

Original Television Scripted Series
Written by: Norma Ruiz Guerrero
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FRATZ

EXT. MEXICO/US BORDER

Long lines of cars are waiting to cross the border from Cd. Juarez into the El Paso, ALFREDO 18, is sitting in a 1978 convertable VW, deep in thought, his wild mane of hair blows in the wind.

His narrates in a thick Mexican accent as he sits watching the cars cross the border.

"Growing up on the Mexico/US border is both a blessing and a curse. We have a love/hate relationship with Gabachos; it's like that expression, 'So close to the US and so far from God.' I mean, sure who doesn't love to drive across the border to get Abercrombie Finch jeans, an iPad at the Apple Store or see Iron Man without subtitles but there's something awesome about driving back home to Mexico."

He approaches a Latino-looking immigration officer, shows him his student visa, officer examines it carefully, types something on the computer, peers in the back of the car suspiciously and waives him over to the customs area.

"I mean sure Cd. Juarez is no Disneyland, but the other side's hostile, I mean even the Chicanos treat you badly, like these wanna be drug czars on the border treating me like a drug dealer when I'm just trying to get to school."

He pulls into the customs area, is getting frisked, while his car is being meticulously torn apart by other customs agents and a dog.

"I wouldn't say I hate the US, but I wouldn't say I like it either and it always gets me how Gringos hate it when you don't LOVE their country, they get all bent out of shape over it. I think it's because they don't know their history. I like to believe that maybe they'd be embarrassed if they knew how they're forefathers' lied, cheated and then slaughtered all those poor Indian people and how they hacked up all the buffalo for no apparent reason."

Customs guys give him the green light, Alfredo starts gathering his stuff which has been left in total disarray.

"So when I got my acceptance letter from the university in the US, with a full 'soccer'scholarship, I almost got sick thinking about spending 4 years with the descendents of buffalo murderers, but mostly because I play FÚTBOL not fucking soccer. I never really thought I'd get in and honestly deep down, I never wanted to get in.

We follow his car on the highway, passing serveral towns as he drives to college.

"...but here's the thing, in Mexico there are only 3 ways to make money, you inherit it, you sell drugs or you sell time-shares. I have no inheritance, I don't do drugs and who the hell wants to sell time-shares?! So I guess I gotta go."

We see VW disappear into the highway.

EXT. ARRIVAL DAY AT UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Students, parents, boxes and suitcases fill the campus.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS DORMS - DAY

A cab drives up to the front of the dorm, CARLOS 17, computer science major/amateur DJ from Madrid, hiper, skinny, grabs his backpack jumps out and rushes out grabs a suitcase from the trunk and then over to the other side to open the door for his aunt DOLORES, 70'ish, an outlandishly dressed woman with a large hat and dark glasses, she is Carlos' financial mentor, an old film star who has accompanied him from Spain to get him settled in.

CARLOS

Don't get out tia, I just want you to get some fresh air, I'll throw my stuff inside and we can go to your hotel and get you settled in. I'll only be a few minutes, vale guapa?

He kisses her on the forehead and rushes off.

DOLORES

Si, si mi amor, go on take your time, have the cab driver help you carry everything don't strain yourself my darling.

She turns outwardly and places her legs outside of the car and proceeds to insert a cigarette into a long, silver cigarette holder, lights it and then pulls out an elegant silver flask and takes a secretive swig.

INT. CARLOS'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Carlos is rushing around opening boxes in his dorm room to make sure all his DJ equipment has been delivered unscathed. He checks off his list and rushes out.

INT. GUSTAVO'S DORM ROOM - DAY

GUSTAVO, 21, tall, dark and handsome Jewish Argentinian, with manly, old movie star looks (young Don Draper), impeccably dressed like out of a magazine, he is discretely gay, getting his Masters in Architecture. His boyfriend, LUIS, average looking and a tad effeminite has come from Buenos Aires to help him settle in, he looks pensive as he carefully puts away Gustavo's elegant clothes and shoes. Gustavo is arranging few but exquisite high design decorative & art pieces.

LUIS

I'm worried Gustavo...(dramatic pause) I don't know what will happen to us in a whole year of separation. It concerns me.

Gustavo responds in a cold but comforting tone, without looking up from what he is doing.

GUSTAVO

Luis, nothing will happen in one year. It will be gone before you know it. I won't have time for anything but school, or do you think that getting a masters is a simple task?

Luis walks over the window.

LUIS

No of course not, but temptation is everywhere, look at all these beautiful boys, for God's sake you'll be living in the middle of this...it will be the end of us, I know it, I can feel it...just...

