes around the pallets, panting, carrying a heavy backpack like a pack mule.

CLARIN. Don't speak for me, señora. As your mule on this pinche revenge quest, I resent having your anguish added to my back.

ROSAURA. A wise man once said, man takes so much pleasure in lament, he'd seek misfortunes galore for an excuse to make a soliloquy.

CLARIN. A solilo-que? I'll knock that pendejo upside the head and then he could lament from my putasos. Señor, what are we going to do? There's no one here, the Corolla is out of gas, y tengo hambre. I'm hungry!

ROSAURA. Shaddap, esquinclé. *(smacks him)*

The lights change. The piles of boxes change.

ROSAURA. *(gasps)* I think I see something. *(lights change)* Nah, it's a mirage.

She turns away. Lights change again.

CLARIN. I see it!.

Rosaura whips around and knocks something. A box tumbles down and hits Clarín in the head.

ROSAURA. There! Amid the boxes.

She points to a tiny opening at the top of a pile. An illuminated door, covered in vinyl translucent strips.

ROSAURA. A place so small it scarcely dares to behold the sun. It's almost like a tiny rock that has rolled down from the summit.

Clarín gets up, holding the box. He drops it on his foot.

CLARIN. Owwww!!! Staring at it won't bring it closer, seño!
Let's venture up and beg mercy from those within.

They walk "up the mountain."

The boxes open up like a door, revealing Segismundo, sleeping and held by chains in the meat freezer. He is dressed in rags and animal skins.

ROSAURA. Mira! The door is open.

CLARIN. Es hora de comer. I'm sure they'll have enough food for two extras. Well, one. Your thirst for vengeance seems to satisfy--

A clamor of noise. Clarin runs behind Rosaura.

CLARIN. Señorita! I'll protect you!

Rosaura draws her sword. She ventures forward.

CLARIN. De veras, don't! It may be a chupacabra, or worse, the spirit of those Vallarta stock boys who were zip-tied and dragged out into the back alley and--!

ROSAURA. Don't be so superstitious!

SEGISMUNDO. *(Waking up)* Ooohhhh.

Segismundo stirs in the freezer.

CLARIN. Chupacabra! Knew it. Don't go! He'll suck your blood!

SEGISMUNDO. Oh, wretched, wretched man!

ROSAURA. I see a man... pale as a ghost. What a sad voice he has...

CLARIN. Because it is a ghost--

ROSAURA. Shh... He looks so sick... so lonely...

SEGISMUNDO. So lonely.

ROSAURA. And wretched.

SEGISMUNDO. So wretched.

ROSAURA. Filthy.

SEGISMUNDO. So filthy.

ROSAURA. Awful, awful beast.

SEGISMUNDO. Awful, awf--okay, I think they get it.

CLARIN. *(looks at the audience)* They get it.

Rosaura backs away.

SEGISMUNDO. Stars above, what am I being punished for? What crime have I committed?

ROSAURA. Now they're gonna get a soliloquy.

End

CLARIN. *Solilo-que?*

SEGISMUNDO. You were born, that's the worst crime you could ever commit. Else have I offended you? Wasn't every other man on this Earth born? What makes me so special? The bird, grown to maturity, flies it's nest once it can take flight, yet I, who have more soul, have less liberty. The beast, who suffers at the hands of mankind, and learns cruelty, must rely on it's animalism for defense. The fish, which cannot breathe the air, the being with the smallest brain on Earth, will stupidly measure the vastness of the ocean, simply to feast on algae. Yet I, with more intelligence, am confined to this small cage. What God would keep a man from the basic rights allowed to a fish and a bird? When I reach this pitch of emotion, I become a volcano, an Ojos del Salado, and I'd like to pull pieces of my heart out of my chest.