

TORTILLA MOON

by

Margaret Larlham

Tortilla Moon was a winner of the Ninth National Waldo M. and Grace C. Bonderman Playwriting Workshop sponsored by Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and the Indiana Repertory Theatre and was featured in a rehearsed reading at the 2001 Youth Theatre Playwriting Symposium held at Indiana Repertory Theatre, Indianapolis.

Performance Features:

This version of the script is written for English language speakers. The dialogue is primarily in English with some Spanish responses. The language ratio may be changed according to the needs of the audience.

The story is told through sound/movement/action images in a series of 12 episodes. Movement, dance, music and visual aspects are integral to the meaning of the play.

Live and recorded music may be used. Song scores and music suggestions are given in the appendix.

Four chairs painted to look like four barrio houses (as part of the design concept) may be used to facilitate the images.

History

Tortilla Moon was created by Margaret Larlham for San Diego State University's Theatre for Young Audiences Touring Program. The production toured city and county schools in San Diego, and the Centro Cultural in Tijuana, Mexico. The run concluded at the THEATRE OF THE WORLD FESTIVAL, Theatre Department, San Diego State University in February 1999 with the following cast:

Mr, Pockets.....	Travis Rowland
Odd Job.....	Javier Guerrero
Tia Choco.....	Carol Ellis
Azul.....	Josè Antonio Perez
Alonzo.....	Noel Iribe
Clementine.....	Emily Gabler
La Luna.....	Pauline Rulla
Rosa.....	Olivia Espinosa
Underdog.....	John Henry Litten
Stage Manager.....	Carol Zupkas
Tour Manager.....	Genaro Bermudez
Director.....	Margaret Larlham
Set Designer.....	Susan Scharpf
Costume Designer.....	Kristen Stephensen
Lighting Designer.....	Todd Mangiapia

TORTILLA MOON

A contemporary border fable for all ages.

Setting:

The story begins and ends in Cactus Street/Calle Nopales—somewhere between North and South America. The story spans more than a century. Events from the past play a role in the present.

CHARACTERS:

AZUL	A Native American traveler from the ancient world. He transforms himself into an eagle.
ALONZO	A proud rancher from South America who marries Clementine/Magical Portrait.
CLEMENTINE	A spunky North American pioneer woman who marries Alonzo/Magical Portrait.
LA LUNA	The moon/the incarnation of love.
ROSA	Present-day granddaughter of Clementine and Alonzo.
TIA CHOCO	Rosa's Aunt, ex-actor who loves chocolate.

UNDERDOG	Rosa's doglike foundling friend.
ODD JOB	Tía Choco's brawny lodger/handyman.
MR. POCKETS	Charismatic and cunning money lender/landlord.
PERCUSSIONIST	Scene changes/sound effects.
GUITARISTS	Two
CHORUS	Actor/dancer/singer ensemble play the following roles as needed: RIVER TRIO, BOBCAT, COYOTE, CACTUS ST. NEIGHBORS, FOREMAN, HARD HAT CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS.

Tortilla Moon Episodes:

Prologue

Rosa and Underdog follow eagle/Azul into the Cinnamon Mountains.

1. **The Eviction**
Cactus Street. The present.
2. **The Secrets of Azul**
River. Early 1900s.
3. **Two Ranches and a Fence**
Border. Adjoining ranches. Early 1900s.
4. **La Luna**
Border.
5. **Happy Days on Cactus Street**
Cactus Street in the 50s.
6. **Hard Times on Cactus street**
Present day.
7. **Sign on the Dotted Line**
Present day.
8. **Voices from the Past**
Present day.
9. **Dangerous Journey**
City, country, desert.
10. **The Sorrows of the World**
Cinnamon Mountains/lake.
11. **The Eviction**
Present day.
12. **The New Cactus Street**

Prologue

A path high in the Cinnamon Mountains. It is a dark night. Eagle sounds. Music. An eagle puppet held aloft by Azul swoops in, dances ceremonially and circles the space.

AZUL: Follow! Aai!

(Rosa and Underdog enter, out of breath.)

ROSA: See the eagle! Follow him!

(The eagle/Azul exits.)

UNDERDOG: *(Stops)* I don't see him!

ROSA: Come on Underdog - you said you would help!
We've got to get to the Cinnamon mountains to find the stones - or...

UNDERDOG: Yeah, I know... but you know what I keep thinking?
(Posturing.) I could "rewind" to my cosy bed under the table. I could be dreaming doggie dreams now instead of living in this intense nightmare!

ROSA: ¡Si! I miss home too! I wish I had the eagle's eyes to see back to Cactus Street from way up here but...

UNDERDOG: Don't worry Rosa. *(Peeps through an imaginary camera.)* I see them all smiling in their sleep!
Kodak moment!

ROSA: No! I doubt anyone can sleep as long as Mr. Pockets is around! Come, we must hurry. It can't be far now. We should be there soon!

(Enter Eagle. He swoops down low over Underdog's head.)

UNDERDOG: Woooh! Did you see that! Is he trying to razor-cut my hair - or what?

ROSA: *(Concerned)* Are you all right?

UNDERDOG: C'mon Rosa...let's get moving! I'll follow the eagle! You follow me!

(Exit Azul, Underdog, Rosa.)

Scene One: THE EVICTION

Place: Cactus Street

Time: The present.

*The lights come up on Cactus Street, a colorful, urban neighborhood of small houses, or chairs painted to look like houses. We see three houses in which the people, **Neighbors**, are all asleep. **Odd Job** enters sweeping the street. **La Luna**, the moon, watches from the sky.*

ODD JOB: *(Sings or whistles under his breath.)*
Hey - a quarter - lucky me! *(Mr. Pockets enters. **Odd Job** reaches to pick up the money.)*

*(Mr. Pockets slyly rolls another quarter on the ground near **Odd Job**.)*

ODD JOB: Hey...double luck!

(Mr. Pockets rolls another quarter, then another.)

ODD JOB: Woah! What's this! *(Scrambling to catch the coins.)*
*Mr. Pockets steps on a coin as **Odd Job** reaches for it.)* Oh, it's Mr. Pockets!

MR. POCKETS: *(Moving his foot to reveal the coin.)* There you go!
*(**Odd Job** pockets the quarter.)* You're looking for work I hear.

ODD JOB: ¡Claro! They don't call me Odd Job for nothing!

MR. POCKETS: Well, I have an odd job for you! It's a secret! Here's what I want you to do...*(He whispers to **Odd Job**.)*

ODD JOB: ¿Me entiende? Throw out my friends.... No!

MR. POCKETS: How would twenty dollars sound to you, Odd Job?
(Holding out the money) Remember what I told you; a friend is something you can fold in your pocket!

ODD JOB: Well... I could use twenty! But...

MR. POCKETS: C'mon! Trust me! This is just a bit of fun... a good game!

ODD JOB: You sure? Fun?

MR. POCKETS: You follow me and I'll show you fun!

ODD JOB: *(Laughs)* Vale! Lead the way!

(Odd Job and Mr. Pockets creep stealthily to a house where Neighbors 1+2 sleep. Percussionist plays a beat. Odd Job freezes as Mr. Pockets posts a sign reading "The Eviction." Percussionist plays a second beat. Odd Job knocks at the door forcefully.)

MR. POCKETS+ODD JOB: *(Knocking)* Wake up! ¡Bueno!

NEIGHBOR 1: *(Dazed)* What the...!

NEIGHBOR 2: ...I'm dreaming! *(Odd Job and Mr. Pockets rudely awaken the sleeping couple and forcibly throw them out on the street.)*

MR. POCKETS: Off you go!

ODD JOB: Off you go!

NEIGHBOR 1+2: Save us! *(The couple huddle together, dazed.)*

MR. POCKETS: See! What did I tell you? *(Odd Job and Mr. Pockets laugh together and move on to the next house. They knock at the door.)*

MR. POCKETS: *(At Tía Choco's door)* Now for the biggest joke!
Wake up! ¡Despiértate!

TÍA CHOCO: *(Screams loudly.)* Waah!

ODD JOB: *(Laughing nervously)* A letter from Mr. Pockets for you! *(He gives her an eviction notice.)*

TÍA CHOCO: *(Reading)* Contract! I agree to give my house to Mr. Pockets if I do not pay back the money I owe him, signed Tía Choco! What? No! What do you mean? Odd Job?

