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*Dramatic Publishing*

# **STAND AND DELIVER**

**Written**

**by**

**RAMÓN MENÉNDEZ and TOM MUSCA**

**Adapted for the Stage**

**by**

**ROBERT BELLA**

**Based on a True Story**



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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RAMÓN MENÉNDEZ and TOM MUSCA  
Adapted by  
ROBERT BELLA

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**STAND AND DELIVER**  
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Ramón Menéndez and Tom Musca  
Adapted by Robert Bella

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*STAND AND DELIVER*, The Play, premiered February 10, 1995 at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. The production was directed by Flora Plumb and included the following:

CAST

Jaime Escalante.....	Jesse Perez
Raquel Ortega.....	Sacha Chambers
Tito Guitano.....	Patrick Martinez
Claudia Camejo.....	Melanie Guillen
Pancho Garcia.....	Logan Kincaid
Ana Delgado.....	Jessica Padilla
Javier Perales.....	Victor Rodriguez, Jr.
Lupe Escobar.....	Jaime Doganes
Principal Molina.....	Leonard Earl Howze
Angel Guerra.....	Robert Sinclair
Chuco.....	Joseph Dammann
Rafaela Fuentes.....	Xochitl Crespo-Oliva
Armando, Maravilla Gang.....	Julio Colon
Hector Delgado, Student.....	Daniel Terrazas
Dr. Ramirez, Maravilla Gang.....	Avelardo Ibarra
Dr. Pearson, Pregnant Girl.....	Denise White
The Secretary, A.P.Calculus Student.....	Claudia Coronel
Security Guard, Student.....	Zachary Aaron
A.P. Calculus Students.....	Iveliese Arguello
	Dylan Brown
	Melinda Gonzales
	Racheal Perez
Maravilla Gang.....	Ramsay Davila
	Clea Du Vall,
	Tiffany McGinn
Maravilla Gang, Security Guard.....	Laura Salwet

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Lighting Design	Max Williams
Scene Design	Flora Plumb
Fight Choreographer	Penny Jerald
Technical Director	Annette Pillow
Production Manager	Noreen Kimura
Lighting Supervisor	Jonathan Wyman
Voice and Speech	Penny Jerald
Production Stage Manager	Sarah Atkinson
Assistant to the Director	Annie Assatourian
Assistant Stage Manager	Wendisue Hall
Second Assistant to the Director	Karen Hansen
Assistant Technical Director	Jo Corbett
Graffiti Artists	Will Benedict Pentii Markonnen Rigoberto Jimenez
Property Master	Marcus Savino
Costume Coordinators	Jennifer Castro Chidi Hill
Master Carpenter	Jaymes Wheeler

# STAND AND DELIVER

A Play in Two Acts

For 10 Men, 7 Women

Multiracial/gender flexible (half of the male roles can be played by females), extras as desired

## CHARACTERS

### The Faculty:

JAIME ESCALANTE . . . . . one of a kind, early 50s

PRINCIPAL MOLINA . . . . . tough guy with a heart, 40s-50s

RAQUEL ORTEGA . . . . . a self-assured woman in her 40s

### The Students:

JAVIER PERALES . . . . . a slim, middle-class boy

TITO GUITANO . . . . . a new-wave math student/musician

CLAUDIA CAMEJO . . . . . a moody and sexy fashion plate

FRANCISCO "PANCHO" GARCIA . . . . . a car freak

LUPE ESCOBAR . . . . . an outspoken flirt

ANA DELGADO . . . . . a flower ready to bloom

RAFAELA FUENTES a recent immigrant from Guatemala

ANGEL GUERRA . . . . . a member of the Maravilla Gang

### The Community:

CHUCO . . . . . the macho leader of the Maravilla Gang

ARMANDO . . . . . the janitor, late 20s

HÉCTOR DELGADO . . . . . Ana's father, 45

DR. RAMÍREZ . . . . . a yuppie Latino ETS official, 30s

DR. PEARSON . . . . . an African-American ETS official, 30s  
and...

The Secretary, Security Guards, Police Officer, Various Students  
(The Maravilla Gang, Tough Boy, Pregnant Girl, ESL's, etc.)

## WRITERS' NOTES

Viewing of the film is recommended and can help to clarify numerous questions.

Double casting of actors in small roles is fine. While the main corps of students is all scripted, a very large part of this play is about the ensemble nature of the unscripted student roles. Escalante's class can be as big as 14 students or as small as the core group of eight. The hallway scenes can and should be fleshed out with specific characterizations and behavior.

There should be an environmental and improvisational approach to the daily life of the school. Set design and staging should also incorporate these aspects. Some suggestions: have the audience pass through security checks, seat the audience in desks, have the students interact with the audience. Certainly there are many more possibilities that can occur within each individual production according to the imagination of the artists involved.



