

# The Tropic of X

by Caridad Svich

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Characters (in speaking order):

HILTON, the DJ cowboy of the island airwaves, 30s

MAURA, arcade junkie and petite wannabe-assassin in faux Docs, late teens-early 20s

MORI, Maura's accomplice and lover, late teens

KIKI, part-time hustler of fluid gender, late 20s-early 30s

FABIAN, a tourist in many guises, 30s; also plays FRANKIE, a man who watches the road, 30s

Setting:

In the polyglot Americas, leaning south: a market of video arcades, old and new drugs, Nescafe internet cafes, swift-changing political regimes, fluctuating currency, cheap sex for the tourist trade, ex-bullrings turned into discos and hotels, white cars and bright blue houses with peeling paint, fresh murals on ruined walls, and a view of the limitless, dirty sea.

Note: Occasional Spanish words and phrases are italicized in the script, as are other non-English-language phrases. Melodies to the original song fragments in the text may be obtained by contacting the author or the lyrics may be re-set by another composer.

Script history:

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*Subsequently the play was presented at the Latino Play Reading Series at [Inside] the Ford, CA under Stefan Novinski's direction, and the Teatro Vista Tapas Reading Series in Chicago under Derrick Sanders' direction.*

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**Part One**  
**1: Hilton, the Cowboy of the islands, Broadcasts to the world**

HILTON

*Oye oye oye oye oye oye oye*

This is the voice

The voice

The voice...

This is the voice of *radio Dos Equis* in the A, B, D and number four,  
you hear me?

This is the electric boogaloo of the cowboy of the islands who seeks remedy,  
remedy and fast, for his ailing everything  
because everything is broken down  
down

and way down

in the triple crown

of the Mayor and Governor

and all the Powerful with the capital P.

The microphone is defunct, you see?

And everything has gone K-side,

As in by the wayside

waylaid

and outside the official news.

The Z doesn't work. For nothing. You hear me?

The Z is absent, failing, stretched out limbless and waiting for X  
as in *Dos Equis* as in as much as you can take.

In which language do you want me to speak?

There is no one language or haven't you heard *del* Babel in which we live?

This is the new Babylonia and it is grand.

So grand you can't even remember what you said after you've said it.

We're in an inferno like Dante's. Remember him? Dante knew everything.

He was prescient.

He was one of those super-intellectuals who ate it and good.

Because he told it how it was, is and will be, and we're just following.

You hear me?

In this language mangled and spit I speak to you

Like two and two are six!

And no one can stop me cause I still got my tongue.

No one can stop me cause I still got my tongue.

No one can stop me cause I still got my tongue.

## 2: The arcade junkies, Maura and Mori, look at the tourist

MAURA  
Look at him.

MORI  
Quit.

MAURA  
Juicy fruit

MORI  
Enough.

MAURA  
Hey, juicy fruit, I'm going to eat you.

MORI  
Leave him alone.

MAURA  
Why?

MORI  
He's a tourist.

MAURA  
Tourist in the land of plastic elastic mescaline rush.

MORI  
You'll scare him.

MAURA  
He's already scared. We should assault him now and get it over with.

MORI  
What for?

MAURA  
To confirm his suspicions about traveling where he doesn't belong.

MORI  
How do you know he doesn't belong?

MAURA  
He's wearing a hat.

MORI  
I wear a hat.

MAURA

Not like that. He's wearing – what? – some retro thingy. He thinks he's in some foreign movie, some tropical exotica fascist propaganda flick. Who are you playing, juicy fruit?

MORI

Leave him be.

MAURA

Why should I?

MORI

It's early.

MAURA

And what? You got something better to do, Mori?

MORI

I'm kicking back.

MAURA

Like a little yogurt cup. Like a little mango-guava delight.

MORI

Stop.

MAURA

Soft belly. Soft arms. You're weak.

MORI

I work out.

MAURA

In what gym?

MORI

The gymnasium of the mind.

MAURA

Mental hoops and loop-de-loops?

MORI

Too advanced for you, Maura?

MAURA

Hey, I'm not a fashionista *turista*. I studied, right?

MORI

You were crap at school.

MAURA

Hey, *turista*, give me a juicy fruit. Damn holding onto his gum. Northern pig.

MORI  
He's not from the North. He's Euro.

MAURA  
Euro Deutsche?

MORI  
Euro something. Check his shoes.

MAURA  
They're good shoes. Not Doc Martens.

MORI  
No, not Docs, but good. Pure cow.

MAURA  
His feet must be hot in them.

MORI  
No. With good shoes your feet never get hot.

MAURA  
Perfect temperature, eh?

MORI  
Year-round.

MAURA  
How much you think they're worth?

MORI  
Don't know. Why?

MAURA  
We should steal them.

MORI  
The shoes?

MAURA  
Yeah.

MORI  
Why?

MAURA  
Screw him up. *Destabilize him.*

MORI  
Kick him better.

MAURA

Yeah, kick him too. But take the shoes.

MORI

How are you going to do that?

MAURA

How do we do anything?

MORI

With *cojones*.

MAURA

*Cojones*. Yeah.

MORI

Smarts.

MAURA

Mental agility dexterity. That's right. Tricks and scams.

MORI

You know them all, Maura.

MAURA

So do you, Mori. Don't act like you're so innocent.

MORI

I like being innocent.

MAURA

You don't have the face for it.

MORI

No?

MAURA

Scratch your face off the map of youth, my friend.

MORI

Hurt me.

MAURA

I wound you. Soft Mori, my little yogurt cup. Give me some.

MORI

What are you talking - ?

MAURA

Tongue, animal.

MORI  
My tongue is mine. I do with it what I will.

MAURA  
Who are you holding out for?

MORI  
...Princess Di.

MAURA  
She's dead.

MORI  
Well, if she wasn't...

MAURA  
You're getting all vampire necrophiliac.

MORI  
I'm not.

MAURA  
Then who? Who is it you're dreaming of in your star-gazy moon?

MORI  
Christina...whatsit.

MAURA  
Britney effsit?

MORI  
I like blondes, all right?

MAURA  
I'll dye my hair. I can be platinum.

MORI  
I mean natural blondes.

MAURA  
Screw you.

MORI  
They taste music.

MAURA  
They're not in your league, *pelon*.

MORI  
Don't call me that.



MAURA

You don't like me anymore? You don't like Maura with the firm tits? What happened, eh? You're swinging the other way now?

MORI

No.

MAURA

Then what?

MORI

...I smell, okay?

MAURA

Since when did that stop you? Hey, Euro, what's your name? Why don't you look at me, huh? You don't like chicks like me? *Matador*.

MORI

What are you saying?

MAURA

He's a *pato patinski*.

MORI

A fag? Him? No. **Don't think so**. Don't look it.

MAURA

He likes you. Screw you Euro. We should jump him now. **We should annihilate him** like an effing Ninja matrix warrior. Screw this hanging around looking at the ocean doing nothing waiting to drown crap.

MORI

You're crazy.

MAURA

Crazy carioca cherry Coke-a.

MORI

What goes on inside your head, Maura?

MAURA

Tunnel.

MORI

What?

MAURA

**Like** when you race through all dark and stuff and you can't see anything but you see everything, right? Like a digital robotic fast forward whoosh in the mini-wave of a microwave.

MORI

Like the dreams of an emperor of a third world catastrophe?

MAURA

You get me.

MORI

I read you.

MAURA

You're inside my mind, Mori. Lick me. Peel my grape.

MORI

I'm kicking...

MAURA

You're spoiled, that's what you are. You're a street *pendejo* with mental *congri* in your brain and no Euros.

MORI

Who wants Euros?

MAURA

I do. I want a tasty Euro in my pocket to give me an effing big screen adventure that will last me the next one hundred years of goddamned solitude [in the global solitude of my aching capitalist soul](#). You hear me, juicy?

MORI

Why do I hang with you, Maura?

MAURA

Cause you like me, Mori. We're good for each other.

MORI

Are we?

MAURA

...Let's kick his ass. Come on. I'm sick of staying here. I'm sick of looking at this endless ocean, this water of death waiting for nothing. Let him know what being a tourist is really like. Let's give him what he came for.

*And Maura and Mori go after the tourist with restless vengeance screaming in their lungs. They want to feel their strength, and release themselves from the hard drive in which they are packed. Pierce break, split open the man in the strange hat who wears his pride as casually as his fine leather shoes.*

### 3: From another view Kiki looks on in dreams

KIKI

I want to die here. Right here.