- MR. POCKETS:** Says so right here ma'm—this house is rightfully mine now! *(He throws her out of her house. She lands near the first homeless couple.)*
- TÍA CHOCO:** *(Weeping)* Rosa... Rosa...Where is my Rosa? Help!
- MR. POCKETS:** Everybody out! Wake up! ¡Despiértate!
- (Neighbors 3+4 enter, drawn to the ruckus.)*
- NEIGHBOR 3:** What's happening?
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Help! *(They resist Mr. Pockets as he tries to push them towards the other evicted tenants.)*
- NEIGHBOR 2:** Hey! Let go! Stop!
- ODD JOB:** *(Laughing uncontrollably)*
- TIA CHOCO:** Odd Job! *(Odd Job stops laughing immediately, suddenly crestfallen.)* What in heavens name are you doing with Mr. Pockets?
- ODD JOB:** He said it was a game. He said it was funny!
- MR. POCKETS:** Funny! It's hilarious!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Is this a joke? What is going on here?
- TÍA CHOCO:** Odd Job, you stop this! Right now ! Put everyone back in their homes! Now!
- ODD JOB:** Now?
- MR. POCKETS:** *(Blocking Odd Job)* Oh, no you don't! *(He wards off the neighbors.)* These are my houses now!
- NEIGHBORS:** *(In unison. Forcefully)* Oh no they're not!
- MR. POCKETS:** Oh, yes they are! You don't pay—you gotta get out!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Unfair...capitalist!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** ¡No! ¡Que barbaridad!

- MR. POCKETS:** *(Triumphantly)* You signed the contract! You signed on the dotted line!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** He is serious! *(Incredulous)*
- NEIGHBOR 3:** He is taking our houses!
- TÍA CHOCO:** Why?
- MR. POCKETS:** You're in the way of progress. I'm going to raze this jumble of houses and build myself a tower, to show who's got the power, nowa-daze!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** What can we do!
- TÍA CHOCO:** How will we live?
- MR. POCKETS:** Not my problem!

(The neighbors, angry, turn on each other accusingly.)

- NEIGHBOR 2:** I knew we shouldn't sell our gardens to Mr. Pockets!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** So, why didn't you say anything at the time zipper lip?
- NEIGHBOR 3:** Loud mouth! Why didn't you?
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Tía Choco, why didn't you stop all this riff-raff from staying here?
- NEIGHBOR 3:** Yeah, why didn't you?
- NEIGHBOR 2:** You invited anyone and everyone!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Yeah! Odd people! Crazy dog people!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** Speaking...gobbledegook languages we don't understand!
- MR. POCKETS:** She invited me!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Yes - you invited Mr. Pockets too! It's all your fault!

NEIGHBOR 2: Tía Choco's to blame!

NEIGHBOR 1: On that we all agree! Tía Choco, it's your fault! (*Neighbors grumble, blaming Tía Choco.*)

ODD JOB: No – its my fault! (*Ashamed*) I'm very, very sorry! (*He weeps. All look at Odd Job.*) Tia Choco...sorry!

(Crowd mood swings to despair.)

NEIGHBOR 4: Oh, what's the use!

NEIGHBOR 3: What a mess!

TÍA CHOCO: Come here Odd Job! (*She pats him forgivingly.*)
What are we to do? How did it come to this? Yes, it is a mess ! What are we to do?

(La Luna radiates light. All freeze. Percussionist plays a beat.)

LA LUNA: Why has this disaster befallen the friendly neighbors here? I have been watching from the sky, and guess what! The story does not start and end here with Mr. Pockets or Tía Choco! It is part of a fascinating, always changing history. You are part of it too. Who knows how it will end? But the beginning... (*Winks*) Watch! I'll "rewind" and replay it from before there was a Cactus Street! Regresemos al pasado. (*La Luna gestures the rewind" to begin. Music.*)

NEIGHBORS: Wooah! (*The Neighbors are sucked backwards, in slow motion, by the magnetic force of the moon. Their houses disappear and all except La Luna exit.*)

Scene Two: THE SECRET OF AZUL

LA LUNA: This is the strip of land, which became Cactus Street. Here, a long time ago, a river used to flow.

(3 Chorus enter. They create a river with a blue cloth and six plastic tumblers. They lay the blue cloth on the ground. Each holds two tumblers. One tumbler is full of water. The other is empty. All three set up

a simultaneous, repeatable pouring cycle in which each has a full glass and an empty glass at the end of each pouring. They sing softly.)

RIVER CHORUS: El Rio brings sweet waters -
Tears!
Tears of laughter.
Tears!
Tears of sorrow.
The river brings sweet waters from the mountains to
the sea.

*(The river song underscores the narration that follows.
Percussionist and others off-stage contribute landscape sounds - eagle,
frog, rustlings etc - punctuating the song.)*

LA LUNA: ¡Escuchen! Listen! El rio brings the agua
crystalinas—water from the Montañas de Canela,
down through the valleys to the sea. It was very
quiet then. *(All listen. The river pauses briefly.)*
Listen! *(The river resumes the soft singing.)* There
were only the rustlings of small animalitos to be
heard, or sometimes the lonely cry of the eagle—el
aguilar—forever searching.

CHORUS/VOICES OFF:
Heeh-hah! *(Breath chant conveying the image of
someone running.)* Heeh-hah! Hee! *(Repeat.)*

*(Azul enters. He is carrying a bag made of animal skins. He has
run a long way.)*

LA LUNA: Who comes? Azul, so far from his home in the
South!

AZUL: *(Takes a glass of water from the river and drinks
deeply.)* ¡Gracias, rio, gracias!

RIVER TRIO: ¡De nada! *(They giggle and pick up the blue river
cloth to display the sign, “The Secret of Azul.”*
Percussionist plays a beat. *The River Trio exits.)*

AZUL: *(Prays)* Let me be brother to all who walk on two
legs, four legs and more, and those who have fins
and those who have wings. I am part of all that I
see, from the lowliest stone that lies upon the earth,
to the eagle that flies highest above!

(Coyote and Bobcat enter and greet Azul.)

- COYOTE:** Greetings, friend!
- AZUL:** Coyote! Bobcat! How glad I am to see you! A peaceful place at last! No people here!
- BOBCAT:** Not now!
- COYOTE:** Not yet! *(They follow Azul.)*
- AZUL:** *(Ignoring the implication.)* Ah, my friends, the relief! *(Petting the animals.)* For so many months on my long journey from the South I have been caught between the wars and fights of peoples.
- BOBCAT:** What do you mean peoples?
- AZUL:** The people of the mountains fighting with the people from the plains. The river people arguing with those from the deserts. *(Relives a critical moment.)* In front fire and smoke... from the sides, knives and arrows! Dangers behind! Wars!
- COYOTE:** *(Entranced)* So...what did you do? What happened?
- AZUL:** I used my eagle powers to escape!
- COYOTE:** But, why have you come?
- BOBCAT:** Where are you going?
- AZUL:** *(He places the bag carefully on the ground. He continues mysteriously.)* A sacred duty! I am making this journey to help bring peace! Ssh! *(Whispers)* I carry in this bag, a demon power that I believe is the cause of our conflicts!
- BOBCAT:** What is it? *(Coyote and Bobcat, interested, circle and sniff the bag.)*
- AZUL:** *(Fearfully)* It is the blind Golden Warrior! It is evil incarnate! I carry it back to the ancestral cave in the Cinnamon Mountains! This thing has unleashed blind hatred in the world for long enough!

- COYOTE:** Show it to us!
- AZUL:** I warn you - it is dangerous! But, I will show it to you, so that you can feel the darkness and blackness that makes people lose sight, makes us argue with each other and fight. Here! *(He opens the bag and reveals an ancient statue—the Golden Warrior. He covers his eyes and backs away. There is a roaring sound which begins as the statue of the Golden Warrior is revealed. The statue has an evil, destructive influence.)*
- CHORUS:** *Ad Lib eerie, agonized cries. Aaa...eee!*
- BOBCAT:** Hisst! Stay back! *(Bobcat and Coyote instantly aggressive, growl, prowl and snarl at each other. They begin to fight.)*
- COYOTE:** Get out of my way!
- BOBCAT:** What? Who do you think you are?
- COYOTE:** Try me! Find out for yourself!
- AZUL:** *(Stops them fighting.)* Stop! Ssst! Cover your eyes! ¡Tapen los ojos! *(They cover their eyes and stop at once. Azul replaces the Golden Warrior in the bag. The sound stops when it is returned to the bag.)* Now you see the dreadful power of this warrior! *(Bobcat and Coyote whimper, licking wounds. Azul caresses and calms the animals.)* Sorry... amigos?
- BOBCAT:** Amigos!
- COYOTE:** Amigos! *(Coyote, Bobcat and Azul play together.)*
- AZUL:** I make this journey to find the precious stones that were its eyes and to return the golden warrior to his original home. *(Bobcat and Coyote stiffen. They hear something. They stare into the distance with frozen attention.)*
- AZUL:** Tell me! What do you see!
- COYOTE:** There is thunder coming from the North!

