

# ASTOLFO

*Clotaldo holds the sword to his breast, closes his eyes, turns to the audience and begins a soliloquy.*

CLOTALDO. Heaven help me! What's this I--

CLARIN. Soliloquy alert.

CLOTALDO. Take them away!

*The guards blindfold Rosaura and Clarin and take them off. Clotaldo is left alone.*

CLOTALDO. What the fuck is going on. I'm losing my freakin' mind over here. Is this real? This sword--this one right here--is the same one that I left with Volante, the mother of my illegitimate daughter. So before I leave I give her this sword--this sword!--and told her that someday that girl would find me. Like a magnet. Like a little robin travels thousands of miles and then finds her nest. Now this boy shows up with the freakin' self-same sword. The only connection to my long-lost mijita. But there's something else: when I laid eyes on this boy, my heart fluttered. Like I was looking in a mirror or something. What do I do? If I take him to El Carne King, which is my duty, the boy might die before I find mi mijita. If I hide him from El Carne King, I'm not doing my job. Self-love over here. Loyalty over here. Me standing here right in the middle. Que pepinillo!

*Exits.*

## Start

### ACT I, SCENE 2

*Inside the breakroom. ASTOLFO and ESTRELLA enter for an appointment. They are both wearing Whole Foods uniforms. Muzak plays. They wait in silence.*

ASTOLFO. Splendid breakroom, I must say.

ESTRELLA. For a Vallarta.

*More silence.*

ASTOLFO. Well.

ESTRELLA. Well.

ASTOLFO. I must say, this music becomes you.

ESTRELLA. Must you say it?

ASTOLFO. It is fitting, at the sight of your outstanding beams of light...

ESTRELLA. Here we go.

ASTOLFO. ...which were once comets, that various salvos are intermingled by the drums and trumpets, and the birds y las fuentes; since con música igual and supreme wondrousness, a tu vista celestial unos, clarines de pluma, y otras, aves de metal; ya así os saludan, señora, as their queen, las balas, los pájaros como a Aurora, las trompetas como a Flora; porque sois, burlando el día que ya la noche destierra, Aurora en el alegría, Flora en paz, Palas en guerra, y queen in my soul.

ESTRELLA. Okay, mira. Astolfo--

ASTOLFO. You don't find me sincere, Estrella?

ESTRELLA. Es-tray-ya. Es-TRAY-YA. Can sincerity seethe?

ASTOLFO. Fine, we'll toss the courtly manners and talk. Politics? Economics? The Shirataki White Yam Noodle Substitute that's on sale this week at Whole Foods, perhaps?

ESTRELLA. How about nothing?

ASTOLFO. We were called here for a reason.

ESTRELLA. I know.

ASTOLFO. My uncle Basilio is getting old.

ESTRELLA. I know.

ASTOLFO. This may be the meeting when he turns over this Vallarta to me. I want it to proceed without impediments.

ESTRELLA. I know.

ASTOLFO. I'm his only heir, you know.

ESTRELLA. I know.

ASTOLFO. His only son died in childbirth. (*beat*) You know?

ESTRELLA. I know!

ASTOLFO. So, that makes me the rightful heir to the throne--

ESTRELLA. Of El Carne King of Vallarta yes I know.

ASTOLFO. Yes, but they don't know! (*gestures to audience*)

**End**

~~ESTRELLA. What they also don't know is that you and I were lovers and assistant managers at the Whole Foods in El Lago de Toluca until you were exposed *in flagrante delicto* with one of the new cashiers and you were demoted to stockboy and I ceremoniously deposited your culo onto Riverside Drive and now you've dragged me up all the way up here --on the 170, the 5, the 118, and the 210--with some promise of something 'spectacular, really spectacular,' which 'will change your life forever, Estrella, but that you won't reveal to me, so I suppose, yeah, now they know you. They know all about you now, pocho.~~

~~*Beat.*~~

~~ASTOLFO. Nevertheless. Would it not be the best for both the people of Los Angeles and our own interests...if we joined forces?~~

~~ESTRELLA. What exactly is it you're proposing?~~