There's no where else to die.  
You hear me?  
You want another place you got to keep your head straight  
and your back against the wall.  
This is the fifth of all avenues. I can see everything here.  
I have the perfect view.  
You wear a hat that sticks out. You look at me and dream.  
And I dream with you.  
This is me altogether in the flesh. Come on. Rub me. Harder.  
Oh, honey, you don't know what you're doing.  
You got it all wrong about me.  
I'm special, ok? I'm one of those...  
they don't got a name for me cause I'm too special,  
that's how special I am,  
you know what I'm saying?  
Here in flames I speak to you.  
Here in flesh I come to you.  
What else do you want? What else do you need?  
Call me, baby. Call me. I'm your friend. Like the arcade angels say...  
they are on the other side of the street. They protect me.  
They have wings. Steel wings. You know what I'm saying?  
There are no secrets here, baby.  
And when you mistreat me, cause you will, cause that's what you do, that's what they all do, I  
won't say anything.  
No, honey. I'll just, you know... I'll be friendly.  
Okay? Okay? Okay?  
I will die here.  
Right here.  
Because there's nothing else to live for.  
nothing else to dress for.  
Nothing...

#### 4: Mori and Maura exalt

MORI  
He was

MAURA  
Like he didn't even...

MORI  
Blink twitch nothing.

MAURA  
Coward.

MORI  
Queasy bastard.

MAURA  
Did you see how he - ?

MORI

Yeah. He thought you were –

MAURA

A poor waif-ona.

MORI

You showed him.

MAURA

Dig in, Euro man.

MORI

And you dug.

MAURA

With teeth.

MORI

And legs.

MAURA

And boots. I got rev boots.

MORI

Fake Docs.

MAURA

Faux Docs. The best kind. Straight from Rio by way of London. *Why get an original anything when everything's a spin-off?*

MORI

We should hit the arcade.

MAURA

Jet-ski in virtual land.

MORI

And land on our feet.

MAURA

Hitting the hills, cyber-snow skidding, testing our balance like guerrilla punk skazis.

MORI

And go from one machine to the other, one screen to the other like raging cowboys of the new wave.

MAURA

The next wave. Cowboys with no land to call their own. *Cowboys of the vanguard.*

MORI

Living in a desert of laptops and concrete churches called malls. Oh Virgin, oh Sony, oh Swatch most holy.

MAURA

I can't go to the mall. *Not now.*

MORI

Why not?

MAURA

I'm too wired. That uptight upright tourist with the funny hat burned me up. Nothing but looking me over, up and down. He thought "I can do with her what I like."

MORI

You showed him.

MAURA

That's right. Maura is not noise. Maura is real sound.

*Kiki cuts in.*

KIKI

What about me, eh?

MAURA

Get away, Kiki.

KIKI

I'm just looking for scraps, Maura.

MAURA

You're such a sorry-ass girly girl.

KIKI

I'm hundred percent male, honey. No eggs in my basket.

MAURA

You got eyes like piss holes in the snow, though.

KIKI

My eyes have character, honey. Unlike yours, Maura.

MAURA

I don't doll them up. That's why.

KIKI

A little shadow never hurt nobody. You could use some *shadow*, honey. *You're so pale.*

MAURA

It suits me.

KIKI

You won't get a man that way.

MAURA

I don't need a man. I have Mori.

MORI

Meaning what?

MAURA

You're all the man I need.

MORI

Is that a cut? *Are you cutting me?*

KIKI

She's complimenting you, honey. *Can't you tell a compliment when you hear one?*

MORI

I don't like compliments.

KIKI

*Why not?*

MORI

I don't trust them. If somebody compliments you, look out, cause what they want is something in return.

KIKI

And what's wrong with that?

MORI

Debt. I don't like to be in someone's debt.

MAURA

I'm not asking for anything, Mori.

MORI

Good. Cause you won't get.

MAURA

Piss off.

MORI

I say what I mean.

MAURA

I'm the love of your life, remember? Or don't you remember?

MORI

Of course I do.

MAURA

...Once upon a time...

MORI  
Yeah.

MAURA  
There lived what?

MORI  
...Maura.

MAURA  
And Mori. Mori and Maura. Joined at the hip lip no matter what sinking ship, right? Right?  
Mori?

MORI  
...Right.

MAURA  
Screw you.

MORI  
What?

MAURA  
I'm all in a rush, and look what you do. You bring me down, Mori. [Completely down like in a well and](#) I'm going to drown.

KIKI  
Stop with that drowning crap. [It doesn't suit you, honey.](#) You're not cut out for pity.

MAURA  
And you are?

KIKI  
I've got the thighs, baby.

MORI  
I like your thighs, Kiki.

KIKI  
They're not bad, no?

MORI  
They're strong.

KIKI  
Scissor-legs, honey. That's me. I wrap you in my scissor legs and the world rests a little better.

MAURA  
Would you stop...

KIKI

What? I'm not doing anything.

MAURA

I got Mori, right? Mori and me, we're a team. You got whomever. Okay?

KIKI

What's with the rules, honey?

MORI

Maura likes rules.

MAURA

And you lay off.

MORI

Don't be jealous, Maura.

MAURA

I'm not. I just don't want anything to spoil anything. I'm feeling good, right? *You know how long it takes for me to feel good? So, don't mess, all right? Don't get in my stuff.*

KIKI

You are getting very sensitive, Maura.

MAURA

And I've saved your ass I don't how many times, Kiki. *Even's even. Fair's fair.*

*Pause.*

I can't look at the sky anymore.

KIKI

You don't have to look at it, baby.

MAURA

What the hell am I supposed to do? Liquid painted blue. Crystal blue. Perfect blue. Too damn perfect.

KIKI

Maura, you drown in a glass of water.

MAURA

I do what I like.

KIKI

I do what I like, too.

MAURA

Begging for looks.

KIKI

What's that?



MAURA

You beg, don't you? For people to look at you. You get all made up, and what? Morning, noon and night Kiki has to be ready for any cold suit who speaks the lingua franca.

MORI

Or the *franca lingua*.

MAURA

Tongue yeah. Sweaty stinky from yesterday's milk.

MORI

The honest tongue, the frank tongue who gets in...

MAURA

And doesn't stop.

MORI

Working it, working it, working it.

MAURA

And then "Oh, Kiki, oh, Kiki, what is that between your legs, baby?"

MORI

"Oh, let me stick my tongue in anyway cause we're like Tristan and Isolde, baby. When we make love, we lose ourselves and become each other."

KIKI

I didn't know you were an opera diva, Mori.

MORI

I'm not.

KIKI

Then why Tristan, honey? Why Isolde?

MORI

It was a web link on a site I was surfing.

KIKI

Maura and Mori: the two freaks.

MAURA

Well, at least I'm not standing around all "hey, want to see me, check me out, Check this, hey." I'm not part of the capitalist state. I'm not currency. That's not my aim.

KIKI

You're high society, eh?

MORI

She's from aristocracy.

MAURA  
Quit.

KIKI  
Is this true?–

MORI  
Her great-grandfather was the Prince of Old Vayazul?

MAURA  
Shut up, Mori.

MORI  
What? Nobody cares what I say.  
Vayazul doesn't even exist anymore. It's 19<sup>th</sup> century. We shot down those memories a long time ago.

KIKI  
Who needs memories when you got TV?

MORI  
Exactly. The stories we need we got. They're given to us. Replay ad infinitum.

KIKI  
Even those of the Prince of Old Vayazul.

MAURA  
Look, I don't want to be disappeared, alright? I don't want to be put in prison. I don't want to have to smuggle myself inside a merchandise van or boat to get the hell out. When the last coup happened, I burned any reference to my great-grandfather that I had. I'm here. I do what I do. I choose my life. I make it.

KIKI  
How serious.

MAURA  
What's wrong with being serious, eh? Everything has to be a party? Everything has to be a cool easy flip surface trip? I'm tired of it. I get tired. I'm not a twenty-four-seven wind-up doll watch her go. You want to amuse yourselves, go to the arcade, go to the peep show, go to the strip n' screw on the boardwalk, leave me alone.

KIKI  
Maura, you worry me.

MAURA  
Why's that, Kiki?

KIKI  
It's like you want to run for office or something.

MAURA

Like running for office means something.

KIKI

It can.

MAURA

The country's been fixed from day one. Prop one puppet up, take him down, prop up another. Everything's the same.

KIKI

Rules change.

MAURA

What of it? One day you're on the left, the next on the right. And so the story spins...

MORI

You just have to make sure you know which side you're on.

MAURA

Before they change sides, yeah. And when you're at bottom, you better know everything. Cause bottom-feeders are the first to get screwed, cause we're disposable.

KIKI

We're not.

MAURA

Trash-stuffers. Not even trash. But trash-stuffers, little plastic linings, that's what we are.

MORI

Speak for yourself.

MAURA

You're above things, Mori?

MORI

Hell yeah. I'm not disposable. I got words, right? I can say things, do things.

MAURA

We're the X corner of the alphabet.

KIKI

Says the great-princess of Old Vayazul.

MAURA

Shut up, Kiki. Okay? Just shut the trap up. There is no Vayazul, there never was a Vayazul. It's all dead gone, out and over. You got that? There ain't a drop of royal blood in me.

KIKI

Everyone who had any link to royalty has been done away with.

MAURA

Take Maura down for being who she is. Is that what you want?

