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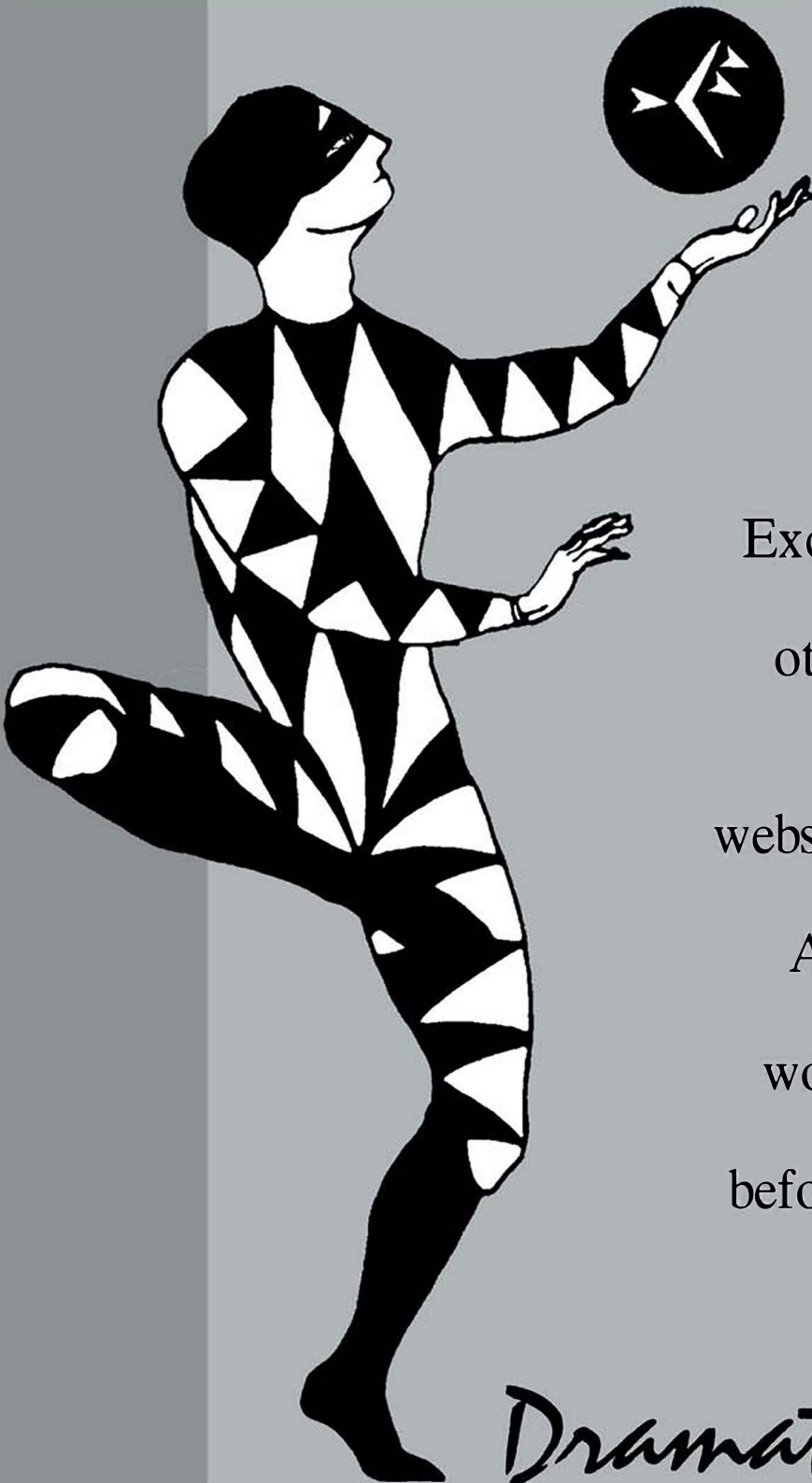
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*Dramatic Publishing*



# **Sal Y Pimienta**

**(Salt & Pepper)**

**(Bilingual Version)**

By

**JOSÉ CRUZ GONZÁLEZ**



**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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Dedicated to Rubén Sierra.

