

THE LONGING FOR A FAMILIAR STRANGER

Written by

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EXT. MARTINEZ'S FAMILY HOME — DAY

1

Two figures drag their feet up the slope leading to the Martinez's modest family home as a much smaller figure rushes ahead, urging them to hurry.

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INT. MARTINEZ'S FAMILY HOME — CONTINUOUS

2

The door to a vintage home creaks open and **MARCO MARTINEZ (38)**, disheveled in his black suit, trudges in.

Marco holds the door for the small figure from earlier, **LUCAS MARTINEZ (9)**. Another black suit.

Lucas sprints in, full of energy.

LUCAS (O.S.)

Pa, can I use the computer?

MARCO

Only after you finished the reading for Ms. Judy!

LUCAS (O.S.)

Okay!

MAMI (O.S.)

You should give that boy a break.

CARMEN "MAMI" MARTINEZ (77) teeters in last in her black dress and veil. Marco lends a hand, but Mami doesn't want it.

She swats his efforts away and takes a seat on the low couch.

MAMI (CONT'D)

I mean, por dios, how many years of his childhood does he have left?

MARCO

It's just a short reading, Mami. He's got to go back some time.

MAMI

Doesn't have to be tomorrow. Tell 'Ms. Judy' she can wait.

MARCO

I want him to go back.

Mami stares at Marco like he's grown a third head.

MARCO (CONT'D)

I want to keep him busy.

MAMI

Why can't he be busy at home?

MARCO

He doesn't need to be around
all this right now.

MAMI (CONT'D)

Coño, Marco. This is what's
wrong with your generation.

MARCO (CONT'D)

Mami, can we not do this right now?

MAMI

Your generation gives all the
parenting to the teachers, then
wonder why your kids won't talk to
you.

MARCO

Mami, please!

MAMI

It's true. You're just like that
woman — cual era su nombre? Well,
whatever her name was, she never
cared for her son; that poor kid...
And now he's not even in the
country anymore. Serves her right.

MARCO

(definitive)

I know what I'm doing with Lucas.
He's going back to school tomorrow.
He needs to keep himself busy. He
needs his friends. He needs to run.

MAMI

He can run in the yard! Pero claro,
what do I know, right? I'm old and
deranged. Fine! Since you've got it
all figured out, I'll just shut up.
I won't say anything else.

Mami shakes her head disapprovingly.

MAMI (CONT'D)

I feel so bad for Lucas.

MARCO

Well, don't. There's nothing to
feel bad for. Because Lucas is
happy.

MAMI

Is he? With a father like you?

MARCO
Better than a mother like you.

MAMI
You're lucky you had a mother like me.

MARCO
Lucky? To have you? Because everyone is just dying to be told they'll never be enough.

MAMI
Maybe if you were a better father to Lucas...

MARCO (CONT'D)
I am a good father! I am a great father! And Lucas is happy! You know, you come into my home with nothing to contribute – just this... this incessant complaining you always do! How are you not embarrassed of yourself?

MAMI (CONT'D)
Coño de la madre. I am your mother!

MAMI (CONT'D)
You are nothing without me, you hear me pendejo? Nothing! You think you're this great, big man.

MARCO
Having you as a mother was the worst thing that ever happened to me! I hate you!

MAMI (CONT'D)
Marco knows this. Marco knows that. Marco knows everything!

MARCO (CONT'D)
If there was an award for the worst mother, you'd win it every fucking year!

MAMI (CONT'D)
You embarrass me. You think I wanted a son like you?

Marco exclaims and points at Mami like he's just hit jackpot.

MARCO
There it is! I knew you hated me!

MAMI
You hate me! You're hating me right now!

MARCO
And I wonder why! If you didn't mean so much to Lucas – I'd leave you in a heartbeat.

MAMI

Don't you dare talk to me like that
carajito de mierda – I am your
mother! I sacrificed everything for
you!

MARCO

Like what?

Marco quivers, doing his best to hold himself together.

MARCO (CONT'D)

I did it all! I was sixteen and I
did it all! I had a whole life
ahead of me... But I had to take
care of myself, I had to take care
of you, and I had to take care of
dad. But I was also a fucking
child. But dad needed me and you
were nowhere to be found. I
sacrificed my childhood for you!
Fuck! I hate you! I hate you! I
hate you! I hate you and I wish you
would just fucking die already!

But the reality of his childhood is far too much for him to
handle and Marco breaks. He weeps into his palms.

MARCO (CONT'D)

Where were you?

Mami is taken aback as she watches her only son, down and
desolate. She wants to reach for Marco. To comfort him. But
she knows she doesn't deserve to.

Mami sits back down on the couch.

MAMI

I'm sorry.

Two words. All that Marco has ever wanted.

LUCAS (O.S.)

Mami?

Marco and Mami look up from the dense bubble they've created
for themselves to see Lucas meekly grasping for their
attention. How long has he been there?

MAMI

(hoarse)
Si, mi amor?

Lucas steps into their bubble.

LUCAS
I'm having trouble with my reading,
will you help me?

MAMI
Of course.

Marco takes a deep breath and walks out of the living room.

Through the curtains, Mami watches as Marco takes a seat on the porch. His head low.

Mami takes in the sight of her son, broken. She turns to Lucas and whispers in his ears. Lucas pulls away, surprised.

LUCAS
I don't know if he wants to see me
right now.

MAMI
Mi amor, He'll always want to see
you.

LUCAS
Really?

Mami nods. She pulls Lucas in once more and kisses him on the forehead.

MAMI
Te quiero.

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EXT. MARTINEZ'S FAMILY HOME — CONTINUOUS

3

The air is bleak as Marco sits on the front porch, staring at the sky.

Then, the door creaks open and Lucas steps out with *all* of his readings. He takes a seat and shuffles close to Marco.

Lucas rests his head on Marco's shoulder.

CUT TO BLACK.