KIKI

No, I-

MAURA

I could wrap you right now. Cord round your neck and you'd be out. No more crap words from you.

...

You're not even worth killing. You're not worth pop bang ouch. Flame girl. Flame nobody, that's what you are: a cog in the wheel of the economic meltdown of the effing meltdowns of this bronco busting rodeo barrio society.

KIKI

...I wish I came from something. My family is not even a headline. Not a mention would they get. They're from a little village on the coast. Barely a village. One of those K-side towns nobody cares about. Cars come through and they keep going, you know, they don't stop. I'm Kiki. I'm a little flea in this city. Who cares about Kiki?

MORI

I do.

KIKI

Mori, you're always there with a compliment.

MAURA

Only when he doesn't mean it.

KIKI

You have some bug up your *yo-no-se-que*? What is it, Maura? Tell me.

MAURA

No bug.

KIKI

You know what you are? You're a phobic.

MAURA

What?

KIKI

A phobic. You act all free and all that but deep down you're old school. Someone is a little different and you get all shook up, out of orbit.

MAURA

I do not.

KIKI

Then why the 'tude, baby? Why against me?

MAURA

I like messing with you.

MORI

It's a sign of affection. She does it with me all the time.

KIKI

Plant me a wet one, then.

MAURA

Get out.

KIKI

I need confirmation, baby. I need to know who I'm with. I'm not interested in hanging around with phobics, you know. I got enough of that to last me plenty.

MAURA

You want a kiss, I'll give it. What's a kiss among friends?

KIKI

A sweet kiss.

*Maura and Kiki kiss.*

MORI

*[a fragment of an old poem recalled]*

Sweet at waking, sing the young from the cradle.

Sweet at waking, ancient solitude.

*Kiss ends.*

MAURA

What's that?

MORI

Words I heard once.

MAURA

How poetic-o.

MORI

I'm more than crap.

MAURA

And who said you weren't?

MORI

I don't know sometimes.

KIKI

Where are you from, Mori?

MORI  
What?

KIKI  
Where are you from?

MORI  
What do you mean?

KIKI  
You're from somewhere, right? A town, village?

MORI  
Yeah. So?

KIKI  
Well, then, where from?

MORI  
Why do you ask? Do I have an accent or something?

KIKI  
No.

MORI  
Then why ask?

KIKI  
It's a question..

MORI  
I don't like questions like that. They're stupid. They make no sense. I don't have an accent. I don't even have a twang. Why do you ask me that?

KIKI  
I didn't know you were so sensitive. Between you and Maura, I don't know where to stand.  
*Pause. Kiki observes at the stolen shoes.*

MAURA  
Get your eyes off my things, Kiki.

KIKI  
Oh, are these yours?

MAURA  
Yeah.

MORI  
They were the tourist's.

KIKI  
Is that all you got from him?

MAURA

That was the goal.

KIKI

Well, what are you going to do with them?

MAURA

Sell them.

KIKI

Who is going to buy a pair of old shoes?

MORI

We could go to the country, sell them to a farm family. They always need shoes.

KIKI

You two are amateurs. The man had a watch, no? He had money.

MORI

He had a hat.

KIKI

If you're going to assault someone, do it right.

MAURA

I did. I kicked his face in. I took his [corporate](#) ass down, eh?

KIKI

And what did you do, Mori? What contribution did you make to this phenomenal escapade?

[MORI](#)

[I spit.](#)

[KIKI](#)

[What?](#)

MORI

I spit on him.

KIKI

You spit? Well, that's very... [ancient law.](#)

MORI

You're dragging my ass, Kiki.

MAURA

That's all she ever does.

KIKI

Hey, don't be so hard on me, honeys. You like Kiki to be around.

*Kiki reveals cocaine bag.*

MORI

...What's that?

KIKI

The power of powder.

MAURA

Where'd you get that?

KIKI

While you two were spitting at your tourist, I pocketed a little something from my coffee man.

MAURA

Who's that?

MORI

The Venetian guy.

KIKI

Milan, baby.

MORI

Oh, right, the Milan guy who's staying at the Roc.

MAURA

You took it from him?

KIKI

He doesn't need it. He has a million hundred thousand connections if he wants more.

MAURA

Fresh?

KIKI

Give me a little credit, honey.

MAURA

How much do you want?

KIKI

What'd you mean?

MAURA

You ain't showing fresh powder for nothing.

KIKI

I'm egalitarian. I like sharing with my friends.

...If you don't want it, you don't want it.



MORI  
Give.

KIKI  
What?

MORI  
I'll take.

KIKI  
Hungry Mori. Bite, Mori. Bite me. You're my vampire, baby. You're my *loco* loco-motion.

MORI  
I'm your killer.

KIKI  
Such sweet anguish....

MORI  
Give me everything.

### **5: In the rush the cowboy of the islands is on air**

HILTON  
And here in the Z  
We rush and rush to forget who we are  
Because who cares who we are  
We are ephemera ephemeral  
Birds passing  
Birds in flight  
Birds singing songs *por un Diablo*  
For a poor *triste* devil who will rescue us.  
Rescue me, please, from this eternal oblivion  
From this *mala noche*  
That has upset my dreams.  
"Rescue me," like the old song says,  
and don't make me pay for it.  
Cause we have enough dues.  
We have dues to last a hundred centuries.

How long must we pay? How long?  
For tobacco, sugar, rice, bamboo,  
*tango, mambo y agua azul?*  
It has been too long and my back is breaking from the weight  
And the expectation of your caress so free.  
Sound my ecstasy, love incomplete.  
The cymbals are loud.  
The flood comes, and we take one look at ourselves and drown.

*The cowboy of the islands, twirls an invisible lasso, and practices his rodeo tricks to a song from  
a long-ago Western isle.*

**6: Kiki is witness to Mori and Maura getting amped up; in counterpoint she offers the not-so-secret history of powder (a pop-up)**

KIKI

Baby loose fine

Basuco cane

Gutter glitter

Bubble bunk

Coca is not cocaine.

She has been given a bad name.

Zip

Witch

Coconut

Jelly

Merk

Rock

Pimp

Stardust belly

Coca is placed on the mouth.

The leaf is chewed.

The pinch of lime soothes

In Bolivia, Columbia, Venezuela and Peru.

Have a dust

Hitch up the reindeer

Send your Inca message to Jim Jones,

Aunt Nora

Homer

Bernice

Roxanne

And the Chippy chola

The cotton brothers

Get lost, and amped

In the Florida snow

And geeze the junk in the last screw,

In this last screw for Johnny

Midst the *Diablito* dust.

Coca is a tonic. Coca tempers.

We all love our Coca-Cola.

Give me sweet Coca-Cola. We hum and hum.

But then in 1903 cocaine was taken out of Coca-Cola,

And our hum got low, down and the joy was kicked out

until 1914 when cocaine became illegal in the United States.

No more coca, the governor said, the mayor said, the policeman said, the general said.

The ban was placed.

And so a new currency was born,

that helped boost the economies  
of Bolivia, Peru, Columbia and Venezuela.

Good for us. Good and plenty.

We will keep you coming and going for eternity.

And cocaine was smuggled in shoes

In condoms  
In empty bellies  
and brandy,  
in baby powder so fine so loose so dandy.  
Such fine powder we could never hope to find anywhere else.  
And networks were set up country to country  
The geography expanded upon demand  
And we saluted the monopoly,  
The nouveau aristocracy,  
The potent democracy of trade on trade.  
The buy and sell,  
And the juiced up high octane chain  
From Columbia through Poland to Italy,  
from the UK to Holland to Kansas City,  
from Moscow to Peru to Argentina,  
from Oklahoma to Miami to new Arcadia.  
Oh, Spain, oh Portugal, coca breathes.  
Hosanna of the most heavenly currency.  
Protect me, oh Morpheus, god of dreams.

#### **7: Maura tracks the tourists with her telescope eyes while Mori sleeps off the powder**

MAURA  
The one with the scarf.  
The one with the dog.  
The one with the pink shirt and hairy face  
Which one? Which one shall I take?  
Tell me. Mori?

MORI  
Huh?

MAURA  
The one with the tie.  
The one with the bracelet.  
The one with the attaché case.  
Which one? Which one shall I take?

MORI  
What?

MAURA  
Which one, Mori?  
The one with the skates.  
The one with the ring.  
The one with the diamond bar tie-clip and bottle of spring.  
Which one, Mori? Which one shall I take?

MORI  
You know...

MAURA  
What?

MORI  
Go....

MAURA  
Wait for me, Mori. Wait.