*Salt & Pepper* was first presented as a staged reading in June 2000, at the Kennedy Center, as part of New Visions/New Voices.

*Salt & Pepper* was read at Childsplay’s New Play Project on May 23, 2000, in Tempe, Ariz. The New Play Project was made possible in part by a generous grant from The Whiteman Family. It subsequently premiered at Childsplay on Oct. 27 through Nov. 19, 2000, at the Tempe Performing Arts Center.

Cast:

Hannah ..... Lisa Randolph Kindall  
Andy ..... Jere Luisi  
Salt ..... Gordon Waggoner  
Old Man ..... Jon Gentry and D. Scott Withers  
Pepper ..... Andréa Morales

Production Staff and Crew:

Director ..... Graham Whitehead  
Set/Costume Design ..... Gro Johre  
Lighting Design ..... Paul Black  
Sound Design ..... Julie Randolph  
Fight Choreography ..... Larry Grubbs  
Properties Master ..... Pamela Houser  
Stage Manager ..... Sarah Ternan  
Production Manager ..... Anthony Runfola  
Technical Director ..... Andrew Campbell  
Scenic Artist ..... Jolane Morgan  
Master Carpenter ..... Dave Ekholm  
Costume Construction/Wardrobe Supervisor ..... D. Daniel Hollingshead  
Master Electrician ..... Tim Monson  
Electrician ..... Cassandra Flynn

The world premiere production was presented as part of The Whiteman Foundation New Plays Program. Significant additional funding came from The Flinn Foundation, COMPAS, The Children’s Theatre Foundation and Boeing Employees Community Fund, and the Children’s Theatre Foundation of America.

Special thanks to Dan O’Neill and Jenny Lucier, David Lucier/The Barnes House, David and Sonja Saar, Graham and Margaret Whitehead, Rosemary and Patrick Walsh, Debra K. Stevens, and Childsplay resident company and staff, Palabras, Gordon Waggoner, and my family, Cory, Casey and Kelsey.

The Zach Theatre (Austin, Texas) presented the bilingual version of *Sal Y Pimienta (Salt & Pepper)* in the fall of 2013.

## **Salt & Pepper (Bilingual Version)**

### CHARACTERS

SAL: a 10-year-old boy. Loves his grandpa and brother.

PIMIENTA: a 10-year-old Latina girl. She dresses like a boy. She likes to read books.

EL VIEJO: SAL and ANDRÉS' grandfather. ANA's father. In his 50s. He is a hard man to live with.

ANDRÉS: a 17-year-old boy. SAL's older brother. Very protective of SAL.

ANA: appears as a memory. She has a beautiful singing voice. She is SAL and ANDRÉS' mother.

Note: Words italicized in Spanish should be pronounced in Spanish.

# Salt & Pepper (Bilingual Version)

## SCENE 1

SETTING: *Onstage are letters of the alphabet scattered about. They come in all different shapes and sizes. The letter characters are not in any recognizable order. They may be used to create settings as well as words. The play takes place in a small agricultural town somewhere near a desert. The year is 1952.*

AT RISE: *ANA appears onstage. There's a glow about her. ANA is a memory. She throws small paper letters up into the air. She is a young woman. She wears a plain cotton dress. She wears no shoes.*

ANA (*singing*).

HUSH 'N' BYE  
DON'T YOU CRY  
OH, YOU PRETTY LITTLE BABIES  
  
WHEN YOU WAKE  
YOU'LL GET SWEET CAKE  
AND ALL THE PRETTY LITTLE PONIES  
  
A BROWN AND A GREY  
AND A BLACK AND A BAY  
ALL THE PRETTY LITTLE PONIES

EL VIEJO (*offstage*). *¿Ana?*

*(ANA runs and hides. EL VIEJO, ANA's father, enters. He is half dressed in overalls and carries a lantern. He wears no shoes.)*

EL VIEJO. *Ana, ¿dónde estás?*

ANA. *Escondida, Daddy! You gotta find me!*

EL VIEJO. *Ana, ya es muy noche.*

ANA. *¿Dónde estoy?*

EL VIEJO. *Vas a coger un resfriado.*

ANA. *It's been rainin' letters again.*

EL VIEJO. *¿Letras?*

ANA. *In all shapes and sizes mixed together.*

*(ANA throws some letters into the air. She runs and hides again. EL VIEJO searches for her.)*

EL VIEJO. *¿Dónde estás?*

ANA. *He recogido un montón de ellas, ¿ves? ¿No es maravilloso, Daddy?*

*(ANA throws some more letters into the air. She runs off again. EL VIEJO searches for her.)*

EL VIEJO. *Hija, vámonos pa'dentro, donde es más seguro.*

ANA. I can't, Daddy.