- BOBCAT:** There is thunder coming from the South!
- COYOTE:** Viene del Sur.
- BOBCAT:** You are in great danger! There are people coming who will drive you from your lands.
- COYOTE:** They must not find you here! You need to hide! ¡Escóndete! And quickly!
- AZUL:** Man, the only animal in the world to fear! Volaré lejos de aquí. Gracias—for the warning! (*He searches for a hiding place.*) Aah! No place to hide!
- BOBCAT:** What can we do?
- AZUL:** I will...I will transform myself into an eagle!
- BOBCAT+COYOTE:**
¡En aguilár!
- AZUL:** (*Urgently*) My friends, while I am gone, bury the statue so that its evil influence is dulled. I will return for it when the people are gone!
- COYOTE:** We will!
- AZUL:** Help me clear the dancing ground. (*They circle low, brushing the earth, clearing stones as he chants an invocation.*) I am Azul! Blue, like the dancing ground of the eagle... sky! (*The Animals assist Azul with his transformation, giving him wings. Azul flies about the stage whirling the wings. Coyote and Bobcat retrieve the statue.*)
- COYOTE:** Where should we bury it?
- BOBCAT:** Where no one can find it!
- (Bobcat and Coyote exit to bury the statue. Eagle music plays while Azul circles. La Luna rises.)*
- LA LUNA:** Turning and turning all day and all night,
Turning and turning through darkness and light!

Vuelta, que vuelta de noche y de día
Vuelta, que vuelta que triste alegría.

(Azul flies off-stage. After he disappears, a small eagle with miniature wings, recognizably those of Azul, perches on the set where it remains till Scene 6.)

LA LUNA: Listen! *(The moon fades.)*

*(There is the sound of distant hooves. 2 **Guitarists** enter. They tap hoof beat rhythms against the bodies of the guitars. **Percussionist** plays a beat. The sign, "Two Ranches and a Fence" is displayed.)*

Scene Three: TWO RANCHES AND A FENCE

*(Alonzo and Clementine enter on horseback. They gallop around each other. The second **Guitarist** positions himself diagonally opposite the first **Guitarist**. They punctuate the dialogue with a progression of chords and musical phrases amplifying the sparring between the characters. **Clementine** and **Alonzo** dismount and face each other.)*

CLEMENTINE: Stop!

ALONZO: ¡No, deténte tú!

CLEMENTINE: I got here first!

ALONZO: ¿Qué? ¿Estás loca mujer? ¡Yo llegué primero!

CLEMENTINE: Well then, no further!

ALONZO: ¡No te avances más!

CLEMENTINE: This river is the border of my lands!

ALONZO: ¡Este río es la línea de mis tierras y estoy reclamando esta tierra para mis descendientes y yo!

CLEMENTINE: I am claiming this land for myself and MY descendants...I will call this land Cactus Ranch!

GUITAR 1: *

ALONZO: A este rancho yo, Alonzo, le llamaré el Rancho de los Nopales.

GUITAR 2: *

CLEMENTINE: I will plant potatoes over here...for mmm....mashed potato!

GUITAR 1: *

ALONZO: Mushy mash? ¡Yo plantaré maíz aquí! Para tortillas!

GUITAR 2: *

CLEMENTINE: I will plant grape vines over here...for wine.

GUITAR 1: *

ALONZO: ¡Muy bien! ¡Yo plantaré aguacates aquí...para guacamole!

GUITAR 2: *

CLEMENTINE: I will live in a grand mansion. *(A chair is brought on to where she points.)*

GUITAR 1: *

ALONZO: Yo viviré en una mansión “más” grande.

(Another chair representing Alonzo’s house, is brought on and set down on the opposite side of the stage.)

CLEMENTINE: That man copies everything I do! I look upon him with contempt!

ALONZO: ¡Esta mujer me vuelve loca, nació para tormentarme! She drives me insane!

(Guitar 1 plays a series of sinister chords—in the style of a Western movie. Guitar 1 challenges Guitar 2 musically. Clementine scorns Alonzo as she dances. Guitar 2 responds to musical challenge of Guitar 1. Responds with Latino music to which Alonzo dances. Both tire and prepare to sleep.)

CLEMENTINE: *(Sleepily, to audience.)* I love my ranch and would be perfectly happy here if only I did not have to live so darn near to my stinking neighbor.

ALONZO: Yo amo mi rancho y estaría muy contento si no tuviera que vivir tan cerca a esta vieja. *(Both fall asleep.)*

Scene Four: LA LUNA

*(Chorus displays the sign “La Luna”. The **Guitarists** play an overture to the La Luna Song. **La Luna**, with a cloak of stars, “rises” gracefully. **La Luna** speaks over the instrumental overture to the song.)*

LA LUNA:

Look at these foolish people—so self important!
¡Miren a esta gente loca, se cree muy importante!
They choose to fight when they could laugh and play.
Escoje pelear en vez de reirse cantar.

(Sings) They think they know everything.
They think they know everything.

LA LUNA: I will sing them the song of the moon—the song of love! ¡La canción del amor!

*(La Luna sings as she draws **Clementine** and **Alonzo** from their beds. **Alonzo** and **Clementine** move in a trance. They interject their lines between lines of the song.)*

LA LUNA: *(Sings)* For love is the welling of feeling...

CLEMENTINE: Ah the sky!

LA LUNA: *(Sings)* That flows from the earth to your heart...

ALONZO: ¡Ay, las estrellas!

LA LUNA: *(Sings)* In love, all the borders have no meaning...

CLEMENTINE: The sweet scent of roses!

LA LUNA: *(Sings)* The lovelight binds those near and apart.

ALONZO: I am burning...I am freezing! ¡Estoy ardiendo!

*(As the song ends **Alonzo** and **Clementine** walk toward each other in a spell.)*

CLEMENTINE: I...

ALONZO: ¡Te...

CLEMENTINE: ...love...

ALONZO: ...amor!

CLEMENTINE: ...you! *(They embrace.)*

ALONZO: ¡Clementina!

CLEMENTINE: Alonzo!

*(**La Luna** moves in front of them shielding their embrace from the audience with her cloak of stars. **Percussionist** plays a beat.)*

LA LUNA: *(Jokingly)* Restricted viewing—No under eighteen! ¡No Menores!

*(**La Luna** drops her cloaked arms to reveal **Alonzo** and **Clementine** in a double portrait inside an empty picture frame. **They** become a picture on the wall. If they need to move, they should move slowly en bloc so they do not draw focus.)*

LA LUNA: Time passes! The river dries up. In its place, a road is made, bringing a living river of travellers to Cactus Street. *(**La Luna** exits.)*

Scene 5: HAPPY DAYS ON CACTUS STREET

*(**Tia Choco** and **Odd Job**, **Rosa** and **Underdog**, and the **Chorus/Neighbors**, enter as a living river carrying chairs and bulding material . The sign “Happy Days on Cactus Street” is displayed by one of the chorus. **Percussionist** plays a beat. This signals the beginning of the building action. The activity is underscored by banging, machine, building and street noises, loosely percussive.)*

- ODD JOB:** OK! OK! Everyone to work! Lend a hand! (*All work together raising a house.*) Push! Lift! Put your back into it! (*Neighborhood building continues.*)
- NEIGHBOR 3:** Ouch! My toe!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** More paint here!
- TIA CHOCO:** Look at the colors!
- ROSA:** This house is rose pink!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** Mine, peacock blue!
- NEIGHBOR 3:** Odd Job! You're needed over here!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** So clean!
- TÍA CHOCO:** You're welcome!
- ODD JOB:** Look at our neighborhood! You should be proud!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Odd Job...over here!
- ODD JOB:** Be right there! Back to work!

*(Music for Brooms and Buckets Dance. **Women Neighbors, Rosa and Tia Choco** with wash cloths alternate movement sequences with men who have brooms. The women dance forward with basins, each holding a little water. During the dance routine they soak the wash cloths and sprinkle water playfully on the audience. As they retreat the men perform synchronized and choreographed sweeping. The dance evolves to a couples Salsa or Cha-cha dance. **Tía Choco and Odd Job** dance.)*

TIA CHOCO+ROSA+2 FEMALE NEIGHBORS:

When you're scrubbing the floor
 You think it's a chore, but
 You're doing much more
 Than just cleaning the floor,
 You're making a space where the colours will
 glow,
 Making a place where the children can grow.

ODD JOB+UNDERDOG+2 NEIGHBORS: (*Salsa rhythm continues.*)

When you're sweeping the street
 And your neighbors all meet
 And work alongside you

Till the job's complete!

ODD JOB: (*Interjects*) Yes, life can be sweet!

ODD JOB+UNDERDOG+2 NEIGHBORS:

You're making a space where the colours will
glow,
Making a place where the children can grow!