*Maura goes in search of another tourist.*

### **8: And Kiki picks up the shoes**

KIKI  
Sweet Mori, how sweet you are.  
Sleeping without incident, without a care dare.  
Did you hear the shoot-out, honey?  
Did you hear the screams?  
There were guns, Mori. Out on the street.  
They killed somebody. I heard them.  
Honey, everything is K-side, don't you know?  
And we go on, like nothing's changed,  
sleeping like restless tigers, acting like everything's going to be fine..  
We have diseases of the blood, things that creep in our veins,  
and we go on with poison inside of us.  
When I move my mouth, I think of Antarctica.  
I see myself in a cold climate with snow and a frozen lake.  
And in this waking something dream I don't name, I bend in the moonlight. I let you screw me.  
You are my incidental everything, Mori. You are inside.  
Obscenity is all we have now. It is what we make with our lives.  
*Kiki takes the stolen shoes.*

### **9: The tourist Fabian and Mori speak the same language**

FABIAN  
Gum?

MORI (Caridad, my thinking here is that Mori's muteness is more powerful – MA)  
What?

FABIAN  
You want a stick?

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
Juicy fruit.

MORI  
You look familiar. Have we met?

FABIAN

There are many men like me.

MORI

...Different shoes.

FABIAN

What?

MORI

Your shoes...they're not the same...

FABIAN

I wear sandals. It's hot.

MORI

I don't like sandals. I get blisters on my feet.

FABIAN

How unfortunate.

MORI

Yeah.

FABIAN

You sure you don't -?

MORI

No. That's all right. I like gum later.

FABIAN

After food?

MORI

After sex.

FABIAN

...Like a cigarette?

MORI

Yeah.

FABIAN

I prefer a cigarette.

MORI

I'm trying to quit.

FABIAN

Why?

MORI  
Lungs. Not good for you, right?

FABIAN  
Kills.

MORI  
*[part of the façade]* Yeah. My dad, he died from it, cancer in the lungs. He smoked a lot. He smoked like five packs a day, but he didn't know, right? Cause the cigarettes were cheap. Cheaper than eats, than real food from the earth. I mean, cigarettes are from the earth, the tobacco is, but it's bad for you, right? It ruins you. I never liked him smoking. He stunk all the time. He was full of shadow. He had this red overcoat he would wear. Red overcoat and yellow face with yellow teeth. That was dad.

FABIAN  
You remember things.

MORI  
Dad, yeah, my *papi*, yeah. He was blood.

FABIAN  
You sure you don't want- ?

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
...I like gum. It's a limited pleasure. You put it in your mouth, you chew, you wear it out, and then you toss it. It requires nothing of you.

MORI  
It kills appetite.

FABIAN  
It fuels it.

MORI  
Since when?

FABIAN  
Long time.

MORI  
... Where'd you get that?

FABIAN  
The tie?

MORI  
No, the other...

FABIAN

It's a pin. A Celtic dragon. My wife gave it to me.

MORI

Oh.

FABIAN

You didn't think?

MORI

What?

FABIAN

You didn't think I was married?

MORI

I don't think anything. I'm just here, right? I walk around, do stuff, go to the cybercafe.

FABIAN

You surf?

MORI

It takes too much time.

FABIAN

There are some sites I could recommend.

Travel and leisure. Education and sports. There are all kinds of options in life.

MORI

I eat fake food and pretend it's good. I hope the blank messages sent to my brain will stop. But they don't, right? They just keep going like sharks and shopping lists and cellphones and pigeons I try to scare off. There are so many damn pigeons. Where do they come from? They're mutants. They eat everything. Mceverything. They get fat. I watch them. I make them bleed. I take their skinny little breasts in my hands and suck them dry. You think I'm innocent? You think I have that kind of face? An innocent face? Screw you.

FABIAN

How much do you want?

MORI

Juicy fruit...

FABIAN

How much?

MORI

What?

FABIAN

In what language do you want me to speak?

*[French] Combien voulez-vous?*

*{German} Wieviel wunschen Sie?*  
*[Italian] Quanto desiderate?*  
*[Chinese] ...*  
*[Spanish] Cuanto deseas?*  
How much do you want, my friend?

MORI  
However much you'll give me.

FABIAN  
You are innocent.

MORI  
Screw you.

FABIAN  
...What's your name?

MORI  
What do you care? I rim you and we're done with. This ain't no relationship we're going to set up house and have kids and watch TV.

FABIAN  
I'm Fabian.

MORI  
You're Spanish?

FABIAN  
It doesn't matter where I'm from.

MORI  
You say your name like a Spaniard, like an Iberian...whatsit: "Fabian."

FABIAN  
I say it how I was taught.

MORI  
King Fabian went to the island,  
King Fabian burnt his tongue  
King Fabian let the cord move between his legs  
All night long  
King Fabian wanted to be a puppet  
in Hansel and Gretal's show  
King Fabian was tied up with strings  
And given a starring role.  
King Fabian wept and wept,  
Until he could weep no more.  
King Fabian stopped being a king  
And let his puppet face glow  
At night the children shunt him



By day the children laughed  
At the sight of poor Fabian  
Undone by the acrobat.  
Poor Fabian, poor Fabian  
Such a tale of woe  
If only Fabian had relinquished his throne  
He would still be standing  
He would still be free  
Instead of being a silly puppet  
With a cord between his knees.  
Poor Fabian, poor Fabian.  
Such a tale of woe.

FABIAN  
Where'd you learn that?

MORI  
Grade school.

FABIAN  
You made it up.

MORI  
I make everything up. I'm Mori.

FABIAN  
Mori?

MORI  
Yeah. You don't like it? Call me something else.

FABIAN  
Mori's fine.

### **10: Maura bereft of Mori**

MAURA  
Like smoke like a vacant moon he's gone for hours days endless time where where where and why has he gone without telling me, without a sign; It's not right; it's screwed-up alien abduction shit and he's going to pay okay? He is going to pay for this leaving me alone, cause I won't stand for it, I'm not one of those chicks that takes everything without asking, without question, not me. He's wrong about that. He wants to leave me? Fine. Leave, but don't come back. You hear me? I don't want to see you ever again loosy-goosy crybaby. I hope you rot. I hope you drown. I hope you're holed up in some well... I got wallets this time, Euro-man wallets and real live cash, my friend, and none of it is for you. You got that? Not a bit.

### **11: In the dark after sex spent**

MORI  
Angel honey baby.

FABIAN  
Sweet words to one who will listen

MORI  
Give me more

FABIAN  
Why should I?

MORI  
Cause I'm your Mori.

FABIAN  
You have a weak tongue.

MORI  
I drink and lick and spit and bite.

FABIAN  
Yeah.

MORI  
All for you.

FABIAN  
And what will that get you?

MORI  
Tokens for the arcade, a ride on the super-ski, a shoot-out in the cyber gun parade.

FABIAN  
Is that what you want?

MORI  
Sure.

FABIAN  
You act like a boy.

MORI  
Does that mess you up, upset your equilibrium?

FABIAN  
It does nothing for me.

*Fabian moves away.*

MORI  
Hey where are you- ? We've barely got going.

FABIAN  
You have a weak tongue, Mori.

MORI  
What are you talking about?

FABIAN  
... Who's Maura?

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Maura?

MORI  
She's no one.

FABIAN  
Is that right?

MORI  
Yeah.

FABIAN  
You screw me but you call out her name.

MORI  
Angel honey, I got a lot of names in my head, baby.

FABIAN  
Don't.

MORI  
She's no one, all right? I swear.

FABIAN  
You swear?

MORI  
She's nothing. She's no one. No one at all.

FABIAN  
... You drink and sleep, and come. That's all you do.

MORI  
I'm what you want, baby.

FABIAN  
You're cheap and you cling like a rotten thing.

MORI  
You love it. *I know you.*

FABIAN  
Do you?

MORI  
I am right inside, *papi*. What do you want, baby? What do you need?  
You want to screw all night? I can do it. Try me.

*Mori and Fabian begin to make love, then Fabian stops.*

FABIAN  
This is over.

MORI  
Hey. *Don't do that.* We have an arrangement, no?  
*Fabian gags Mori.*

FABIAN  
Sleep, Mori. Let the whole world converge in your body and make ribbons inside you like a blood labyrinth.

*And Fabian cuts Mori with a hidden knife.*

## **12: While the cowboy of the islands hits the air**

HILTON  
We interrupt, we interrupt this program  
To report an "incident in the Occident:"  
In the broken alphabet of the spanking west  
The capture and torture of dissidents  
Is now allowed.

Rules change,  
gravity shifts  
And we are riding another wave now.

If you think things will change  
Nothing will change.  
That's the beauty of the Babel in which we live.  
That's the killer of living in Troy,  
as in the Troy who fell, and haunts us all.

In this miraculous Babylonia  
Where miracles are what we count on now  
trafficking bodies is part of the traffic we'll allow.

Hear my shout,  
cowboys of the mini-isles,  
Because the islands are vanishing in the Equi-tow  
(in the toe of the liquid equator)

And He says "Okay!"  
Huh?  
"Okay!"  
And we listen,  
And bow.

**13: Maura and Mori re-kick in slow time.....**  
**at the arcade, which used to be a bullring...**  
*This begins as a wary, tentative reunion*

MORI  
In the speed shoot rush of the simulator surf

MAURA  
And the Alpine Ski?

