

Nelson and Tia Dolores

FATHER. *(On radio.)* Every penny we make from this raffle, Gus, is going for the building of that footbridge.

DOLORES. Ay! El Father Fernandez! *(She turns up the volume and listens enrapt as she kneads and rolls.)*

FATHER. *(Radio.)* Our St. Agatha kids are going to get safely across that new highway. And we're not going to sit around 'til our city commissioners get their act together. *(Nelson Cruz [early 20s] enters [side door] carrying a big shopping bag. His clothes give him away as a product of a contemporary college campus. Definitely not a jock, he's still managed to get down the All-American look. But underneath a veneer of self-assurance lies a bundle of insecurities.)*

Start NELSON. She here yet?

DOLORES. No. Pero llamó del turnpike ...

NELSON. Tia. Please. Remember Beverly doesn't speak Spanish, okay?

DOLORES. Sure. Okay. *(Accented.)* Mira. She call from the Jersey turnpike and I explain her what to do.

NELSON. Good.

DOLORES. You know, Nelson. She talks funny. *(Nelson gives her a look, then sets the bag on the counter and rushes around hiding kitschy nicknacks [such as porcelain Flamenco dancers and a "Cage Planter" with kissing birds] and hiding them inside the end tables and coffee table. Dolores turns back to her radio.)*

EMCEE. *(Radio.)* Thank you for being here, Father. This is Guz Gonzalez reminding all of you to be with us tonight when WPRC, the hot Latin one, brings you St. Agatha's big raffle drawing. And now for the weekend weather. *(Background Salsa music.)*

WEATHERMAN. *(Radio.)* Increasing cloudiness this evening with scattered afternoon thundershowers forecast for Saturday. And for all you boaters out there ... *(Dolores turns off radio. Nelson quickly hides another item.)*

NELSON. Guess there goes the beach tomorrow.

DOLORES. *(Noticing shopping bag.)* Nelson! *(He jumps, thinking she's caught him.)* You didn't need to buy any food.

NELSON. Oh. I just thought I'd play it safe. *(Intrigued, Dolores takes out two giant bags of potato chips.)* Bev's a muncher.

DOLORES. Well, I fix your room all nice and pretty for her. And when you go to sleep tonight — I fix the sofa for you.

NELSON. Thanks. I can do that.

DOLORES. No, no. You work very hard with your college exams. Here you relax. *(Nelson goes to kiss her and sees the mountain of dough.)*

NELSON. *(Worried.)* Is that dinner?

DOLORES. Oh, no. I made something 'especial' for your friend. This is an order for Mr. Weinberger. You know, the man I cook the parties for. He's doing Mexican Night at the Sons of Sicily Club. One thousand tortillas.

NELSON. A thousand tortillas? *(Not pleased.)* We don't eat tortillas. You never made one in your life.

DOLORES. I know. I thought one could get them from the A&P. But not Mr. Weinberger. He thinks if your name is Dolores Cantú you can make tortillas. When he call I was going to say no, but then I say to myself, Dolores, if God send this man to you maybe he has a reason he want you to make tortillas. *(Continues kneading.)*

NELSON. *(Pointing to dough.)* Tia. You think maybe 'til after she gets here we could, uh ...

DOLORES. Ay, Nelson. I know it isn't very pretty. But what can I do? I have seven-hundred and twenty-three more tortillas to make. *(She checks tally pad. Discouraged, Nelson looks for any other last minute improvement he can make on the decor. He takes the votive light by the Virgin and tries to sneak it away.)* Oh. We got a beautiful postcard from your brother. *(She goes to show him. He hides the candle behind him.)*

NELSON. Yeah?

DOLORES. He's in Mexico.

NELSON. *(Pleased.)* That far? *(Then seeing card.)* Tia. South of the Border is some tourist joint in South Carolina. **End**

~~DOLORES. Well, Eddy says it's beautiful. Ay, ese muchacho! Always traveling. Always making money. You know, I may be traveling very soon too. This raffle tonight ... *(She catches Nelson blowing out the votive light.)* ¿Que haces?~~

~~NELSON. It, uh, was almost burnt out.~~

~~DOLORES. Ay. And I think that was the last one. *(Dolores puts*~~