(*The dance ends.*)

TÍA CHOCO: Good work everyone! Go on home now! (*Tía Choco, Rosa, Underdog and Odd Job return to their house. The Neighbors return to their houses either side.*)

CLEMENTINE: (*Aside, from the picture frame in Tía Choco's house.*) Perhaps, now, at last...

ALONZO: ...we can rest in peace!

TÍA CHOCO: Happy Birthday, Rosa! (*Hugs her.*) Did you think We'd forgotten?

UNDERDOG: Wooh-uf! (*Bothered by intimacy.*)

ODD JOB: Happy birthday – I found this lucky bean for you! (*He hugs Rosa.*)

UNDERDOG: Wuh-wuh-wuh!

ROSA: (*To Underdog*) Hey, you – I like you too! (*They exchange stylish hand-slap.*)

TÍA CHOCO: (*To Odd Job*) My sister would be so proud of Rosa!

ROSA: (*Overhearing.*) I wish she were here!

TÍA CHOCO: We will send our wishes to La Luna to give to your Mama. Come!

ROSA: Yes, Tia Choco, she sees the same moon! I love it here, but I miss my mother and the canciones she used to sing. (*Rosa claps her hands to the rhythm of this traditional Mexican children's rhyme.*) Tortellitos para Mamá. (*She creates a dreamy spell in which others participate. Mr. Pockets enters. He watches from the side.*)

TÍA CHOCO, UNDERDOG, ODD JOB (*join in with Rosa*)

Tortellitos para Mamá,
 Tortellitos para Papá,
 Las quemaditas para Mamá
 Las bonitas para Papa!

*(They repeat the verse. The **Neighbors** simultaneously chant another rhyme synchronised to the Tortillitos rhyme.)*

NEIGHBORS: Uno, dos, tres, cho,
 Uno dos tres, -co,
 Uno, dos, tres, -la,
 Uno, dos, tres, -te,
 Bate, bate chocolate.

ODD JOB: Choco latte! (*Laughs. Breaks the spell.*)

MR. POCKETS: Opportunity knocks! (*He knocks at Tia Choco's door.*) Hello, I'm new in the neighborhood!
 Pardon my intrusion!

ODD JOB: Welcome stranger! You are... ?

MR. POCKETS: Pockets is my name
 I love to play a game
 And meeting all of you
 Is like a dream come true!

ODD JOB: Well, come in! Meet the original owner of this street. Mr. Pockets... Tía Choco!

(Neighbor2 introduces Mr. Pockets to Tía Choco)

MR. POCKETS: Fascinated Ma'm! And how lucky...I just happen to have a chocolate in my pocket for a lady such as you!

TÍA CHOCO: For me!

ODD JOB: (*Aside*) Oh no! No more chocolates!

TÍA CHOCO: How kind!

MR. POCKETS: The pleasure is mine! So, what can you tell me about Cactus Street?

(Alonzo and Clementine maintain their picture on the wall behind them. Rosa is writing a letter. Underdog sits under the table.)

- TÍA CHOCO:** This house used to be the stables of the original Cactus Ranch, of my grandparents.
- ODD JOB:** You can still smell it! *(Nudges Mr. Pockets. They laugh.)*
- TÍA CHOCO:** Tut! *(Introduces Mr. Pockets.)* This is my family, Rosa...always writing to her mama! Today is her birthday.
- ROSA:** Hello!
- MR. POCKETS:** *(Produces a rose from his pocket.)* A rose for Rosa!
- UNDERDOG:** Grrr...!
- TÍA CHOCO:** Oh! Delightful! And there *(Points under table.)* is Underdog, Rosa's friend! Say hello, Underdog!
- UNDERDOG:** *(Sarcastically)* Grrreat!
- TÍA CHOCO:** *(Aside to Mr. Pockets/ referring to Underdog.)* He was abandoned you know...so sad! We found him on the doorstep in a dog kennel five years ago. Can you imagine! *(Confidentially.)* Between you and me...he thinks he's a dog! He likes to eat his dinner under the table! But my Rosa loves him—my sweet niece Rosa! *(Mr. Pockets notes the picture of Alonzo and Clementine.)*
- MR. POCKETS:** Rosa, tell me about this picture! An antique?
- UNDERDOG:** Grr...!
- ROSA:** They are my ancestors, Alonzo and Clementine. Es mi posesión más querida. *(Clementine reaches through the frame to stroke Rosa's hair as she stands in front of the picture.)* This picture is all that remains of those días en el rancho. Nací en México but I've been living here on Cactus Street since my mom sent me to live with Tía Choco. My mom is coming here too...

(The Magic Portrait exits, infinitely slowly.)

TÍA CHOCO: I remember when my sister left Rosa with me. She was as pale as the moon. She hopes there will be a better life for Rosa here.

UNDERDOG: Grr...!

ROSA: This is my friend...my amigo, Underdog... *(aside)* who thinks he's a dog! C'mon Underdog...let's play! *(Rosa and Underdog play at dog training. To Mr. Pockets.)* Watch! See the tricks I've taught him? Sit! *(Underdog sits.)* Shake!*(Shakes hands)* Roll over! *(Rolls over, and enjoys a scratch from Rosa.)*

ROSA: Now...his favorite game! *(She throws a ball to him.)* Fetch! *(Underdog chases after and retrieves the ball.)*

UNDERDOG: Now YOU fetch! *(Throws the ball for Rosa. Rosa chases off-stage after the ball.)* Is this bizarre or what! They think that I think that I'm a dog...so I play along! By the way, do you have a canine treat—a dog biscuit—for me? I know what you're thinking! Man thinks he's a dog...crazy right...loco! Well, call it madness if you like! It's what keeps you alive in here... *(Indicates brain.)* ...and in here! *(Indicates heart.)* ¡Hasta la vista! *(Exits)*

MR. POCKETS: I like it here! It makes me grin, to have the neighbors invite me in!
I might buy a house or two, or three, or four, or maybe more!

(Tia Choco and Odd Job believe he is joking)

TÍA CHOCO: Oh, how funny!

ODD JOB: Perhaps he's got a lot of money! *(Both laugh)*

MR. POCKETS: *(Laughs along.)* Well then! Nice to meet you but I must be on my way! I hope you won't forget me when I drop back in one day! *(Exits)*

ODD JOB: Adios!

TÍA CHOCO: Come again!

MR. POCKETS: Hasta la vista!

(Neighbors return to houses. La Luna appears, a radiant full moon. Guitarist enters.)

TÍA CHOCO: The moon in heaven looks down and smiles on our shining street... so clean...so bright!

LA LUNA: Turning and turning through day and through night,
The seasons go past us through darkness and light.

(Guitarist plays a sequence which moves from Major to Minor key to harmonic discord during the following lines. Enter Neighbor 3 and Neighbor 4.)

TÍA CHOCO: *(Praise)* La Luna en el cielo miraba hacía nuestra calle iluminada y se sonreían.

(La Luna alters her position slowly to represent a sickle moon.)

ROSA: *(Lament)* But the moon wanes. She grows thinner. She wastes away till there is just the edge of the sickle blade slicing the dark sky! *(Percussionist plays a beat. Odd Job enters with sign.)*

Scene Six: HARD TIMES ON CACTUS STREET

ODD JOB: Hard times on Cactus Street. *(Holding up the sign.)*

(Collage of sounds. A cacophony of bulldozers, honking horns, jack hammers, radio in different language over low grade roaring sound begins. Tia Choco and Odd Job step out of their house. Foreman enters.)

FOREMAN: Stand aside people! You are in the way!

ODD JOB: ..of what!

FOREMAN: Progress, of course! *(Blows a shrill whistle.)* Get over here! *(Grumbles.)* ...Taking all day! *(Two Hard Hats, Neighbor 3+4 enter, unrolling a length of yellow, plastic, "caution" tape between them, blocking off the yards and sidewalks.)*

NEIGHBOR 3: Hey Boss, were here already!

NEIGHBOR 4: Get a life!

FOREMAN: Look sharp! Move it! (*Foreman directs them to create a web of barriers across the neighborhood.*)

ROSA: What are you doing? Why? (*Tia Choco, Rosa, Underdog become trapped within the web.*)

FOREMAN: More to the right! Over...under! Idiots!

NEIGHBOR 2: My garden!

ROSA: You can't put that there!

ODD JOB: You're digging up the gardens!

UNDERDOG: (*Barks.*)Wuff!

NEIGHBOR 2: Hey! How dare you?

HARD HAT: Stand aside!

(Neighbor3/Hard Hat crosses the stage with a dolly of junk. The Golden Warrior, in its bag, may be glimpsed among the junk items.)

ODD JOB: (*To Foreman.*) Got any work for me?

FOREMAN: (*Sourly*)You don't qualify, old man!

ODD JOB: But I live here!

FOREMAN: (*Shouts.*) Are you going to take all day! Move on to the next one! Big barriers!