Gustavo's tone harshens, still not looking away from what he's doing.

GUSTAVO

Luis stop it! We're not having this conversation again, if you can't refrain from these emotional outbursts then maybe we should take a break and we can re-visit our relationship when I get back to Buenos Aires, I will not tolerate added stress.

Luis whips around with a frightened look on his face.

LUIS

(walks over to Gustavo)
All right, all right I'm sorry darling. You're right, I'm done with this conversation. Ni una palabra mas! Let's finish up here and go out and celebrate, si?

They embrace, kiss passionately and fall on the bed caressing.

EXT. UNIVERSITY DORM PARKING LOT - DAY

ALFREDO drives into the parking lot of the campus, parks his car, looks around and starts hitting the dashboard angrily then buries his head on the steering wheel.

EXT. FLASH BACK - CHIHUAHUA MEXICO, STREET VIEW - DAY

A quaint street with modest houses, gardens filled with Bougainvilleas, street vendor carts and kids playing on the street.

INT. ALFREDO'S KITCHEN - DAY

In a small kitchen, Alfredo and his parents are sitting at the table arguing.

ALFREDO

Papá, you don't understand, if I play soccer for an American university, it'll destroy any chance I have of going pro in Mexico, I'll be the laughing stock!

ALFREDO'S FATHER

Do you have any idea what this scholarship means for your future?

(MORE)

ALFREDO'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Look at your brother, all that time he wasted to make the 'selección' and for what?! To end up wearing cheap suits and working for \$300 a month! Is that what you want?! Goddamit Alfredo, we're not discussing this anymore, you're going and that's that!

Alfredo's slams his hand on the table, gets up knocking down the chair, his mother paces the room anxiously, flashes her husband a dirty look and walks over and puts her arm around him.

ALFREDO'S MOTHER

Listen to me Alfredito, you ARE an amazing athlete but your father is right you have to think about your future, you can't throw away an opportunity like this, not with what's going on in this country, you have to be reasonable. And you're uncle's assured me that it's a safe town and a very good school.

ALFREDO

My uncle! Yeah that's just what I need, my uncle hanging around the school, Dios mio mamá!

EXT. FLASH FORWARD - UNIVERSITY CAMPUS PARKING LOT - DAY

Alfredo looks up from the steering, gets out of the car and begins unloading, he holds his soccer ball staring at it sadly, as he's reaching for a suitcase, he stops and looks up, he sniffs and looks around to see where the scent is coming from, he spots a taco truck across the street and throws the ball back in the car and walks over.

ALFREDO

Hey? Give me an order of tacos al carbon and a Jarritos de piña.

PEPE, 14, short stocky Mexican undocumented immigrant, good natured and ambitious, happily begins to make the tacos.

PEPE

Right away, hey you're from Mexico? I noticed your car has Mexican plates, great car, you don't see too many Bochitoss around here, my name is Jose but everybody calls me Pepe, what's yours?

Pepe becomes distracted from his cooking, leaning over the counter and chatting.

ALFREDO

Yeah, hey how are those tacos coming along?

Pepe jumps back into food preparation mode, returning quickly with the tacos.

PEPE

Sorry about that, I don't get to meet too many Mexicans around here, I got distracted. Here you go, I gave you an extra one, cause you're probably real hungry, right?

Alfredo takes his tacos, adds salsa, and starts eating. nodding approvingly.

ALFREDO

Thanks Pepe these are pretty good for a Mexigringo, my name's Alfredo.

A scrawny, butt ugly little dog comes up to Alfredo and starts tugging at his pant leg and whining, Alfredo shakes his leg to get him to go but the dog hangs on swaying back and forth on Alfredo's the leg.

ALFREDO (CONT'D)

Orale pinche perro! Sácase cabrón!

Alfredo tears off a piece of tortilla and throws it to get rid of him.

The mutt runs after the food and comes right back.

PEPE

Solovino! Get out of here! Sorry about that.

ALFREDO

Where'd you get such an ugly dog, did you smuggle him in from Mexico?

PEPE

Hahaha that's pretty funny, nah he just showed up and I kept him because he reminds of the street dogs back home. I'm from Michoacan, are you a student, what are you studying?

Alfredo seems lost in thought.

ALFREDO

Give me another order of tacos please, I'm from Chihuahua and yes I'm a student, journalism.