EL VIEJO. *¿Por qué no?*

ANA. 'Cause I'm writin' you a postcard.

EL VIEJO. A postcard?

ANA. Give up?

EL VIEJO. *No.*

ANA. I found me the most pretty one you ever seen. *¡Mira!*

*(ANA's hand appears. She holds up a small postcard.)*

EL VIEJO. *¡Ahí estás!*

ANA. It's a picture of the Grand Ole Opry. Ain't it the most beautiful buildin' you ever seen? It's where I'm gonna make my professional debut.

EL VIEJO. Debut? *¿Qué es eso?*

ANA. It means I'm gonna sing in front of the whole world, Daddy. And you gonna be proud of me. People will want my autograph and want me to star in their Hollywood pictures!

EL VIEJO. *Déjame ver tu frente.*

ANA. I ain't got a fever!

*(ANA crosses away from him.)*

EL VIEJO. You ain't makin' any sense, *Ana.*

ANA. That's 'cause it's a dream, Daddy.

EL VIEJO. *¿Un sueño?*

ANA. And it's yours.

EL VIEJO. *¿Mi sueño?*

ANA. Yes, sir. Rememberin' how things were. Good and bad. But there isn't much time.

EL VIEJO. Time for what?

ANA. Before I go away.

EL VIEJO. *¿Por qué quieres hacer eso?*

ANA. It's in the postcard, Daddy. All you gotta do is read it.

EL VIEJO. *Ana, no te puedes ir.*

ANA. Daddy, I gotta go and find my future.

EL VIEJO. But it's here with your boys and me.

ANA. It's in the wind callin' to me.

EL VIEJO. *¿Qué viento?*

ANA. The same one that brings the rain and the dust storms. It's callin' my name wantin' to sweep me up and take me far away.

EL VIEJO. *¿Adónde?*

ANA. Anywhere my little songs will be heard, Daddy.

EL VIEJO. There's nothin' but heartache out there. *Lo he visto. Lo he sentido.*

ANA. That's all I've ever known, but not no more. I'm gonna let that wind carry me and my babies into the future and take us wherever it wants.



EL VIEJO. But them *muchachitos* are too little to go anywhere.

ANA. That's why I need your help, Daddy. You gotta come with me.

EL VIEJO. I ain't goin' nowhere and neither are you.

ANA. If I don't go now, I'll just wither away and die. Can't you understand?

EL VIEJO. No, I don't. You gotta place here. Ain't that enough?

ANA. I made up my mind.

EL VIEJO. *¡Te prohíbo que te vayas!*

ANA. I'm takin' my babies with me.

EL VIEJO. *No, no te los llevas.* You wanna go chase after some stupid dream then go, *pero esos muchachos se quedan aquí conmigo.*

ANA. No.

EL VIEJO. *Ya escogiste. ¡Vete!*

ANA. *Por favor, Daddy ...*

EL VIEJO. *¡Salte de mi casa! ¡Vete!*

*(ANA rushes away, dropping the postcard.)*

EL VIEJO. *¡¿¡Ana!?! ¡¿¡Ana!?!*

ANA *(singing)*.

HUSH 'N' BYE

DON'T YOU CRY ...

EL VIEJO. *¡No te vayas!*

ANA *(singing)*.

OH, YOU PRETTY LITTLE BABIES ...