(Foreman and workers exit.)

ROSA: How dare they? I don't believe it! Tia Choco, stop them!

NEIGHBOR 2: Disgraceful!

UNDERDOG: Typical!

- FOREMAN:** *(From offstage)* Big barriers!
- ROSA:** Tía Choco!
- TÍA CHOCO:** We can't stop them, child. We must just live with it as best we can!
- UNDERDOG:** Na-uh! No way! *(Taking action. He tears down a barrier of tape.)* Play! Let's play Rosa! *(They clear some of the tape. **Odd Job** joins them.)*
- ODD JOB:** This is a very odd job!
- TÍA CHOCO:** *(Worried)* What if...no, you shouldn't be doing that! There must be danger all around us. Why else the barriers? Why us?

(Azul enters. He controls the eagle puppet. He swoops around, searching. Eagle theme music fades in.)

- TÍA CHOCO:** Whoa! Odd Job, watch out!
- ODD JOB:** Take cover!
- UNDERDOG:** Nature is scary!
- TÍA CHOCO:** It's strange! He appears to be searching for something! Here he comes again. Watch!
- AZUL:** *(Sings Eagle cries, which sound like words.)* Lost!
Find! La Luna!

*(All freeze. **La Luna** appears.)*

- LA LUNA:** Hard times on Cactus Street. The river of people overflows its banks! Too many people, strange languages...hard work...no work ...digging...machines! Calamity! A dinosaur freeway rears up and roams the city. Incessant roaring! Cold shadows and fumes brew bitterness and discontent in the neighborhood!

(Neighborhood re-animates.)

- TÍA CHOCO:** Always a smog of bad news.

(Tia Choco approaches Rosa. She is reading a letter.)

- ROSA:** *(Reading)*...and then we will be together again mija, Mama.
- TÍA CHOCO:** *(Gently)* Rosa... *(Sympathetically)* Sorry Rosa...your Mother...she is gone...the truck overturned...many died...sorry! Lo siento Rosa.
- ROSA:** *(Distraught)* NO! *(Tia Choco tries to embrace her.)* No! Leave me alone! Go away... I hate you! *(Tia Choco exits. Rosa tears the letter. Underdog enters)*
- UNDERDOG:** Rosa, what's up!. *(He tries to greet her. She ignores him still tearing the letter. Exits.)*
- ROSA:** Go away!
- UNDERDOG:** OK...OK! Be cool!

(Neighbors 1, 2, 3, 4 enter and stand in glum isolation. Underdog approaches different Neighbors unsuccessfully.)

- UNDERDOG:** Say - does anyone have any left-over bones?
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Scram Underdog! ¡Largate!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Get out...
- NEIGHBOR 2:** ...of my yard...
- NEIGHBOR 3:** ...or I'll spray you...
- NEIGHBOR 4:** ...with pesticide!
- UNDERDOG:** *(Retreats)* Woah...I mean woe! I mean I'm weebegone...I'm gone! ¡Vamos! *(Exits)*
- NEIGHBORS:** *(Whisper simultaneously)* Tarde para trabajar. Tarde para la escuele. *(Repeat)*

(Neighbors walk, locked in a well-worn grid pathway in a grid pattern repeating the words to themselves. Rosa enters. She is remote, unseeing, closed off. She ignores everyone and finds a place to sit where she tears paper into smaller and smaller pieces. Neighbors 1, 2, 3,

4 group and re-group to convey the following series of short scene fragments. The eagle/Azul continues searching intermittently.)

NEIGHBOR 2: Don't leave!

NEIGHBOR 1: No work for me!

NEIGHBOR 3: What about Saturday?

NEIGHBOR 1: I'm so tired...

NEIGHBOR 2: ...of not having any money!

NEIGHBOR 3: I keep waiting for..

NEIGHBOR 4: ...my life to change!

NEIGHBOR 3: ¡Yo también!

(Mr. Pockets enters. Watches unobtrusively.)

TIA CHOCO: Rosa, you didn't go to school again today!

ROSA: There is nothing I want to learn at school!

*(Blues style guitar introduction to Cactus Street Blues. **Odd Job, Tia Choco, Underdog** join in this song/dance. Rosa, aloof, sits to the side tearing paper.)*

NEIGHBOR WOMEN: Gotta stone in my/shoe,

NEIGHBOR MEN: /Stone in my shoe

NEIGHBOR WOMEN: Gotta thorn in my/side

NEIGHBOR MEN: /Thorn in my side

NEIGHBOR WOMEN: Un dolor en mi/cabeza

NEIGHBOR MEN: /Un dolor en mi cabeza

NEIGHBOR WOMEN: And there's no place to/hide

NEIGHBOR MEN: /No place to hide

NEIGHBOR WOMEN: Aint much to eat/

NEIGHBOR MEN: /Ain't got much to eat on
Cactus Street

(Repeat song with continuing choreography.)

UNDERDOG: YOOOWWL!! *(Howls at the conclusion of the song.)*

NEIGHBOR 1: Scram Underdog!

NEIGHBOR 2: Get out!

NEIGHBOR 3: Stop barking!

(The Neighbors return to houses. They contribute to a backdrop of dejection.)

UNDERDOG: Rosa – are you listening? Its me, Underdog!*(She continues tearing paper. He turns away.)* Typical—it's a dog's life! These people are seriously dysfunctional! ¡Un perro sufre más! When the humans suffer I suffer worse I reckon! Not too long ago these were the same people who loved me and petted me and told me I was the greatest. Hmm! Look at them now!

NEIGHBORS 1+2: It's not fair!

NEIGHBOR 3: I'm hungry! ¡Tengo Hambre!

UNDERDOG: Listen to them! Rosa doesn't care about me any more. When last did anyone give me a bite to eat! I guess I'll go dig up a bone...check the junkyard, maybe. Losers! See you later! *(Underdog exits, sniffing, investigating possibilities of sustenance.)*

NEIGHBOR 4: Oh! Oh my! Ah! Why? *(The sighing breaths of the Neighbors become orchestrated. Mr. Pockets enters.)*

NEIGHBORS: Oh! Oh my! Ah! Why? *(Repeat and fade into a percussive rhythm with body pats and finger clicking.)*

MR. POCKETS: *(Aside to the audience) These people have got problems and I have the solution! (He produces the sign which reads "Sign on the Dotted Line." Percussionist plays a beat.)*

Scene Seven: SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE

MR. POCKETS: *(Mr. Pockets, like a magician, struts and raps to the beat now clearly articulated by the clicking fingers of the Neighbors.)*

Hear that! * * */ Hear that! * * *

Trouble* * * how/ Sad * * *

Tut - tut - tut - tut! Mm-mm-mm! *

MR. POCKETS: I got nothing...

NEIGHBORS: No tiene nada...

MR. POCKETS: Nothing in my pocket! *(Pulls his pocket inside out.)*

NEIGHBORS: Nada en su bolsa.

MR. POCKETS: I got something...*(Goes to neighbor or audience member.)*

NEIGHBORS: El tiene algo...*(Interest grows.)*

MR. POCKETS: Something in my pocket!

NEIGHBORS: Algo de su bolsa!

MR. POCKETS: You take something...*(Opens pocket. Shows he has money bills.)*

NEIGHBORS: Toma algo...

MR. POCKETS: Something from my pocket. *(Gives person money.)*

NEIGHBORS: Algo de su bolsa.

- MR. POCKETS:** *(Whispers.)* You put something...*(Stealthily retrieves money.)*
- NEIGHBORS:** Pon algo...
- MR. POCKETS:** Something in my pocket! *(Puts money back in pocket.)*
- NEIGHBORS:** ¡Algo en su bolsa!
- MR. POCKETS:** *(To Neighbors)* You need a little money?
- NEIGHBOR 3:** No... I need a LOT!
- MR. POCKETS:** You need some for the rent?
- NEIGHBOR 2:** I could use some!
- MR. POCKETS:** The rent, the car, cable TV?
- ALL:** *(Ad Lib)* Yeah! Cable TV! Car payments! *(Mr. Pockets notes Rosa's isolation.)*
- MR. POCKETS:** Rosa, I see you are a bit afraid to play this game with me. *(Rosa ignores him. He turns to Neighbors.)* So Mr. Pockets will supply a little fun for free! *(He throws a handful of paper money into the air.)* Grab what you can!
- ALL:** Money! ¡Bolo! ¡Bolo! *(The Neighbors scramble to grab the money.)* Thank you Mr. Pockets! ¡Gracias!
- MR. POCKETS:** You like? You want some more? Just follow me...and sign on the dotted line, just sign on the dotted line!
- (All the Neighbors, except Rosa, exit, following Mr. Pockets. They imitate his stylish strut and repeated chant.)*
- NEIGHBORS:** Just sign * on * the dot-ted line
Just sign on-the-dotted line! *(Repeat till all are off stage.)*
- MR. POCKETS:** *(He pops his head back on stage)* Hey Rosa...you sure you don't want some dinero? Think! You could buy some bones for Underdog! *(He exits.)*

LA LUNA: Rosa, where are you!