MORI  
And the fooseball?

MAURA  
and blitzkrieg redux  
And fighting off aliens and ghouls all night

MORI  
Through the screen

MAURA  
And popping tokens in

MORI  
One after the other

MAURA  
Nonstop

MORI  
No stop here. Just go.

MAURA  
We shoot to kill

MORI  
Against the promise of pinball

MAURA  
Old ancient in the corner waiting to be revived

MORI  
We hack into all kinds of people's junk

MAURA  
Drinking on the cheap

MORI  
Hitting the slots  
Raving to the beat coming out of the disco speakers

MAURA  
Lousy tin sounding but loud

MORI  
Loud

MAURA  
And getting louder

MORI  
Until we can't hear ourselves think

MAURA  
Or speak

MORI  
Just move

MAURA  
And communicate with signs

*They dance.*

Hey

MORI  
What?

MAURA  
yeah

MORI  
Okay

MAURA  
Uh huh

MORI  
Like radical geniuses we are

MAURA  
...Tough moody and bad-ass

MORI  
We think of nothing but

MAURA  
Ourselves

MORI  
And the orbit

MAURA  
Our orbit  
Hold on world

MORI  
Hold on.....

*And they are in sync.*

MAURA  
With *sangria* in our blood

MORI  
Bleeding binary code

MAURA  
Arcade hardware in our veins

MORI  
Kick the slot

MAURA  
Kick everything

MORI  
Smash the screen with your hard fist

MAURA  
And never come down

MORI  
From this

MAURA  
From this

MORI  
High.

MAURA  
Delicious.

MORI  
Delirious

MAURA  
Mach ten.

MORI  
Mach twenty.

MAURA  
Mach maximum we rage and spin  
Against the bankers and rodeo riders in our midst  
Who walk with fear in their bellies  
And old songs caught in their throats

MORI  
We bury the old.

MAURA  
We squash it  
Cause it's all cut-and paste now

MORI  
Hacking

MAURA  
Stealing

MORI  
Mixing things up in the smog-choked city

MAURA  
The silver city of stores where people buy nothing

MORI  
Because no one can afford anything

MAURA  
But themselves:

MORI  
Human traffic.

MAURA  
Trafficking in flesh, meat, and salsa.  
Hold on world.

MORI  
World.  
Hold on.....

MAURA  
Until we can't hold.

MORI  
Until we can't spin

MAURA  
Until we hate each other with so much passion



MORI  
That we burn each other up.

MAURA  
Crash-monsters.

MORI  
Freaks of the millennial wave.

MAURA  
Kill me, *sangron*. Do me in.

MORI  
Disturbed I salivate and contemplate your extinction

MAURA  
And I yours.

MORI  
With pleasure.

MAURA  
With what we're made of:

MORI  
Junk skunk punk fury and misplaced velocity for a slow city

MAURA  
Hit the slot.

MORI  
Bang the token

MAURA  
Eliminate me.

MORI  
With pleasure.

MAURA  
Eliminate me.

MORI  
Yes.

MAURA  
And we're inside each other like beasts

MORI  
Monsters.

MAURA  
Ready to rip

MORI  
See through me.

MAURA  
Blue wrap inner soul gimme

MORI  
Skin

MAURA  
Gimme

MORI  
Marlboro-Inca [pastiche](#)

MAURA  
nicotine cheap, you are.

MORI  
I come as I am.

MAURA  
Romper stomper

MORI  
Arcade headliner.

MAURA  
Yeah.

MORI  
Yeah.

MAURA  
Yeah.

MORI  
And I'm through with you.

MAURA  
And I'm through...

MORI  
Hold on world.

MAURA  
Hold on.....  
Don't leave me again.

MORI  
Never.

MAURA  
You left and I was

MORI  
Through. Yes.

MAURA  
Pledge yourself to me

MORI  
I pledge

MAURA  
To love

MORI  
I will

MAURA  
Kill

MORI  
If you wish me.

MAURA  
Burn

MORI  
Every part of me  
Every part of you

MAURA  
And lose yourself  
Into me

MORI  
Yes.

MAURA  
And cut

MORI  
Razor fine.

MAURA  
Blood on blood. Cut me.

MORI  
Now?

MAURA  
We cut each other, our blood is one. Come on. Come on.

MORI  
Hold on.  
Hold.....

MAURA  
And never leave.

MORI  
I won't

MAURA  
Not now, not ever.

MORI  
I won't.

MAURA  
Swear.  
Swear.  
Mori.

MORI  
...  
And then in the cowboy funk scratching my brain...  
There's Kiki.  
What are you doing Kiki?

KIKI  
Just kicking. You know me.

MAURA  
Not you. Not ever.

MORI  
Where's the Milan guy?

KIKI  
Out.

MORI  
Did you give him a full frontal?

KIKI  
He got some bebop feng shui, honey.

MAURA

Then why are you here? You should be in the chandelier room up at the Plaza-rific.

KIKI

Habit, honey.

MAURA

*Ritmo de lo habitual?*

KIKI

Yeah.

MAURA

This fetid bullring ain't your style.

KIKI

How do you know?

MAURA

I know everything. I'm Maura, remember?

KIKI

You are one dilated snarl.

MAURA

What of it?

KIKI

And Mori's out.

MORI

I'm not.

KIKI

You look it.

MORI

I'm speed racer, right? I'm not drinking Inca cola and farting crap.

KIKI

But where you've been, eh?

MORI

Here.

KIKI

Not here.

MORI

Making coin. What of it?

MAURA

He's through with that now.

KIKI

How do you know?

MAURA

We've pledged to each other. Never to leave each other again.

KIKI

Is that so? How very Romeo and Juliet.

MORI

Tristan and Isolde.

KIKI

You'd die for each other, eh?

MAURA

We'd do anything.

KIKI

The troops are out. On the street.

You shouldn't be here.

MAURA

We're from here. Not from some other where, but here. Right here.

KIKI

It's not safe right now. That's all. No one's...

...Music's gone down.

MORI

Speakers are crap. Music comes and goes. You want to race a bit?

KIKI

I don't game.

MAURA

You're too good or something?

KIKI

Yes.

MAURA

Then scoot, stop cramping me. Mori and I are going for an all-nighter.

KIKI

And then what?

MORI

And then another and another. We're making up, right? We're pledging our love.

KIKI

You should keep up with the news.

MORI

What for? Nothing's true anymore.

KIKI

Rules are changing. You can't trust anyone. Can't trust what you see.

MORI

I never have. Never will.

MAURA

Except me.

MORI

Yeah.

KIKI

The troops will shoot through here, and won't stop. They don't believe in mercy.

MAURA

Let them. We'll take them on. We'll take everybody on. Bring out the knives. Come on. We'll show everyone what we're made of. How many people died here in the last twenty, thirty years? Nobody cares. It's just us, right? Getting by. They want our flesh? Come get it.

KIKI

You're crazy.

MAURA

I'm through and through. Not like you. A little snitch. Isn't that what you are?

KIKI

What'd you mean?

MAURA

Fine powder, the latest news... you are plugged in, aren't you? You are wired to the capitol. Are you turning us in, eh? Is that what this is? You're leading a squad here to tear down this place?

MORI

Kiki wouldn't do that.

MAURA

You don't know anything.

KIKI

I should go.

MAURA  
Why?

KIKI  
I told you. I don't game.

MAURA  
You stay. You got that? You stay here, you snitch.

KIKI  
I'm stronger than you, honey. Don't mess with me.

MAURA  
What are you going to do?

*And Kiki tears into Maura with force while Mori tries to intercede. This is a fight of vengeance shot through with the sounds of the Old West distorted by Japanese anime.*

*Kiki and Maura duel, but Kiki is stronger.*

*As Kiki begins to choke Maura, Mori intercedes.*

*Kiki takes Mori on. The music grows louder now from the old speakers.*

*Kiki begins to pummel Mori. The electricity goes out in the swirling arcade.*

*And then slowly flares light up the sky.*

*And we see Mori in Maura's arms. His eyes are closed.*

*Nothing else. No one else for a long time.*

## **Part Two**

### **14: In daylight Mori sleeps outside; the tourist now in another guise interrogates Mori**

FABIAN  
Name?

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Papers?

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Where are you from?

MORI  
I don't know.

FABIAN  
Get up.



MORI  
What?

FABIAN (he kicks Mori)  
Come on.

MORI  
Don't kick me.

FABIAN  
Sleeping is not allowed.

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Sleeping is prohibited.

MORI  
What are you talking about?

FABIAN  
Rules.

MORI  
What rules?

FABIAN  
Read the sign.

MORI  
... When'd that get there?

FABIAN  
When you weren't looking.

MORI  
Hell.

FABIAN  
No language.

MORI  
Who the hell - ?

*Fabian strikes Mori.*

FABIAN  
Name.

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Papers. No papers?