EL VIEJO. *¡Ana!*

*(EL VIEJO stands there for a moment alone. He sees the postcard lying on the ground. He picks it up, crumples it and throws it back on the ground. A moment later, he picks it up and places it in his pocket.)*

## SCENE 2

*(A ranchera song is heard. ANDRÉS, a 17-year-old boy, enters, flipping a large blue pancake from a frying pan high into the air. He grabs a plate of multicolored pancakes stacked atop one another. SAL, ANDRÉS' younger brother, rushes in, wearing a metal pot on his head and carrying a broom as weapon. He falls to the floor, shooting everything in sight.)*

SAL. Pa-pow! Pa-pow! Pa-pow! Pa-pa-pa-pow!

*(Enemy fire is returned at SAL.)*

SAL *(cont'd)*. Ughhh!!! Pow! Ughhh!

*(SAL's death is dramatic. He falls onto one of the letters. Beat.)*

SAL *(cont'd, opening his eyes)*. You wanna play war, Andrés?

ANDRÉS. No.

SAL. Come on! I'll be the enemy.

ANDRÉS. Go away, *Sal*. Can't you see I'm busy?

SAL. What'cha doin'?

ANDRÉS. Makin' breakfast.

SAL. *¿Panqueques?*

ANDRÉS. Yup.

SAL. *¿De colores?*

ANDRÉS. Yup.

SAL. *¿Qué colores estás haciendo?*

ANDRÉS. *Tengo verde, amarillo y azul.*

*(ANDRÉS flips the blue pancake high into the air and catches it with the plate of colored pancakes.)*

SAL. Woah! Can I help?

ANDRÉS. Take that stupid pot off your head.

SAL. *Andrés*, I can't do that.

ANDRÉS. Why not?

SAL. 'Cause it's my helmet! It's my only protection.

ANDRÉS. Against what?

SAL. The enemy. They're all around. Hidin'. *Esperando el momento para matarme.*

ANDRÉS. Well, you look real stupid, *Sal*.

SAL. I ain't stupid!

ANDRÉS. Fine, then you can't help!

SAL. OK, there, see!

*(SAL drops his helmet to the floor.)*

ANDRÉS. Too late.

SAL. *¡Andrés!*

ANDRÉS. I guess there's nothin' to save you now!

SAL. Huh?

ANDRÉS. From the hounds of war!

*(ANDRÉS howls loudly and then sticks his arms out and flies by SAL, making airplane noises.)*

SAL. Air raid!

*(SAL grabs the pot and puts it back on his head. ANDRÉS returns, strafing SAL. SAL uses his broom as an anti-aircraft gun.)*

ANDRÉS. I'm hit!

SAL. Yeah!

ANDRÉS. But now I'm a kamikaze!

SAL. Oh, no, duck for cover!

ANDRÉS. Too late!

(*ANDRÉS crashes into SAL. SAL and ANDRÉS lie there dead. Beat.*)

SAL (*jumping up*). I won!

ANDRÉS. No you didn't! You're dead!

SAL. No, I'm not, see?! It was my general!

ANDRÉS. What?!

SAL. You killed my general but I still lived!

ANDRÉS. *Sal*, nobody survives a kamikaze attack.

SAL. But I did! You lost! I won! Victory dance!

(*SAL pounds out a beat on his helmet using wooden spoons. He dances a victory dance.*)

ANDRÉS. Will you be quiet!

SAL. Sore loser.

ANDRÉS. *Sal*, eat your *panqueques*!

SAL. They're gonna need more *sal*.

ANDRÉS. I already added salt. *Come*.

(*SAL grabs a blue pancake. He rolls it up and eats it.*)

SAL. Um ... blue one's real good!

ANDRÉS. It don't taste any different from the others.

SAL. It do too. *Azules* taste different from *amarillos*. *Amarillos* taste different from *verdes*. *Verdes* taste real different from *azules*.

ANDRÉS. Whatever you say, *Sal* ...

SAL. *Andrés*, who taught you how to make colored *panqueques*? Was it 'Amá?

ANDRÉS. No.

SAL. Then who?

ANDRÉS. I can't tell you that.

SAL. Why not?

ANDRÉS. 'Cause it's a big fat secret.

SAL. But you can tell me. *Somos hermanos*. Right?

ANDRÉS. Nope. We ain't brothers. Somebody left you on the porch step. The old man took you in *porque todo lo que hacías era llorar*.

SAL. That ain't true!