ROSA: *(Disturbed)* Bones for Underdog? ¿Oye dónde está mi Compañero? *(Calls)* Underdog! *(Underdog has found the bag containing the Golden Warrior. He drags the bag on stage.)*

ROSA: *(Sees Underdog)* There you are! What have you got there?

UNDERDOG: Oh! So you're talkin' to me again? I thought you would never come back!

ROSA: I am lost... don't know who I am anymore!

UNDERDOG: Rosa! Don't talk like that. *(He whines like a dog.)*

ROSA: *(Smiles)* Sí. Perdóname. ¿Amigos? *(She hugs him. Sees the bag.)* What have you got there?

UNDERDOG: I've been digging Rosa. I got dirt under my nails...but hey! A gift from the dog man! *(They open the bag and find the Golden Warrior.)*

ROSA: What is that?

(The Golden Warrior is revealed. There is instantly a repeat of the roaring sound and sense of evil it produced in Scene 2. Mr. Pockets, Tia Choco, Odd Job and the Neighbors enter and surround the statue. They appear mesmerized and visibly affected with self-interest and greed. The scene builds to a fight. During the fight Alonzo and Clementine enter and return to the magic picture on the wall.)

TÍA CHOCO: What do you have there Rosa?

ROSA: No sé que es...Underdog found it.

NEIGHBOR 1: WOW!

NEIGHBOR 2: What IS that ?

NEIGHBOR 3: Is it made of gold?

NEIGHBOR 4: It must be worth a fortune!

- MR. POCKETS:** Tell you what Rosa...I'll give you fifty dollars for that old piece of junk! Actually I might even give you a hundred! What do you say?
- ROSA:** No! It's a gift from Underdog.
- MR. POCKETS:** A thousand!
- TÍA CHOCO:** If it's worth that much...Odd Job, grab it! (*Odd Job makes a rush for the statue. Rosa and Underdog watch in consternation as a brawl breaks out between Mr Pockets, Odd Job and the Neighbors.*)
- NEIGHBOR 3:** Give it to me!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** No! Give it here!
- ODD JOB:** Get out of my way!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** I saw it first! It's mine!

(They fight. Clementine and Alonzo watch through the picture frame. The three fighting contenders are stunned when Underdog, with a chilling call, leaps into the middle of the fray.)

- UNDERDOG:** *(Snarls and growls and chases everyone away in style of martial arts master.)* This is Rosa's. Leave her alone or I'll tear you to shreds!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Crazy dog!

(All exit in terror. Underdog retrieves the statue and gives it back to Rosa. He wags his tail.)

- ROSA:** *(Returns it to bag.)* Thank you Underdog! ¡Bien hecho! What is this thing?
- UNDERDOG:** It's scary! It makes the hairs on my neck electric!
- ROSA:** Did you see the effect it had! It felt like... the end of the world ! What is this thing? *(She sets it down, baffled. Percussionist plays chimes.)*

Scene Eight: VOICES FROM PAST AND FUTURE

*(The magic portrait of **Alonzo** and **Clementine** begins to move forward. Chorus displays and announces the sign.)*

CLEMENTINE+ALONZO:

(Calling) Rosa, Rosa!

ROSA: Who called me? ¿Quién me llama? *(She looks around. **Underdog** is growling at the picture.)*

CLEMENTINE: Rosa do not be afraid. We will...

ROSA: Help!

ALONZO: ...we will not hurt you. We have...

UNDERDOG: Pinch me!

CLEMENTINE: ...we have un secreto, a message for you.

ROSA: What?

ALONZO+CLEMENTINE: ...about the golden warrior!

UNDERDOG: *(Whispers)* What?

*(**Rosa** is bewildered and scared. She and **Underdog** huddle together. **Clementine** and **Alonzo** extricate themselves from the picture frame. They re-animate.)*

ALONZO: Clementina... te adoro!

CLEMENTINE: Alonzo...not now! Rosa, my sweet grandchild...

ALONZO: You have an assignment from your descendientes!

CLEENTINE: Your children's, children!

ROSA: What! Why? ¿Porqué? Underdog wake me up !

UNDERDOG : Is this your dream or mine ?

ALONZO : Return the golden warrior to its ancestral home and complete the work of the eagle, Azul!

CLEMENTINE : This is your mission, to travel to the Cinnamon Mountains!

- UNDERDOG :** What ? What gives!
- CLEMENTINE:** We know you wish to help Cactus Street.
- ALONZO:** Rosa—you are the hope of the family! This is your chance for a journey of the heart!
- ROSA:** Pero no puedo. I am only a girl. No sé donde ir. I am afraid! I can't do this...
- UNDERDOG:** It's true, Rosa has a big heart, but as Indiana Jones she is a pretty pathetic choice!
- ALONZO:** *(Fixing him with a stare)* It is precisely because of her corazon that she was selected by our descendents to go on this journey. It is not clear to me, however, why you have been allowed into the secret.
- CLEMENTINE:** *(Warningly)* Alonzo! I thought we agreed! She can't do this alone. She needs a protector!
- UNDERDOG:** Haven't seen that movie!
- CLEMENTINE :** *(To Rosa.)* When passion *(To Underdog.)* and energy... when oppositions combine, the power multiplies ! *(To Alonzo.)* Remember how we met!
- ALONZO:** Si, si! *(Sighs.)* You will need all your power, yes... *(Increasing pressure directed to Underdog)...* to face the abyss, the bottomless lake, the waves of malevolence on your way to the cave in the Cinnamon mountains !
- UNDERDOG :** Yipes ! And I thought I was loco !
- ROSA:** *(Nervously)* But—cómo? Where are the Cinnamon Mountains...como vóy a...?
- CLEMENTINE:** *(Soothingly)* You will have a guide, the eagle. You may trust him with your life! He will lead you to the magic mountain.
- UNDERDOG:** *(Enthusiastically)* Did you say Magic Mountain—the ride?

- ALONZO:** *(Angrily picks up the frame and returns to his place on the wall. Addresses **Clementine**)* I told you we should have left the dog out of the plan!
- CLEMENTINE:** Alonzo, you'll see they will be fine. Rosa takes after me! *(She joins him behind the picture frame.)* Come, we must get back. Goodbye Rosa! Goodbye Underdog! *(**Rosa** kisses them through the frame.)*
- ALONZO:** Adios precious Rosa! Adios Clementina!*(**Alonzo** and **Clementine** exit in magic picture.)*
- LA LUNA:** No menores!
- ROSA:** Adios! *(Turns to **Underdog**)* Underdog...?
- UNDERDOG:** No—negativo—no! This is not a good idea!
- ROSA:** But we must! ¡Pero debemos!
- UNDERDOG:** I want to stay home and watch TV!.
- ROSA:** Doglet, no! I must do this and I am asking you to help me! Ayúdame. This is crucial/importante! I need you! ¡Te necesito!
- UNDERDOG:** So what will you give me?
- ROSA:** You will be doing something ...helping me, Tía Choco...all of us!
- UNDERDOG:** I get it! You're Lassie and I'm Snoopy *(Teasingly)* Well, let me think about it. *(Poses in mock thought.)*
- ROSA:** Underdog?
- UNDERDOG:** Well, what are you waiting for? Where is this so-called eagle? *(Both look up, searching.)*
- ROSA:** There!
- UNDERDOG:** Lets go! *(They hold hands, start to leave, and freeze as **Percussionist** plays a beat.)*

CHORUS: (*Enters with the sign.*) A dangerous journey!

Scene Nine: DANGEROUS JOURNEY

(*Enter Chorus. Heavy rock music accompanies a physical image of the dangerous journey undertaken by Rosa and Underdog.*)

CHORUS: (*Sing*) The voices of your ancestors
Always calling you
To help protect descendents
That find a life through you.

There's a journey you have got to take
When you realize your life's at stake.

(*Azul enters with the eagle puppet, soaring.*)

AZUL: (*Eagle cry*) Follow!

ROSA: See the eagle!

UNDERDOG: Follow him!

ROSA: Mi corazon palpita rapidamente.

UNDERDOG: My heart beats fast too!
How long can this last?

(*Rosa and Underdog follow the eagle/Azul through a maze of streets.*)

DANCER CHORUS:

Past A street, B street,
Tenth and E street
Twentieth, Thirtieth,
Seventieth and G street.

UNDERDOG: To the highway,
The freeway!

ROSA: The freeway!

UNDERDOG: We have to cross the freeway!

