

Mamá Dahlia and Tia Dolores

promise, when your friend comes I say, 'hello,' 'nice to meet you,' and *(Leaving.)* 'excuse me.'

NELSON. You don't have to do anything like that, Tia. I just want things to be — normal.

DOLORES. We will be very normal. Now stop the worry. And when she comes, smile a little. You look so handsome when you smile. *(He smiles and kisses her.)*

NELSON. Okay. I'm gonna go change.

DOLORES. Oh, Nelson. I have these tickets for the raffle tonight. It's okay if later I turn the radio to listen?

NELSON. Sure. *(He starts collecting his papers. To be added if more time is needed for Dahlia's change. Suddenly concerned.)* What are they raffling?

DOLORES. A trip to Lourdes, Fatima, and Cava di Pistoia.

NELSON. Uh. You think you could keep the volume down a little?

DOLORES. Sure.

~~NELSON. Oh, and Tia — try to talk to Mami. I'd like her to be nice when Beverly gets here. *(Dahlia enters in worn-out slippers and dressing gown — and checking a TV Guide.)*~~

DAHLLIA. Never fails. Whenever you're feeling bad there's nothing good on TV. *(Nelson gives a desperate look and exits. Dahlia goes to kitchen to make herself another Hawaiian Punch and rum.)*

DOLORES. Dahlia.

DAHLLIA. Not one word about my clothes. Dressing comfortable is one of the few pleasures I have left. *(Notices something missing.)* Where's my parrot?

DOLORES. Oh. I was cleaning and didn't have time to put things back. *(Looks to Virgin as if asking for forgiveness/then returns to her tortillas.)* Ay, Dahlia. You know what is tonight? The big raffle. Remember? The trip to Lourdes, Fatima, and Cava di Pistoia. *(Beat.)* That's the little town where the Virgin is appearing right now.

DAHLLIA. *(Not listening.)* She couldn't be coming at a worse time.

DOLORES. The Virgin?

DAHLLIA. Virgin? Ha! I got news for you, Dolores. *(Pointedly,*

to Dolores.) Virgins today are a collector's item.

DOLORES. Ay, Dahlia. You don't have to worry about that. I already fix her Nelson's room, and I put his thing in my closet.

DAHLLIA. What for?

DOLORES. He can't go in the girl's room every time he needs socks.

DAHLLIA. Those two have been sharing a lot more than closets.

DOLORES. Ay, you always have to think of things like that.

DAHLLIA. Things like that are what boyfriends and girlfriends today are doing. It's when they get married that they stop doing it. *(Beat.)* And to think I saved myself for Pancho.

DOLORES. I know many girls who are not — like you say.

DAHLLIA. Name one.

DOLORES. Nicolasa's daughter. She's the engagement party I have in the oven now. And I put my hand in the fire that that girl ...

DAHLLIA. *(Cuts in.)* Nicolasa's giving a party? A big one?

DOLORES. Four-hundred meat pastelitos and two-hundred guava.

DAHLLIA. You know. *(Mind ticking.)* Nicolasa's husband always plays dominos with Pancho.

DOLORES. *(Disapprovingly.)* Dahlia.

DAHLLIA. Can't I even mention a fact? Okay, forget it. *(Dolores starts taking foil covered pyrexes from the oven.)* I guess you'll be asking me to make the delivery.

DOLORES. No.

DAHLLIA. You're going to get on a bus with six-hundred pastelitos?

DOLORES. Dahlia. I know why you want to go. And if Pancho and that woman are invited you have no right to show up and make everybody uncomfortable.

DAHLLIA. No right? Are you pushing sin, Dolores?

DOLORES. What?

DAHLLIA. Those two are living in mortal sin.

DOLORES. That is between them and God.

DAHLLIA. "For better or for worse and 'til death do us part"

End