ANDRÉS. *¡Claro que sí!*

SAL. Well, I don't care 'bout your big fat secret! I don't wanna know!

ANDRÉS. Fine. Suit yourself. But you better hurry before the old man gets here. It's your turn to wash them *platos*.

SAL. *No puedo, se me quebraron los brazos*.

ANDRÉS. *¡Sal!*

SAL. They are. See? They won't move.

(*SAL wiggles his body, and his arms flap side to side.*)

ANDRÉS. You ain't weaselin' outta this again. It's your turn.

SAL. No, I'm not gonna do 'em.

ANDRÉS. Yes, you are!

*(ANDRÉS grabs SAL in a headlock.)*

SAL. Ow! Let me go!

ANDRÉS. Not until you say, "I give."

SAL. Why do I always gotta wash 'em?

ANDRÉS. When you learn how to cook then you won't have to do 'em! Now say it!

SAL. No!

ANDRÉS. Say it!

SAL. I give!

*(ANDRÉS releases SAL. SAL places his helmet back on.)*

ANDRÉS. When the old man catches you wearin' that pot on your head, you're gonna be sorry.

SAL. No I won't.

ANDRÉS. Why's that?

SAL. 'Cause he loves me more than you.

ANDRÉS. Oh, really?

SAL. Yup. So you better watch out.

ANDRÉS. He's been in a foul mood all week.

SAL. That's 'cause he wrecked his *troca* and hurt his arm.

ANDRÉS. And he's takin' it out on me. It ain't no picnic.

EL VIEJO *(offstage)*. ¿Andrés?

ANDRÉS. See?

SAL. ¡Tata!

*(EL VIEJO enters. He is SAL and ANDRÉS' grandfather. He wears overalls, boots, a soiled baseball cap and gloves. His arm is in a sling.)*

EL VIEJO. *Sal, ve y vístete para ir a la escuela.*

SAL. *Sí, señor.*

EL VIEJO. *Y quítate esa olla estúpida de la cabeza. (To ANDRÉS.) ¿Que no oyes que te llamo?*

ANDRÉS. *No, señor.*

EL VIEJO. Well, we got a truck to fix. It ain't gonna fix itself.

ANDRÉS. *Iba a comer primero.*

EL VIEJO. *Ya empezó el día.*

ANDRÉS. I'm hurryin'.

EL VIEJO. You stayin' out nights don't help any.

ANDRÉS. I got my reasons.

EL VIEJO. Well, your reasons ain't helpin' me fix my *troca*. All that schoolin' you're so proud of, where's it got you? It can't fix my truck engine. And you know even less about produce. I got a business to run.

Them bills ain't gonna pay themselves.

ANDRÉS. All you ever do is complain.

EL VIEJO. *Porque me das la razón.*

ANDRÉS. I'm gonna leave one day and then you'll be sorry.

EL VIEJO. *Tú nunca te vas a ir.*

ANDRÉS. I might. I got plans.

EL VIEJO. *¿Planes?*

ANDRÉS. I wanna see the world. Travel to far away places. Learn to speak different languages even.

EL VIEJO. *¿Cómo vas a hacer eso?*

ANDRÉS. I'm gonna join the Marines.

EL VIEJO. The Marines? *No te van a querer.* You just like your 'amá. Head in the clouds. And look where it got her.

ANDRÉS. *Te lo voy a demostrar.*

EL VIEJO. Well, you show me how to fix my *troca* first 'cause while you're under my roof, you'll do as I say! *No hay lugar para los tontos o los soñadores en esta casa.*

ANDRÉS. *Bien, ¡me voy!*

*(ANDRÉS storms out. EL VIEJO eats one of the colored pancakes.)*

EL VIEJO. *Azul* one's good. At least he learned how to cook.

*(SAL enters, combing his hair and dressed for school. He hums "Cielito Lindo.")*

EL VIEJO *(cont'd)*. *¿Qué canción es esa que estas tarareando, Sal?*

SAL. I don't know.

EL VIEJO. *Ya la habia oído.*

SAL. Where?

EL VIEJO. *Esa es una de las canciones que le gustaba cantar a tu 'amá.*

SAL. *¿De veras?*

EL VIEJO. She had the prettiest *voz* you ever heard.