(*The Chorus create a physical image of many cars and drivers on the freeway.*)

CARS: BRRRRRRRRRr DDDDDRRRRRRR
MMMMMMm NNNNN!

(Rosa and Underdog wait anxiously at the edge of the freeway for a safe moment to cross.)

ROSA: ¡Ahora!

UNDERDOG: No not now!

ROSA: ¡Ahora!

UNDERDOG: Yes now!

(They cross. The city streets disappear. Winding road to the mountains. Rosa sings with chorus)

CHORUS: *(Song reprise.)*
There's a journey you have got to take
When you realize your life's at stake.

AZUL: *(Eagle cry)* Follow!

UNDERDOG: You hope it's not a big mistake! Wow, it's gotten dark! No street lights here!

*(They are heading towards the dark chasm. The **Chorus** create the threatening natural landscape.)*

ROSA: Underdog, where are you?

(Azul exits with eagle puppet.)

UNDERDOG: I'm at the edge of a cliff! I can't see!

ROSA: I can't see either! Feel your way! Follow my voice!

UNDERDOG: Ouch!

ROSA: *(In fright)* Ah! Underdog, the path is so narrow. Should we go back?

(Landslide of rocks, makes retreat impossible.)

- UNDERDOG:** Landslide! Oh, no! We're trapped. There's a dark chasm in front!
- ROSA:** No way out!
- AZUL:** *(Eagle voice)* There is a way! Jump!
- ROSA:** Did you say that? Underdog? *(Thinks he's disappeared.)* Underdog!
- AZUL:** *(Eagle voice)* Trust me! Jump into the dark abyss!
- UNDERDOG:** I'm here, Rosa... and I'm staying here!
- ROSA:** The eagle! It was the eagle said we must jump. We can trust the eagle! Clementine said so! Come on Underdog. It's the only way! Hold my hand. Now!
- UNDERDOG:** Not now! This is not happening!
- ROSA:** Now! *(They jump)* I'm falling! Mama!
- UNDERDOG:** Help us somebody! Help!
- ROSA:** Help! La Luna!
- (Azul returns as the full size eagle, whirling his wings. He catches Rosa and Underdog.)*
- AZUL:** Hold on to my wings! Hold on tight. *(They fly up and land safely. The music stops.)*
- ROSA:** ¡Gracias!
- UNDERDOG:** Man that was close! Better than Disneyland! *(Sees Azul)* Wow!
- ROSA:** Where did you come from?
- AZUL:** The sky! I have been waiting one hundred years for this. So...you are the fearless ones! I believe you have something for me.
- ROSA:** Yes! The Golden Warrior...Underdog? *(Underdog takes it out of the bag.)* Be careful! *(To Azul)* Here it is.

AZUL: Well done! Here is the cave; the ancestral home of the Warrior. *(A secret door reveals a small portico/altar.)* You may replace it.

ROSA: *(She places the statue in the cave.)* We did it!

UNDERDOG: Great! Let's go!

AZUL: Wait! Not so fast! There's more!

UNDERDOG: Oh, no!

AZUL: Now, to transform the evil, you must find the eyes—los ojos—of the Golden Warrior.

ROSA: Where? ¿Dónde?

AZUL: The eyes are stones hidden in the depths of this lake. *(Azul indicates the audience.)* Can you see them glistening?

ROSA: *(Rosa and Underdog look intently at the audience.)*
I see them!

UNDERDOG: But...there are hundreds of them...which ones should we choose?

AZUL: La Luna! *(La Luna enters.)* Her radiant light will direct you to where you must dive. There you will find the stones to bring sight to the golden warrior! Go now! *(They start to move.)* One last thing! Watch out for the waves of malevolence!

ROSA: What! *(Rosa and Underdog are awed by the moonlight glinting on the lake)* Look!

(La Luna joins Azul on stage. Atmospheric, peaceful, watery music fades in.)

UNDERDOG: I see...it is time...!

ROSA: Agua cristalinas!

(Rosa and Underdog dive into the water. Chorus enter as stars. They sing. La Luna and Azul perform a celestial dance.)

CHORUS: Tears!
 Stars of the sky!
 Tears!
 Tears of laughter!
 Tears of sorrow!
 Stars of the sky!

(Rosa and Underdog each find a glistening glass eye on two audience members. Magician's trick.)

UNDERDOG: Rosa! I've found one look! *(He holds up the glistening stone.)*

ROSA: *(She holds up another.)* They are beautiful!

(La Luna and Azul beckon. Rosa and Underdog make their way back to the cave. Chorus exit.)

UNDERDOG: *(To Rosa)* So much for the waves of mal-ever-whatever!

ROSA: Let us each put one in! *(As they approach the statue the roaring noise begins again and the statue exerts an invisible barrier. Rosa and Underdog strain, but cannot move forward.)* I can't move! I can't go any further!

UNDERDOG: *(He tries to fight away the power streaming toward him. He remembers)* Aargh...waves of malevolence!

(There is a tremendous repellant magnetic force coming from the warrior. A black clothed guard, physically identical to Mr.Pockets, protects the Warrior. Rosa and Underdog try various strategies to get close but are thrown back repeatedly.)

AZUL: Keep going!

ROSA: I feel sick! I feel weak!

LA LUNA: Put back the eyes!

UNDERDOG: I have an idea! *(He whispers to Rosa.)* I will cover for you... ready! *(Underdog takes on the Guard with martial arts trickery. Rosa manages to slide under the magnetic zone to behind the statue. She*

places the stones in the eye sockets of the Warrior. The roaring ceases. The guard disappears. They fall to the floor.) At last!

(A magical transformation occurs. Starry lights come on in the eyes of the statue. In the twinkling light it seems as if the statue is crying.)

AZUL: At long last! New eyes that may bring peace - y alegria al mundo.

ROSA: The Golden Warrior is crying... esta llorando. Why?

(Percussionist plays a beat. An actor brings on a sign and places it on the set. It reads "The Sorrows of the World".)

Scene Ten: THE SORROWS OF THE WORLD

LA LUNA: The sorrows of the world are flowing through the eyes of the Golden Warrior. The unshed tears for the meanness, the fights, the stress, and the wars of the people of the earth are flowing.

AZUL: Rosa, why are you crying?

ROSA: I see pictures of Cactus Street empty and the people homeless and hungry.

UNDERDOG: I see Mr. Pockets swimming in his own money!

ROSA: *(To La Luna)* Tell us what we can do to save Cactus St. Dimos que podemos hacer.

UNDERDOG: Let me get my paws on Mr. Pockets!

AZUL: That is not the way!

LA LUNA: Violence is not the way! There are other powers. Other secrets to learn.

AZUL: All problems, all people, even the meanest people have a reservoir of goodness, but hidden deep inside. Like the cactus in the desert with its thorns and prickles...

LA LUNA: In the core of the cactus is moisture, the water of life. Find a way to reach this.

UNDERDOG: Really! Goodness! Even in Mr. Pockets? I don't think so!

AZUL: I agree! Mr. Pockets is a cunning adversary. His thorns are sharp. You will have to find his weakness!

LA LUNA: Rosa, here is something that might help you. *(She turns to the cave and brings out a little bottle of water which she holds up to Rosa.)* Take some of these healing waters...agua especial...back with you to Cactus Street. You may find a quicker way to see the bright side...to see the stones in the pool...to see the stars in the sky! Here! *(Giving the bottle)* Go now, with our blessing!

ROSA: *(Takes the bottle.)* We will...si ven! ¡Gracias!

AZUL: Here! My gift to you Underdog..two slivers of precious quartz. You will find a way to use these when the time is right.

UNDERDOG: Thank you. Adios

(Rosa and Underdog exit. Azul exits.)

LA LUNA: So Rosa and Underdog make their way back to Cactus Street and find...Adelate...adelate...Mr. Pockets evicting the neighbors!

Scene Eleven: THE EVICTION II

*(Music. The back-in-time theme music from Scene 1 is repeated for this reverse action. The **Neighbors**, in slow motion, are blown back to a repetition of their eviction from Cactus St. by **Mr Pockets**)*

MR. POCKETS: You're in the way of progress. I'm going to raze this jumble of houses and build myself a tower, to show who's got the power, nowa-daze!

NEIGHBOR 2: What can we do!

TÍA CHOCO: How will we live?

MR. POCKETS: Not my problem!

(The neighbors, angry, turn on each other accusingly.)

NEIGHBOR 2: I knew we shouldn't sell our gardens to Mr. Pockets!

NEIGHBOR 1: So, why didn't you say anything at the time zipper lip?

NEIGHBOR 3: Loud mouth! Why didn't you?

NEIGHBOR 1: Tia Choco, why didn't you stop all this riff-raff from staying here?

NEIGHBOR 3: Yeah, why didn't you?