MORI  
I'm getting them.

FABIAN  
Where are you from?

MORI  
Here.

FABIAN  
Refugee?

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
Asylum?

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Is that why you're here? For asylum?

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
Stand straight.

MORI  
Do I know you?

FABIAN  
Keep your spine straight.

MORI  
I know you. Your voice is familiar.

FABIAN  
Straight.

MORI  
Hey, come on, baby-

*Fabian strikes Mori.*

FABIAN  
Don't initiate. Only what I ask. Understand?

MORI  
... Yes.

FABIAN  
Where are you from?  
What's your language?  
Papers?  
Name?  
...  
Repeat after me. A.

MORI  
A.

FABIAN  
Ass.

MORI  
Ass.

*Fabian strikes Mori*

FABIAN  
No language. Rules.  
B. Repeat.

MORI  
B.

FABIAN  
Bullcrap.

MORI  
What?

FABIAN  
Repeat.

MORI  
Bullcrap.

*Fabian strikes Mori.*

FABIAN  
C. Repeat. Repeat.

MORI  
...No...

*Fabian strikes Mori*

FABIAN  
Repeat.

MORI  
...I won't...

FABIAN  
Foreigner?

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
Where are you from? Where are you from?  
Repeat.

MORI  
Where are you from?

*Fabian strikes Mori*

FABIAN  
Word only. Word C. Repeat.

...  
No memory?

MORI  
...Yes.

FABIAN  
Here is a list of what you want. Read.  
Can you read?

MORI  
Yes.

FABIAN  
...Out loud.

MORI  
I want...

FABIAN  
Louder.

MORI  
I want to die.

FABIAN  
...Continue.

MORI  
I want to regret.

FABIAN  
Louder.

MORI  
I want to change

FABIAN  
Louder.

MORI  
I want to leave.  
I want to hate.  
I want to cry.  
I want to forget.

FABIAN  
Repeat. Louder.

MORI  
I want to forget.

FABIAN  
...Sign.

*Fabian strikes Mori.*

Sign. Now.

*Mori pisses on the piece of paper.*

MORI  
There.

FABIAN  
Lick it. Lick your signature.

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
You refuse?

MORI  
...I refuse **everything**.

FABIAN  
...You are number 015125.  
You will answer to this number and this number only.  
You are now a female, understand? A girl. No trace.

MORI  
What?

FABIAN

You have no memory.

*Fabian blindfolds Mori, and drags him away.*

**15: Hilton croons a country *bolero* like a true cowboy  
against the radio static**

**“Goodbye song”**

HILTON

*[sings]* “Today I know you left me  
Today I wave goodbye  
How sad, how cruel, how lonely  
Is life on this isle.  
Oh please say you will remember  
That once I passed you by  
In favor of a stranger  
Who had danger in his eyes  
In favor of a lover,  
In whose eyes I admired mine.”

*[spoken]* And this is *radio Dos Equis* saying good night  
On this long night turned day  
There is silence on the street  
After yesterday’s riots.  
No one was left standing at the factory, at the arcade,  
at the old radio museum...  
There is only silence now.  
Limited freedom.  
And tequila ice cubes on our tongues  
To make us slowly  
dis-remember.

**16. Kiki and Maura see each other**

KIKI

No Mori?

MAURA

Don’t talk to me.

KIKI

I’m sorry.

MAURA

No words.

KIKI

I’m sorry.

MAURA  
What?

KIKI  
Bruises. The fight... before. I didn't mean -

MAURA  
Screw it. It's over. It's all over.  
We were sleeping. He was sleeping. We were quiet. Perfect citizens, right?  
No sound, no mess. Just sleep, being close. Close tight with each other.  
I got up. I was awake. I was coming down from all... mess in my head,  
heart pumping, pulse going, weird coming down. I needed to walk about.  
Streets empty. Yeah. People hiding. Sound of gun-shots every once in a while. Dead dogs,  
whacked-out canaries... zoo, right? Like a death zoo.

And I'm walking. Not far. Just to move. I need to move my legs.  
I need to get about. I think "I'll be back in a sec, Mori."  
But I get lost. That's the truth. I couldn't remember what street I was on. Everything was too  
quiet. I was spooked. didn't know myself.  
I couldn't even move. Like everything was caving in.  
Piece of trash in my stomach. Ache, right? Like mad.  
fake bits of food sticking in me.  
I feel like gagging. Like vomiting up everything. But I can't.  
I don't know where I am.  
Red shutters on a door of a building. There's a sign up. It says "Sunday House." I'm thinking  
"church, right?" But it's not. It's an ice-cream place.  
They've spelt the word wrong. They don't know the language right.  
One scoop for a dollar. I get close. And then the street turns.  
I swear it just turned. And I could see the sea,  
and a pelican nibbling on a discarded CD.  
The pelican was looking for some nourishment.  
All the real food here goes elsewhere. Goes up and out. Export.  
Even gunk, the good gunk, the fine effing blow goes elsewhere.  
And I'm staring at the picture of an ice cream sundae.  
And I suddenly know where I am. I'm next street over.  
Near the *bodega*, and the tourist trap hotel, and the seashell place.  
And I think "Mori, I'll be right there."  
And I'm quick heart-stopping running to where I left him,  
to where we lay, and he's gone. No trace.

KIKI  
He'll appear.

MAURA  
I've been here. I've been waiting. I've looked everywhere. I've checked everything. I sit. I wait.  
He's run off or something, and I'm what?

KIKI  
...I thought I saw him.

MAURA

When?

KIKI

With a guy.

MAURA

What guy?

KIKI

I don't know. It might not have been him.

MAURA

Don't do that. Don't go silent on me, Kiki. Come on, snitch. Spill.

KIKI

Look, honey, I'm not good at details. He was with a guy. That's all I know. They exchanged something.

MAURA

What?

KIKI

Papers.

MAURA

What kind of papers?

KIKI

I don't know.

MAURA

Newspapers?

KIKI

No. Smaller. Like at the doctor's, you know.

MAURA

Prescription?

KIKI

Yeah. Yeah, honey. Prescription. Must have been. And then they walked away.

MAURA

Don't lie to me. You lie to me, I'll kill you.

KIKI

You really love him, eh?

MAURA

He's my life.



KIKI

No one should be your life.

MAURA

Well, he is. He's always has been.

KIKI

Was this before or after you came from Vayazul?

MAURA

Vayazul, *agua azul*, what the crap is it to you? Mori and I are mates. We're like blood. We speak the same language. He's my life, yeah. Now, which way did they go?

KIKI

This way I think.

MAURA

You're sure?

KIKI

Towards the old hospital, towards the sea.

MAURA

Here.

KIKI

What's this?

MAURA

Euro-wallet.

KIKI

What about you? Hey, Maura. Crazy girl...

*Kiki is left with the wallet. Maura runs away.*

### **17: As Mori writes a letter to Maura in silence**

MORI

They stole my tongue, Maura.

They took it just like that,

and I didn't even have a chance to...

I hear things. I smell things. Salt and piss.

I hear waves. I must be near the sea.

They took me, Maura.

They stole my name. They took it from me. Just like that.

They took my sex, too.

They say I'm a girl. They want me to believe this.

I have to act like one. For them. For people that seem so familiar,

And yet I don't know where they're from.

Lights out. All dark.

Sometimes the light never comes... not for days.  
I hear waves and think of the sea.  
Some people say in dreams things get taken from you.  
But I don't sleep. I never sleep. My eyes are pressed open now.  
And there are no dreams.

I miss my tongue, Maura.  
I miss the virtual jet-ski.  
I miss standing in front of the deep peep and screwing for eternity.  
I hear you, Maura. I hear you cursing at the sea.  
I want to die.  
I want to regret.  
I want to change.  
I want to leave.  
I want to hate.  
I want to cry.  
I want to dream.

*The night falls in waves. The earth shifts.  
The arcade is far away and Maura picks up a voice in the air. It is Mori's voice. The cowboy of  
the islands, of the airwaves, sleeps, As Maura makes her way through the brush, while Kiki sings  
an old song to anyone who will listen.*

### **“A city by the sea”**

KIKI  
There's a city on the ocean.  
Give me another drink and you'll see.  
Silent waves are breaking  
Everything will be released.  
Go on, fish, sleep.  
Go on, fish, dream.

There's a city on the ocean.  
Give me another drink and you'll see.  
Quiet waves are breaking.  
Everything will be released.  
Go on, fish, sleep.  
Go on, fish, dream

Go on, fish, sleep.  
Go on -

*A single loud military sound cuts off the song, followed by a long silence.*

### **18: In simultaneous frames**

HILTON (on the radio)  
All is quiet

We are happy

FABIAN'S VOICE  
Number 015125

We are stabilized  
The alphabet gleams  
It is bankrupt.

Report to room twenty  
For lesson one hundred and three

It is complete.

MORI'S VOICE  
Number 015125 reporting.