PEPE

Wow! Like Jorge Ramos! One day I'm going to college too, my parents want me to keep working because the taco truck does so well but I have 8 brothers and sisters you know, so I figure that as soon as a Juancho's old enough he can take over, he hates school, and I can go back fulltime, you know? I wanna be an engineer and build bridges, my grades a real good too, what do you think?

Alfredo finish up his food, lights a cigarette and puts his hand in his jeans.

ALFREDO

Yeah, that's great, how much do I owe you? I have to go.

PEPE

Nothing paisa! It's on the house! Hey it's your bienvenida present, but come back, ok, whenever you like, everyday if want. I have machaca and barbacoa on the weekends.

Smiling appreciatively at Pepe.

ALFREDO

Orale, gracias compa, so I'll see you later.

Alfredo walks away.

PEPE

Adios Alfredo! Vuelva pronto!

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

GABRIEL 18, preppy uber rich Colombian, blonde haired, blue-eyed, business major is dressed in a sport jacket standing next to a stretch limo, ensconced in his iPhone while the driver unpacks and carries his Louie Vitton suitcases in and out of the dorm building. His mother MAGDALENA, 40, elegant and beautiful, nervously lashes out instructions to the driver while staring at an old beat up station wagon, poor-looking Latino kids unloading boxes and mix matched suitcases, laughing and cutting up.

MAGDALENA

(Glaring at the stationwagon crowd)

Gabby, pleeeaaase let me get you a nice apt, I don't understand why you insist on living here, look at this place, what am I going to tell your father, this place looks dangerous.

GABRIEL

Mamá stop it, it's ok.

MAGDALENA

It's not ok, how can we protect you here? You never said you were going to live in public housing.

GABRIEL

It's not public housing, it's the dorms. Mamá, this isn't Colombia, you don't have to protect me anymore. Besides it'll be fun here, please let it go, I've made up my mind. When are you going back?

MAGDALENA

Tomorrow, unless you want me to stay longer, I can stay and help you find an apt or a house if you prefer. I'll stay as long as you want me to.

Never taking her eyes off the poor Mexican looking family in the old station wagon.

MAGDALENA (CONT'D)

Just think about it amorcito, please, and we can discuss it tonight over dinner, ok?

The driver is finished unloading and is standing at attention waiting for instructions.

GABRIEL

Mamá, I'm staying here, you're going home and I'll see you tonight for dinner.

He hugs and kisses her, pushing her into the limo.

MAGDALENA

Wait, let me give you more money.

She pulls out a wad of hundreds and hands it to him.

GABRIEL

Mamá, put that away you're embarrassing me, I already have enough money in the bank plus the 500 credit cards you gave me.

MAGDALENA

Don't be so sarcastic, I swear I don't know where you get that attitude from...

He signals the driver to leave by waving his hand in an authoritative and arrogant manner, the driver nods and drives off with his mom still talking.

EXT. UNIVERSITY SAME TIME - DAY

The family in the old station wagon are finishing up unpacking, kids are unstrapping an expensive-looking bike from the roof of the car. MANNY, 17 Mexican/American from Albuquerque NM, a Film major, is saying goodbye to his family, he is leaning into car where his grandmother is blessing him. His 9 year old brother is running around with Manny's camera video taping everything and everybody. Manny walks over to his parents, DOÑA LUPE and DON MANUEL who are looking around at the campus and dorm building in amazement.

DOÑA LUPE

Hijo, this place is so beautiful!

DON MANUEL

I'm very proud of you son, but I don't want you getting big ideas just because you live with the rich people now, I expect you to be a good example for your brothers and sisters.

Manny walks over with a huge grin on his face and throws his arms around both of them.

MANNY

I won't, I'll always be a kid from 'Burque! It IS a good school dad, thank you.

Manny's beautiful 16 year old sister SANDRA comes over to hug him.

SANDRA

Hey hermano, so you think your all that now just beause your going to a Gringo school, eh?

MANNY

Yeah I do, hey don't forget to send me some tortillas de harina from home once in a while, oh wait I forgot you don't know how to do anything.

SANDRA

Shut up menso!

She punches him in the arm and they crack up. His wild little brother is running around with the video camera and Manny reaches over and grabs and pulls him by the back of the shirt.

MANNY

Hey, get over here and give me that camera, how many times I gotta tell you it's not a toy! (hugging him)
Hey carnalito, you gonna behave while I'm gone?

Wild kid nods and hugs him.

DON MANUEL

Ok, vámonos! Everybody get in the car we have a long drive back.

His mom blesses him and they all hug it out again.

DOÑA LUPE

Que Dios te me cuide hijo.