# ACT ONE

## Junior Year

### SCENE ONE

**SETTING:** *Garfield High School is represented by a graffiti-filled classroom and hallway. As the audience files in, the lights on the stage are dim. It's the night before the first day of school.*

**AT RISE:** *A police siren wails, closer and closer, flashing lights bouncing off the walls of the theater. The sirens fade out as the lights onstage shift to early morning. STUDENTS start filing into the space. While there is excitement in the air, it's muffled by the inertia of barrio life. These are inner-city kids, predominantly Latino; many are poor. The students range in types, a mixed bag of jocks, heavy metal aficionados, ROTC's, new-wave punkettes, cholos (gang members), a few straight arrows, and ESL (English as a second language) students. SECURITY GUARDS scan students with metal detectors as they enter the space. Some STUDENTS are smoking, some hang out by their lockers or the pay phone, others cross on their way to classes. Off in a corner, a TOUGH BOY is selling drugs. In another corner, some GIRLS are gathered around a PREGNANT GIRL, feeling her stomach and gossiping. JAVIER PERALES enters the classroom. The desks are arranged haphazardly. He*

*slides one toward the front and sits in it. He opens a copy of a science-fiction novel and reads intently. A few STUDENTS enter the classroom. One grabs JAVIER's book and throws it in the trash. JAVIER gets up and retrieves it. OTHER KIDS grab ass, make out and laugh. General mayhem. A Latino Rap beat comes from the boombox of a just entering TITO GUITANO. TITO wears a jeans jacket with the image of Christ painted on the back. He coolly enters the classroom and sits, still lightly bopping his head to the music. Enter JAIME ESCALANTE. There's a slight stoop to his rolling walk but there is nothing weak about him. He is met by one of the SECURITY GUARDS.*

SECURITY GUARD. Are you a teacher?

ESCALANTE. Yes, I am. I'm new.

SECURITY GUARD. Gotta see an ID. (*Bewildered, ESCALANTE gets his driver's license out and gives it to the GUARD. The GUARD refers to a clipboard.*) You're not on my list. (*Into radio.*) Uh, Main Office, got a guy here says he's a teacher ... "Jaymee" Escalante ...

ESCALANTE (*leans toward the walkie-talkie, saying his name with the correct Hispanic pronunciation*). Jaime Escalante. I am here to teach computer science.

SECURITY GUARD. No computers here. (*Chuckling.*) Sure you're at the right school?

*(Enter RAQUEL ORTEGA with a Los Angeles POLICE OFFICER. Abrupt and charming at the same time, she is used to dealing with problems in a no-nonsense way.)*

POLICE OFFICER. Anything else missing?

ORTEGA. Just the key to the ladies' room. (*ORTEGA spots ESCALANTE and comes to his rescue.*) Mr. Escalante, glad you made it! Raquel Ortega, chairwoman of the math department. (*To SECURITY GUARD.*) He's on the faculty.

POLICE OFFICER. And where exactly was the fecal material found?

ORTEGA. In my office. You'll know when you're near it. (*The POLICE OFFICER makes a note. ORTEGA starts leading ESCALANTE off.*)

ESCALANTE. The computers? They weren't stolen, were they?

ORTEGA. I'm sorry, Mr. Escalante. We were supposed to get computers last year and the year before and there's no funding again for them this year. Let me show you to your classroom.

ESCALANTE. But, you don't understand. I was supposed to teach computers.

ORTEGA. Welcome to Garfield, Mr. Escalante. (*They exit. A bell rings. The behavior of the kids in the classroom grows more chaotic with the sounding of the bell. CLAUDIA CAMEJO crosses near TITO's desk.*)

TITO. So, where were you last night?

CLAUDIA. What do you mean, where was I?

TITO. I was *waiting*.

CLAUDIA. Oh, you were waiting, huh?

TITO. Yeah, and I was dreaming about you.

CLAUDIA. Good. Keep dreaming. (*CLAUDIA gives him a playful slap and wanders off.*)

*(Enter ESCALANTE. His entrance has absolutely no effect on the kids. If anything, they become more rowdy.)*

*PANCHO GARCIA slides over to ESCALANTE and imitates every gesture the teacher makes.)*

PANCHO. You our new teacher, man? Hey, you the teacher?

ESCALANTE. Will everyone please try to find a seat? ...

PANCHO. Hey, what are we gonna do today?

ESCALANTE. Please take a seat.