NEIGHBOR 2: You invited anyone and everyone!

NEIGHBOR 4: Yeah! Odd people! Crazy dog people!

NEIGHBOR 2: Speaking...gobbledegook languages we don't understand!

MR. POCKETS: She invited me!

NEIGHBOR 4: Yes - you invited Mr. Pockets too! It's all your fault!

NEIGHBOR 2: Tia Choco's to blame!

NEIGHBOR 1: On that we all agree! Tia Choco, it's your fault!
(Neighbors grumble blaming Tia Choco.)

(Rosa and Underdog enter, out of breath. They break into the scene repetition.)

ROSA+UNDERDOG:
Wait! Wait!

TIA CHOCO: Rosa, Underdog! Thank goodness! Where did you go? Dreadful things are happening here...

ROSA: *(To Neighbors.)* What's going on here?

- NEIGHBOR:** Tia Choco's to blame for losing our houses!
- UNDERDOG:** Tia Choco threw you guys out?
- ODD JOB:** Well...actually ...it was...
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Odd Job's fault!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** Tia Choco's fault!
- NEIGHBOR 3+4:** *(To each other)* It was your fault!
- ROSA:** Stop! As a daughter of Cactus Street I beg you to think! Look at you! Who invited you to live here? Who?
- NEIGHBOR 2:** *(Taken aback)* Well, Tia Choco did!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Yes, Tia Choco!
- ROSA:** So, who's to blame here?
- ODD JOB:** Me! I'm to blame!
- NEIGHBOR 3:** No, me!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** My fault!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Actually, not!
- NEIGHBOR 4:** Actually it was...
- NEIGHBOR 3:** It was...*(Neighbors turn to look at Mr. Pockets. He is reclining expansively in Tia Choco's house.)*
- ROSA:** Who is it?
- UNDERDOG:** Kodak moment!
- (Mr. Pockets notes their intense scrutiny and plans a timely exit.)*
- TIA CHOCO:** You leaving, Mr. Pockets?
- MR. POCKETS:** M.mm...I got something to take care of! I got something...

NEIGHBOR 1: Right! You got something...

NEIGHBOR 2+3: Something in your pocket?

MR. POCKETS: No, I assure you, I've got nothing in my pocket!

(Neighbors parody Mr Pockets earlier flamboyant style and advance as a gang, en bloc, clicking fingers.)

NEIGHBOR 3: You put something...*

NEIGHBOR 4: *(Interjecting)* Oh yes, you did!

NEIGHBOR 1: Something in your pocket. * *

NEIGHBOR 2: Show us something...* *

NEIGHBOR 3: Something from your pocket...Mr. Pockets!

MR. POCKETS: Get back! You've got it all wrong! *(He tries to evade the Neighbors. Underdog restrains him, by biting his coat.)* Nice doggie!

(The neighbors crowd around. They open the front of his coat revealing many pockets with papers inserted.)

TIA CHOCO: Will you look at that! Pockets full of paper!

ROSA: These your calling cards, Mr. Pockets? *(She draws one paper, then another and another, and passes them on to everyone.)*

TIA CHOCO: *(Reads)* Contract! I agree to give my house to Mr. Pockets if....

NEIGHBOR 1: *(Reads)* Contract! I agree to receive half tomorrow for what I did today.

NEIGHBOR 2: *(Reads)* Memo! Cactus Street Tower in production phase.

NEIGHBOR 1: *(Reads)* I will work for less than minimum pay!

NEIGHBOR 3: Greedy Pockets! Let's give him an answer to the eviction notice!

NEIGHBOR 4: Catch him!

(Neighbors advance, menacingly)

- ROSA:** Wait neighbors! Mr. Pockets, here's an offer on your own terms. If you will calculate the value of Cactus street, we'll buy back the houses ourselves!
- MR. POCKETS:** Oh, yes! And how to you plan to pay me, Miss? Ten year mortgage? Ha! Don't be funny! You haven't any money...you don't count!
- ROSA:** But I do! I have treasures! Underdog and I have treasures in our pockets, better than payment.
- MR. POCKETS:** Don't waste my time with trash about treasures. And get out of my way – the bulldozers are coming today!

*(The **Neighbors**, outraged, prepare to attack.)*

- NEIGHBOR 4:** Enough! Let's teach him a lesson!
- NEIGHBOR 3:** Yeah! Let's make a mob!
- NEIGHBOR 2:** Yeah! Punch him and kick him!
- NEIGHBOR 1:** Let's tear him to shreds!
- UNDERDOG:** Neighbors! Stop! Get a grip! *(The **Neighbors** freeze in threatening postures. **Mr Pockets** cowers.)* Violence is not the way! Rosa, it is time!
- ROSA:** Here! *(She produces the bottle of special water.)*

*(**Rosa** and **Underdog** pour a little water in their hands, dip fingers and flick water drops over the frozen mob.)*

- UNDERDOG:** Here's a message from the ancestors to cool you down! *(As the water drops reach them, the aggression drains from the **Neighbors**.)*
- MR. POCKETS:** Whew! I'm getting very hot.
- ROSA:** See! Treasure! We have brought you the tears of The golden warrior, that may shield you from harm. Agua especial! *(She shows him the bottle of water.)* Watch this! *(She takes the bottle and pours*

a few drops on to a cactus. Magically, flowers bloom.)

NEIGHBORS: *(Gasp!)* Aah!

ROSA: Think what you can do with this! Take a sip, make a wish! You might become richer than you ever imagined.

MR. POCKETS: Aha, its magic is it? You mean I can make a wish?

ROSA: Yes...drink some! *(He takes a sip, but seems unaffected.)*

MR. POCKETS: Pah! You are wasting my time! It's just water! And as for the flower, it's nothing but an old magic trick. I should know! As I expected, you have no way to pay!

ROSA: Well, I'm not done yet. There's more! Underdog?

UNDERDOG: Now?

ROSA: Yes, now!

(Underdog offers the stones to Mr. Pockets.)

MR. POCKETS: Stones!

UNDERDOG: Precious stones! Take them!

ROSA: Look through them. Look at the light!

1(Mr. Pockets holds the stones to his eyes. Faint, watery, crystal music fades in. All fall under a spell.)

MR. POCKETS: The colors! Oh my - oh goodness me! *(Entranced, he gazes in many directions)*
Refractions and multi-faceted views,
Through prisms and rainbows I can choose,
To see,
The way things work most perfectly! *(He removes the stones but is compelled to put them back again.)*
Amazingly!
(He scrutinize floors, walls etc.)
The foundations are cracking, the pipes are all leaking!

The freeway emits a poisonous fume.
This neighborhood is quite the worst in the city,
Yet the colors are so very pretty!

TIA CHOCO: Let me see! (*Mr. Pockets slowly hands the stones to Tia Choco..*)
Rainbows and prisms...Oh my! Through this lens I
can see all
The amazing possibilities, a wealth of talent in
you,(*indicating various neighbors*) and in you, and
in you...all of us! Here Rosa !

UNDERDOG: So Rosa, look at Mr. Pockets. What do you see?

ROSA: Mr. Pockets, look up at me!

MR. POCKETS: Ah! I can't stand the scrutiny!
A mirror appears in front of me!
And an inscription which appears to be true...
I am Pockets, full of greed,
I would rob you beyond my need.
(*Sees Tia Choco is still holding Eviction notice. He
gestures for it. She hesitantly hands it to him.*) Give
me that eviction notice, Tia Choco. I know what to
do with it!
(*He tears the notice in two. The neighborhood is
very still.*) Something's come over me...I feel so
heavy ...and incredibly sad! (*Staggers*) I can't
stand up... (*Falls.*)
Please forgive me! Perdona me...

TIA CHOCO: Oh, Mr. Pockets. Here ! (*Helps him stand*) It's your
heavy coat dragging you down! You can take it off!

MR. POCKETS: (*Underdog and Rosa help him out of the coat*) Oh,
that feels good! Infinitely better! (*He recovers.
Rolls up his sleeves.*) Well then, Rosa... We don't
have much time. Let's get to work! Let's start
building a new Cactus Street! Right now! (*He
begins to sing. All join him singing. They dance. La
Luna and Azul appear in the sky. The Magic
Portrait glows.*)

Scene Twelve: THE NEW CACTUS STREET

LA LUNA: For a while they have it...a vision of a new Cactus
Street that they will create! Though strangers, their

dream of belonging holds them together. They work to dispel the cloud and build a safe place for the children's children of the neighbors on Cactus Street. And if you happen to pass through one day, you will see a fountain, topped by two slivers of quartz stone, flowing from the place where the tears of the Golden Warrior fell. Look up ! High under the freeway you will see a mural, a swirling gallery of portraits, folded into the wings of a giant eagle.

END OF PLAY

Appendix