*Mori appears in the empty room. He wears dress and heels. No makeup.*

Our language is one of perfect  
Equilibrium.

FABIAN'S VOICE  
Move now. Move like a girl.

*Mori moves across the room as a girl would.*

No more *malas noches*  
No more waking at four a.m.  
To strange sounds.

More feminine, please.  
And dance.

*An instrumental riff of "Go on, fish, sleep" from song "A city by the sea."*

Everything is normal now.  
We move in unison.

*An instrumental riff of "Go on, fish, dream" from song "A city by the sea."*

All difference  
Is erased.

The city lifts its smog  
To welcome piracy of all kinds  
Branded goods are produced  
In mass quantities  
More than before. More than ever.  
We allow our language to be owned  
To be protected  
To be copyrighted.  
This is how we live after Babel,  
After Dante  
After the sleek angels of history  
Have let down their guard.  
Hold on, world.

More movement  
In the hips. Yes.  
And keep dancing.  
Wilder. Yes.  
Like a hungry girl.  
Like a starving girl.  
Full of lust and desire.  
Feel your breasts.  
Feel your thighs.  
Between your thighs.  
Gyrate. Thrust your pelvis.  
Improvise. Like a girl.

Hold on.

Always.

### **18a) after the simultaneous frames, it's just the room**

FABIAN'S VOICE  
...And strip.

*Mori pauses.*

Like a girl.  
You must strip.

...  
Number 015125, are you listening to me?

MORI  
Yes.

FABIAN'S VOICE  
No words, please. Just the body. Just a sign.  
And strip.

*Mori begins to strip.*

Slowly. Slowly. Like a girl. Very shy. Very modest.  
A virtuous girl filled with shame.  
That's right.

*As Mori strips very slowly, Maura is seen in another place. She is transforming herself into a boy. Mori speaks to Maura as if he can see her.*

MORI  
Maura? What are you doing?

MAURA  
Shh... Don't tell.

MORI  
*Are you changing yourself for me?*

MAURA  
I'm heading to the country, to the open fields. Do you see me?

MORI  
Maura?

FABIAN'S VOICE  
No words. No voice. Just a body, please.

MORI  
I am a girl now. *That's what they tell me.* I am a number.  
I am shut out *inside this place.*  
I am disappeared.  
*Find me.*

FABIAN'S VOICE  
Quiet.

MORI

I am a criminal. I am a number. [Find me.](#)

FABIAN'S VOICE

Quiet.

MORI

Maura?

[MAURA](#)

[I will.](#)

FABIAN'S VOICE

Silence!

*Mori is naked. Maura is now disguised, transformed.  
Fabian appears in his other guise.*

FABIAN

Number 015125, you have failed lesson one hundred and three.

Open your mouth, please.

Leave it open.

Do not cover yourself.

Do not try to leave.

*In the distance, Maura runs away.*

MORI

Maura?

FABIAN

Number 015125. Are you number 015125?

MORI

Yes.

FABIAN

Repeat.

MORI

015125.

FABIAN

Your crimes?

MORI

None.

FABIAN  
Crimes against state and nature. Repeat.

MORI  
No.

FABIAN  
Crimes against state and nature.

MORI  
No. No. No.  
...

FABIAN  
Lie down please.  
Lie down.  
And mouth open. Wide.  
Keep open.

*Fabian kicks Mori in the mouth..*

### **19: Kiki calls to a passer-by**

KIKI  
Everybody is leaving.  
They hide or escape or throw themselves to the sea.  
Except me.  
I don't leave. I like the city.  
Honey, come closer. Be rough. Come on. I can take.  
My body can take anything.  
You're sweet. You're candy. Eh?  
You buy me some toothpaste, honey?  
You buy me some gum?  
Toilet paper, condoms, some ecstasy?  
I can take. I take everything.  
I stock up now. Cause there's nothing.  
You hear me?  
Don't leave.  
I'll be your baby. I will. I'll be soft and tender and sweet.  
Rub me. Yeah. I won't bite. You see?  
I'm Kiki. I'm Gloria. I'm everything.  
And when the guards come in the name of freedom,  
and they'll come, cause they always do  
In this *carajo* country  
I won't say anything. I'll be a good quiet one.  
I keep the best secrets.  
You see that old hospital over there out by the fields?

It hasn't been a hospital in years.  
You don't believe me?  
Believe what you want. What does it matter, eh?  
We'll all be dead soon.

**20: Maura in disguise asks a man from the fields about Mori**

FRANKIE  
*Aqui no hay nadie.*

MAURA  
Speak English.

FRANKIE  
No one here. Who you look for?

MAURA  
My brother.

FRANKIE  
Is he lost?

MAURA  
He told me he'd be here.

FRANKIE  
*Que chulo.*

MAURA  
Quit.

FRANKIE  
You don't like my hands, boy?

MAURA  
Did you see him or not?

FRANKIE  
That's not how you find someone. By asking just like that.  
*He walks away from her.*

MAURA  
How then?

FRANKIE  
...See? You need me.

MAURA  
I don't need anyone.

FRANKIE  
Don't be a *tirano*.

MAURA  
Speak English.

FRANKIE  
Why?

MAURA  
I don't want to hear anything else.

FRANKIE  
What kind of English do you want me to speak? [There are so many kinds.](#)

MAURA  
Speak what I can understand, *cabron*.

FRANKIE  
You speak Spanish, eh?

MAURA  
[I speak words.](#) Where is he?

FRANKIE  
You are too direct. You will never find him with such directness.

MAURA  
I came all the way out here, didn't I? [I found my way here.](#)

FRANKIE  
[You have strong belief.](#)

MAURA  
Yes.

FRANKIE  
He is your brother?

MAURA  
Yes.



*He walks away from her.*

He's my lover.

FRANKIE  
One boy to another?

MAURA  
Yes.

FRANKIE  
I sensed this.

MAURA  
You get no brownie points from me.

FRANKIE  
What is that? Brownie points? What is that, eh?

MAURA  
An expression.

FRANKIE  
What does it mean, boy?

MAURA  
It's an American expression.

FRANKIE  
Is it a good thing?

MAURA  
I think so.

FRANKIE  
Okay. ...And you, you're not American?

MAURA  
I'm nothing.

FRANKIE  
No one's nothing.

MAURA  
I am nothing. I am a mutt.  
No breeding. No stock. No line. Nothing. There's no geography to me.

FRANKIE

*Que pena.*

MAURA

Speak English.

FRANKIE

A shame for you to be nothing, to feel nothing. Except for him? You feel for him?

MAURA

Have you seen him?

FRANKIE

I could have seen something. This photo you show me is not very good.

MAURA

It's from a booth.

FRANKIE

What's that?

MAURA

You go in, you get your photo taken, it comes out of the machine.

FRANKIE

A city thing?

MAURA

An American thing.

FRANKIE

Well, it's not a good photo. But you know him a long time, yes?

MAURA

Long enough.

FRANKIE

I have a romantic nature. I do. I understand these things. Wanting to see the lover, wanting to possess the beloved. But if he leaves of his own accord, there is nothing you can do. No one to find where there's no one. You see? The hospital is abandoned. There hasn't been anyone there for years.

MAURA

How do you know?

FRANKIE

I live here. I was born here and I'll die here. I know things. I'm witness.

MAURA

To what?

FRANKIE

To time passing. Nothing else. You have *papeles*?

MAURA

Speak English.

FRANKIE

Papers?!

MAURA

I have ID. Yeah.

FRANKIE

Let's see.

MAURA

Is this what you do?

FRANKIE

I guard this road. Yes. That is my job. That is one of my jobs.

MAURA

What's the other?

FRANKIE

I move things from one place to the next. I move markers, burial places. I establish order. I do not question. I just act, do. I keep things where they need to be, where they should be. I could help you. I am tender-hearted. Don't I look tender-hearted?

MAURA

You look how you look.

FRANKIE

And you look how you want.

MAURA

What do you mean?

FRANKIE

Are you a boy?

MAURA  
Yes.

FRANKIE  
For how long?

MAURA  
Since the day I was born.

FRANKIE  
Punch me.

MAURA  
What for?

FRANKIE  
I want you to.

*She punches him.*

Harder.

*She punches him again.*

You have strength.

MAURA  
I box.

FRANKIE  
In a ring?

MAURA  
Outside in the park, on the street...

FRANKIE  
You're a sweet boy. Is this your ID?

MAURA  
It's legal.

FRANKIE  
Mauro? That's your name?

MAURA  
Yes.

FRANKIE  
Unusual.

MAURA  
It's not common.

FRANKIE  
I'm Frankie. I'm very common.

MAURA  
You through with my ID?

FRANKIE  
It's nothing to me. Call yourself what you like. Mauro's as good a name as any.

MAURA  
You don't believe me? I have a tattoo.

FRANKIE  
No need to show. I believe.

MAURA  
Why?

FRANKIE  
Because you want me to.

MAURA  
You're a stupid man.

