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My Daughter and Me



A 10-minute play by
Floyd Stephen Alexander

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

1F / 1M

MAGDALENA VAZQUEZ; *a teenager who had her coming out party two weeks earlier*

AITOR VAZQUEZ; *her father*

SETTING

Outside a small stucco-style house on some prairie land in Mexico

My Daughter and Me

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SETTING: *Outside a small stucco-style house on some prairie land in Mexico.*

AT RISE: *AITOR VAZQUEZ is in his front yard checking on the pig that is cooking in a buried charcoal pit. His daughter, MAGDALENA VAZQUEZ, comes from the house with two bottles of beer in her hand.*

MAGDALENA

Papa, here's your beer.

AITOR

Thank you, Gida.

MAGDALENA

I could be 25 or 30 years old, or even as old as abuela, and you'd still be calling me "Gida". "Magdalena", Papa, please.

AITOR

"Gida" is too young for you now. A baby's name for a woman I see. Is that cerveza in your hand a reminder to me that you are grown?

MAGDALENA

I had my coming out two weeks ago and I drank a cerveza right in front of you. Mama saw me drink it and said nothing. Why can't I have one now? We are having a party in the house to celebrate our leaving here and moving across the border. You invited all our family and neighbors. We're even feeding all of them with that cerdo you put in the ground.

AITOR

Was it for me to scold you in front of your friends because you wanted to show you are grown enough to disrespect yourself as a young lady and drink like a common girl? Have you grown chest hair and whiskers that you shaved off this morning? I should know these things so I am won't be surprised.

AITOR turns back to check on the pig in the charcoal pit.

MAGDALENA

Papa don't be so dramatic! Women don't need chest hair and whiskers to drink a beer. Or wine. Or tequila. (*AITOR turns to MAGDALENA*) Of which I don't drink.

AITOR

This celebration is because we are moving across the border because my business has picked up to where I need to be on site with my workers doing the job. Those new homes being built have many trees, bushes and lawn to maintain and keep looking nice for owners moving in. I bid for that job and got it against companies bigger than mine. When I started, it was me, with one hedge clipper, a lawn mower and a machete. Sun up to sun down. Then I had to be back over the border before my pass was to expire. That truck out back had one good tire which I had to rotate with the other three so I could keep it on the road.

MAGDALENA

I wouldn't see you in the morning before I went to school most days. When I did, all you could do was smile when you saw me and then fall fast asleep.

AITOR

When the sun was hot and I'd be climbing up a ladder to cut the branch off of someone's tree, I think of the backyard I will have to build a treehouse for my kids to play in.

MAGDALENA

I'm dieciseis anos de edad, Papa. The sticks and wood you needed to support a cardboard box from a washing machine in that old tree was for a little girl. I don't do much playing anymore.

AITOR

Oh no, Gida, you play games. Only now it's with the make-up on your face and the wild thing with your hair. The eye-lining and the lipstick...

MAGDALENA

It's me now, not some girl at her conformation. My pride to be a woman. A Chicana. I don't leave nobody to wonder what I am. "Is she this?" "Is she that?" We're moving to America. I don't have to leave everything here because of it.

AITOR

Are you going to be against me for what I am doing too?!

MAGDALENA

What do you mean "against you too?"

AITOR

Our friends ask me if we no longer like them or where we have lived since my mama and papa built this house and raised their family here. I tell them "No, that's not the reason I am leaving". I am not one of those people that move from place to place. I saw them once on T.V.

MAGDALENA

Nomads, Papa. They move wherever the living is better.

AITOR

That is right! “Whereever the living is better.” I love this land and I love I am Mexican. I do better for my family and that is what I work hard to do.

MAGDALENA

I know that. You are giving our house to Tio Ramon and Tia Anabel. You have done everything right. We don’t have to walk in the desert at night in hiding. No coyotes at the border to sneak us across. No border patrol telling us we don’t belong. We going in our own car right through just like tourists do. Let’um tell me I’m illegal then!

AITOR

Novio, watch your temper. God is watching. You be on your knees saying the Three Hail Marys and the one Our Father for your anger.

MAGDALENA

It’s all I hear. It’s what everyone over there thinks we are. When I get my card, if anyone looks at me that way, I’m going to take my card out and put it right in their face!

AITOR

Lo que es yo yendo a hacer con usted?

MAGDALENA

What about Donuel?

AITOR freezes and stares straight ahead.

AITOR

Who?

MAGDALENA

Donuel. My brother. Your son.

AITOR

You do hate me for what I am doing. You’ve been lying to me about what you really feel!

MAGDALENA

You are anger because I said his name. You have not allowed any of us to say his name in the house. We’re not in the house, we’re outside. So it don’t count.

AITOR

In the house, outside or in the hills, I don’t want his name spoken. Your mama listens and all those in the family listen. You now don’t listen. I know why. It’s your Cousin Soraya. She is bad, so you follow after her.

MAGDALENA

It's not Soraya. Don't blame her for having spirit and not keeping her head down and her eyes closed. She's got red, white and blue tattooed on her ass now. She's American through and through. Same place you're taking me.

AITOR

You and your mama think Donuel belongs with us because he is your brother and her son. But he came from me. Right out of my bones. His looks. His walk. His talk, all from me. I teach him to be a man. To work hard to be a credit to his family. Be respectful to his name and those that came before him. He took all that and throw it in the street to become a traficante dedroga! I don't want him near our new home. No police busting down my door and putting a gun in my face to find him. Cocaina. That's what he wants from his money and his name. You defy me to say his name. Ok. Now I tell you something, Nina. I love Donuel with my whole heart. If he was standing right where you are, I would walk to him, hold open my arms and hug him so tight I would ache. But if he had cocaina in his hand when I pulled away, I would kill him where he stood. A fool will not live on and be my son.

MAGDALENA

What are your plans for me, Papa?

This is Not the End of the Play
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