SAL. I don't remember her too good.

EL VIEJO. *Siempre les andaba cantando y tocando la guitarra a ustedes.* Wrote her own songs and even made *discos* too. Just about everybody in Nashville knew her.

SAL. *Andrés* says she had her own bus with her name written on it.

EL VIEJO. *Oh, sí.* She was a big radio *estrella* too. She was always *cantando* at the Grand Ole Opry and she even went to make a Hollywood picture *también*.

SAL. My 'amá was a movie *estrella*?

EL VIEJO. *Creo que hasta ganó uno de esos premios por actuar.*

SAL. How come 'Amá didn't ever take us with her?

EL VIEJO. *Bueno*, that's 'cause she was always on the road. *El camino*. Them entertainers have got a lot of travelin' to do and it ain't no place for *niños mocosos*. That's why you two come to live with me.

SAL. Was 'Amá rich?

EL VIEJO. *Hijo, ella tenía tanto dinero que tenia que ponerlo en dos bancos.*

SAL. No.

EL VIEJO. *Oh, sí*, but she gave it all 'way to needy people.

SAL. My 'amá was somethin' else, wasn't she?

EL VIEJO. *Ella los quería un montón.*

SAL. *Tata, did my 'amá go to school?*

EL VIEJO. *For a little while till Andrés was born.*

SAL. *She did real good for herself and she didn't need no school.*

EL VIEJO. *Así es.*

SAL. *You know more about things than my teachers do.*

EL VIEJO. *Bueno ...*

SAL. *Why do I gotta go to school, Tata? Everythin' I need to know is right here with you. One day, I wanna drive a troca just like you.*

EL VIEJO. *You do?*

SAL. *Ajá.*

EL VIEJO. *Bueno, quizá si faltas un día no va a pasar nada.*

SAL. *You mean I don't have to go?*

EL VIEJO. *Nope.*

SAL. *I'll work real hard and I won't complain like Andrés.*

EL VIEJO. *Entonces ve y cámbiate. We got us a troca to fix and produce to entregar!*

### SCENE 3

*(A bus is heard driving away. ANA enters carrying her guitar and suitcase. An image of a postcard appears behind her.)*

ANA. *Querido Daddy, I've ridden the wind and its carried me as far as Esperanza, Tejas. I ain't got a cent to my name but it don't matter. I'm writin' this postcard to tell you I'm doin' fine. I'm gonna send you a picture postcard from every place I go, so you'll know where I've been. Espero que se las enseñes a mis bebés and explain what I am doin'. I know you're still mad and I don't expect you'll write me, but that's OK. Well, I gotta go for now, Daddy. Atentamente, Ana.*

### SCENE 4

*(EL VIEJO and ANDRÉS enter, carrying crates of produce. SAL drags one in.)*

EL VIEJO. *¡No tenemos todo el día, Andrés!*

ANDRÉS. *I'm workin' as fast as I can!*

EL VIEJO. *A snail is faster than you!*

ANDRÉS. *Well, I don't see one liftin' these heavy crates!*

EL VIEJO. *If we don't get this producto off to el mercado today, we ain't gettin' paid. We need the money. ¿Vez esto?*

*(EL VIEJO holds out a stack of bills.)*

SAL. *What are they, Tata?*

EL VIEJO. *They're bills. Lots of 'em.*

ANDRÉS. *I didn't wreck the troca. You did.*

EL VIEJO. *How was I supposed to know they was fixin' a road? There were no road signs.*

ANDRÉS. *Yes, there were.*

EL VIEJO. *You weren't even there to help. Ese es mi punto.*

ANDRÉS. Well, what do you want me do?

EL VIEJO. Tell me what they say. I ain't got my glasses.

SAL. I'll help you, *Tata*.

EL VIEJO. No, I need *Andrés* to do it, *Sal*. *Es su trabajo*. He goes into town and pays *las cuentas*. 'Cept lately his head's been somewhere else and he ain't been no good for nothin'. Well, how much do I owe?