FRANKIE  
And you're a sweet boy, but you know nothing. Y'hear me? There are screams, and children on fire. Sweet children walking in flames. Even here far from the city. Don't look away from me, Mauro. Keep your eyes on me, or I shoot you right now!...What does he mean to you, Mauro? What does this boy in the photo mean to you?

MAURA  
I told you.

FRANKIE  
You said he was your lover. That's not enough.

MAURA  
What do you want from me?

FRANKIE

Some feeling, Mauro. Not enough these days. Everyone is closed up, shut down, hiding, afraid, and in the end, they are taken away anyway. Understand?

MAURA

...Mori and I...

FRANKIE

Yes?

MAURA

We kick and shout...

FRANKIE

Go on.

MAURA

And dance and hang, and think of nothing and think of everything...

FRANKIE

Why you get quiet, eh? I asked for some feeling. Give.

MAURA

We go inside each other.

FRANKIE

*Asi.*

MAURA

And we drown the world and forget and dream and not dream and kick again and we don't even think about it.

FRANKIE

*Asi. Con ganas.*

MAURA

We just wiggle and waste cause there's nothing else, right? Just waking and falling back to sleep on the inside of the inside, on the flip side of ecstasy, static blinking and not thinking about another day cause it doesn't matter, nothing matters in this state. Just us. Only us. Mori and Mauro. Mauro and Mori joined at the hip no matter what... We know this. We think the same. We feel the same. He is my tongue. And I am his body. You see? We are joined. We are one being. Is that what you want? Is that what you need? Is this enough for you, mister Frankie?

*Frankie punches her.*

FRANKIE

The sky was powder gray. Full of bursts. I was ten years old. I was at an air show. Everything was loud. I wanted to be a pilot. My *papi* held me. He said "Look up, son. Don't cover your ears. Take it all in." And I did. I pointed up at each plane. I shouted. I made a scene. "Who's that little boy? Why doesn't he behave?" I didn't know what that was. I was my father's son. The fireworks happened at the end of the show. We were on the grounds. Cars were parked for miles. We sat on the hood of a car that wasn't ours and watched the greens and reds shoot up into the sky one after the other. I tried to hold my *papi's* hand, but he couldn't see me. So, we sat letting the smoke from the fireworks sting our eyes, burst upon burst. I thought "This is how it will always be between us: *Papi* looking up, caught in something, dreaming, and me, wanting a touch, a bit of acknowledgment, and never getting anything." ...I put my hand inside you. We take our time. You walk away.

MAURA

And what do I get?

FRANKIE

There's a path. I know it well. I show it to you. Out here by the sea, walls crumble slowly from the salt. The door to the old hospital is broken.

MAURA

A trade?

FRANKIE

Yes.

MAURA

Okay.

*Maura begins to undress.*

FRANKIE

What's the hurry?

MAURA

I don't have time.

### **21: Mori and Maura share a dream**

Feel my hand?

Yes.

Through the wall?

Yes.

Can you hear me?

A little.

Where are you now?

On the path.

In the dark?

Yes.

How much farther?

Your voice is funny.

So is yours. Why don't you curse at me?

I don't want to. I am a boy now.

Better yet. Better reason to.

Your voice is still funny.

My mouth is broken. This has been done to protect me, to stop me from speaking. I write words in the air. I send messages as if on a screen like in the cyber. Do you hear me?

I always hear you.

...Where's Kiki?

What do you care?

Is she with you?

Is he?

Who?

The tourist.

How do you know about him?

I know everything. We are joined, remember?



But you can't find me.

...I am closer now. I am a boy. We are the same.

You are not a boy. You never will be.

Why not?

You're not strong enough.

I am stronger than you.

You miss me.

I hold you. Yes. I reach out my hand through the wall where they hold me, where they keep me.

Can you see me?

I am blind.

No eyes? No mouth?

Everything is dark. My tongue spits Z's.

Z.

The end of the alphabet.

Crave me.

Want me.

In some countries there is no want.

In some countries there is no need...of anything.

I get hit every day. I hit everyone back. My fists break walls.

...Closer?

Yes.

I feel your breath.

In what room do they keep you?

I don't know. I can't see.

Is it because of me?

Is that why they have taken you? Because of me? Because of my family?  
Because of Vayazul and aristocracy?

They take because they take, because they can. I am a refugee.

You were born here.

Only you know this. But to them....

...You're very faint.

My voice goes. It will come back soon. You will be able to hear me.

How many miles...?

Mori?

Maura.

You are far away, far from me.

The walls tremble.

*(unison)* I punch, I kick. I will not lose faith.

In the ocean...

Yes.

There's graffiti.

What does it say?

I can't make it out.

Try.

Salt words in a salt sea.

Read them.

*[French] Une nouvelle langue,  
[Portuguese] uma lingua nova,  
[German] eine neue Sprache  
A new language*

Your voice is clear.

My accent's crap. I learned the wrong alphabet.

I want to see you close.

With blind eyes?

With every part of me.

...No need. I'm here now. Our fingers touch.

Die.

Regret.

Change.

Leave.

Hate.

Cry.

Forget.

Love.

**22: Awake in real time, Maura encounters Mori  
who has been tossed out onto a bone heap.**

MAURA  
Mori?

MORI  
015125.

MAURA  
It's me. *Remember?*

MORI  
You're a boy.

MAURA

I am pretending. But I'm not. See?

MORI

It's wrong to pretend. Lesson two: do not pretend you are anything.

MAURA

Okay.

MORI

Bones here. Dead. The dead are here. Arms and legs. Smashed skulls.  
I am dead too.

MAURA

Mori?

MORI

What a stupid name. Whose name is that? Yours?

MAURA

No. It's yours. Remember?

MORI

I am 015125. I was born in another country. I am a girl, age twenty. I am dead.  
Stop looking at me.

MAURA

You are bruised.

MORI

I have broken things inside. Outside, I have marks. I am disposable. Trash. I wait now for  
crows, gulls. For my flesh to be picked, for another number maybe.

MAURA

Come here.

MORI

You have cold hands.

MAURA

You need to get out of here.

MORI

Lesson number one thousand and two: do not leave, do not try to leave, never leave, or  
much drowning, head in bucket, pulling of limbs.

MAURA  
I'll carry you.

MORI  
Don't touch me. Please.

MAURA  
Okay.

MORI  
You speak funny.

MAURA  
I speak how I speak.

MORI  
You have an accent. Lesson five: no accents.

MAURA  
Is that what you've been taught?

MORI  
No questions. Repeat.

MAURA  
What?

MORI  
Repeat.

MAURA  
This man put his hands on me. I let him. I'd do anything. And there was another man after that, and another. All along the road. Men waiting. Men with dogs. Sad men doing their job of guarding. I walked the whole way. I became rougher and rougher outside, and more and more gentle inside. I would cry at weird times. In the middle of sex. In the middle of trade. At no hour, no anything. A tear would come. And another. And music was so distant. I thought there was a disco on one side of the road but it was just an abandoned radio playing inside an empty house stained with fresh blood. I kept walking. The last man along the road was right. There was a path. Not too far. A possible path. A visible path. I wanted to be back at the arcade. I wanted noise and lots of noise. Beeps, pops, shots, bells, mechanical cheers from a screen crowd. Reactivate. Reload. Start again.

MORI  
Beeps and pops?

MAURA

From a machine. Alpine Ski. Speed Racer. Remember?

MORI

Rush...

MAURA

Yes. Yes. Speed shoot rush. You remember.

MORI

...I listen to the sea. This leg I think was from number 017127. A young man. Very tall.  
No eyes. I listen to the sea.

MAURA

Mori?

MORI

Forget me.

MAURA

Mori?

MORI

Erase memory.

MAURA

...I'll stay here with you. Yes?

MORI

You're a strange boy.

MAURA

Yes.

MORI

We listen to the sea.

MAURA

Yes.

*Mori and Maura look at the ocean.*

**23: The cowboy's voice hits the quiet air**

HILTON

In the A, B, D and number four  
We come to you live from the capital city  
Where the new voice of freedom can be heard for miles.  
Order is in place and the electric boogaloo gives way  
To a synthetic *merengue* conveniently lifted off an old laptop.

Two pure ones  
have been found  
hard as mules  
on the sand  
against the rough sea  
they are seen  
we are told  
through a night of lucid silver.

*Kiki in view...*

KIKI

What will you do with your hands?  
What do you dream with your eyes?  
What do you look for in the dark  
when only the clickety-clip of bicycles can be heard at night?

HILTON

Two walls  
silent as a rose  
cast their double shadow  
at break of dawn.

Two pure bodies  
lean as mules  
were found  
bound to each other  
on the sand.

KIKI

Who was it?

.

Who could they have been?

HILTON

But nobody dares untie  
this Mori, this Maura  
who in one motion  
gave themselves up to the moon.

*Against the sea wall, Mori and Maura are found. They are nude. They are entwined.*

**End of play**