*(EL VIEJO removes a roll of dollar bills held together by a rubber band.)*

ANDRÉS. *¡Este es de cinco dólares!*

EL VIEJO *(counting)*. *Uno, dos, tres—*

ANDRÉS. *¡Este es de siete!*

EL VIEJO. *Cuatro, cinco—*

ANDRÉS. *¡Este es de seis!*

EL VIEJO. *¡Ve más despacio! Uno, dos, tres—*

ANDRÉS. *¡Seis!*

EL VIEJO. *Cuatro, cinco—*

ANDRÉS. *Dos-veinte, cinco.*

EL VIEJO. *Uno, dos—*

ANDRÉS. *Ocho.*

EL VIEJO. *¡Me estás confundiendo! Uno, dos, tres—*

ANDRÉS. Oh, what's the use? They're past due!

EL VIEJO. *¿Todas?* But how can that be? I always pay my bills on time. I send you into town to ... You ain't been payin' them?

ANDRÉS. No.

EL VIEJO. *¿Por qué no?*

ANDRÉS. Because I hate doin' it. People are always laughin' and whisperin' behind my back! So from now on you do it. I quit!

*(ANDRÉS crumples up the bill and throws it on the ground.)*

EL VIEJO. *¡Recógelo!*

ANDRÉS. No, you pick it up!

SAL. *¿Andrés?*

EL VIEJO. *¡Tú mismo te vas a la ciudad y pagas esas cuentas ahora mismo!*

ANDRÉS. No! I told you I quit!

EL VIEJO. You wanna go?

ANDRÉS. Why is everythin' I do not good enough for you?

EL VIEJO. *¡No me hables así!* You ain't any better than me!

ANDRÉS. You make everythin' so difficult!

EL VIEJO. Garbage is garbage. That's where we come from but you wanna pretend you somethin' better!?!

ANDRÉS. What's wrong with that?

EL VIEJO. You forget who you are!

ANDRÉS. How can I when you remind me of it everyday? "You just a dumb Mex. Never amount to much."

SAL *(picking up the delivery form)*. *¡Yo puedo arreglar esta carta!*



ANDRÉS. You always sayin', "You ain't got a lick of horse sense! You ain't good for nothin'!"

EL VIEJO. I done it to make you strong!

ANDRÉS. How? By tellin' me I'm no good?

SAL. *¡Lo haré todo mejor!*

EL VIEJO. People walk all over you if you let them.

ANDRÉS. What are you so afraid of?

SAL. *¡Se acabaron las arrugas!*

EL VIEJO. I ain't afraid of nothin'! You hear me? I kept you both here with me when your 'amá left!

ANDRÉS. She was gonna take us with her but you wouldn't let her.

EL VIEJO. I did it to protect you!

ANDRÉS. Protect us from what? From the big bad world? Or were you just protectin' yourself!?!

EL VIEJO. You ain't got no right to say that!

ANDRÉS. You're just an ignorant old fool holdin' on to nothin'!

SAL. *¡Va a quedar tan bien como si fuera nuevo!*

EL VIEJO. Don't you say another word!

ANDRÉS. Made up lies and secrets! I'm sick of it!

SAL. See?

ANDRÉS. And I ain't comin' back!

EL VIEJO. Just like your 'amá!

ANDRÉS. One day he's gonna leave you too!

EL VIEJO. Get off my place!

ANDRÉS. What are you gonna do then?

SAL. *¿Andrés?*

ANDRÉS. 'Cause you won't have nobody!

SAL. *¿Tata?*

ANDRÉS. *¡Nadie!*

*(ANDRÉS exits.)*

EL VIEJO. He thinks he's so smart! *¡Que yo soy estúpido! ¡Ignorante!*

SAL. No, you're not, *Tata*.

EL VIEJO. *Escupe sobre todo lo que he hecho.*

SAL. I don't like spittin'.

EL VIEJO. He don't care nothin' 'bout us.

SAL. I do.

EL VIEJO (*yelling*). Don't you be here when I get back!

SAL. I'll help you, *Tata*. You can trust me.

EL VIEJO. It's just I can't find my glasses.

SAL (*reading with difficulty*). It says you gotta take 20 crates of *lechuga* to Hadley's. Ten crates of *zanahoria* to Friendly—

EL VIEJO. Corners.

SAL. Six crates to ...

*(They exit.)*