PANCHO. Sure, no problem, "Teacher Man." *(The STUDENTS heckle ESCALANTE's efforts.)*

ESCALANTE. For those of you who cannot find a seat, please stand against the wall. *(There are about 25 students and only 15 desks. TITO grabs a passing CLAUDIA and sits her on his lap.)*

TITO. Hey, let's put our desks in a circle and discuss our feelings, huh?

ESCALANTE *(overlapping)*. Okay, all right. One body to a desk.

CLAUDIA. Could we talk about sex?

ESCALANTE. If we talk about sex, I have to give sex for homework. *(The STUDENTS react with catcalls, laughs, and whistling. CLAUDIA gets off TITO's lap.)*

CLAUDIA. You know, I could get you fired for saying that.

ESCALANTE *(overlapping)*. Stand back everyone, please... Move back.

ESL STUDENT #1. **Que dijo?**

ESL STUDENT #2. **No sé.**

ESCALANTE *(to ESL STUDENTS)*. **Entienden inglés?**

PANCHO. Sometimes... *(Some STUDENTS laugh. ANA DELGADO tries to defend the ESLs.)*

ANA. Come on, you guys... *(More laughter.)*

ESCALANTE. **Los que no entienden inglés, por favor levanten la mano.** (*More hooting from the STUDENTS and most raise their hands in a pretense of ignorance.*) Please move forward if you do not speak English. **Los que no hablan inglés, por favor, pasen al frente.** Please, for all the first row, please stand up.

ANA (*relinquishes her seat, turns to JAVIER*). Javier.

JAVIER. No. (*JAVIER, in his front row seat, does not move. Several ESL STUDENTS move forward and sit in the front row.*)

ESCALANTE (*to JAVIER*). What's the problem?

JAVIER. I was the first one here.

ESCALANTE. I'll find you another seat, okay, Johnny?

JAVIER. My name's not Johnny. (*ESCALANTE erases graffiti in order to write his name on the board.*)

ESCALANTE. Okay, okay, I make a mistake. No problem. My name is Mr. Escalante and I teach... (*Refers to course description.*) Arithmetic 1-A. (*JAVIER stubbornly reads from his book. ESCALANTE closes JAVIER's book and points to the back of the class. JAVIER reluctantly gives up his seat. Jeers and whistles from the other STUDENTS. ESCALANTE picks up a textbook and writes on the blackboard: 31 lbs. - 19 oz = ? (While writing.)*) Okay. Chapter 1. Weights and measures. Start simple: 31 pounds minus 19 ounces equals what?

TOUGH BOY. Pounds of what?

ESCALANTE. Whatever you want.

TOUGH BOY. I have 31 pounds of dope and sold 19 ounces.

TITO. If you had 31 pounds you'd be pretty stupid to be here in school. (*The CLASS breaks into laughter.*)

ESCALANTE (*to CLAUDIA*). Do you have the answer?

CLAUDIA. I don't have to buy drugs, he gives them to me. (*More catcalls and laughter.*)

ESCALANTE. If he gave her 19 ounces, how much would he have left? Anybody? (*JAVIER raises his hand. ESCALANTE nods to him.*)

JAVIER. Twenty-nine pounds, 13 ounces. (*Some STUDENTS smack their lips and hiss "Lambe" to JAVIER. He shoots them dirty looks.*)

ESCALANTE. That's right. Way to go, Johnny. (*ESCALANTE writes on the board:  $1,872 \div 23$ . While writing:*) You keep that up and you'll go back to head of the class. Invent the hyper-drive for a spaceship. Computers. Science fiction, science fact. Okay. 1,872 inches divided by 23 inches. (*STUDENTS snicker. Someone burps loudly. ESCALANTE turns to the class, no hands are raised.*) Who's got the answer? C'mon, this is easy. Anyone can do. You, in the plaid shirt.

PLAID SHIRT (*mischievously*). 1,895.

ESCALANTE. Why did you add them? How many of you don't know what this means? (*ESCALANTE points to the long division sign.*)

PANCHO. I don't need no math. I got a solar calculator with my dozen doughnuts.

LUPE. The bus is exact change, no big deal. (*Laughter from the class.*)

ESCALANTE. Okay, okay. Quiet! (*The bell rings. The STUDENTS rush out of the classroom, cheering and laughing. They nearly trample a confused ESCALANTE. He checks his watch, then hears a voice offstage. ESCALANTE crosses out into the hallway.*)

MOLINA (*offstage*). Everyone back in their classroom!

*(PRINCIPAL MOLINA enters the hall. The STUDENTS groan and start to clamor as he ushers them back into the classroom.)*

MOLINA. Back! Back in class! That was a premature bell!

PANCHO. Premature bell? I thought we weren't supposed to discuss sex in class.

MOLINA. All right, sit down. Sit down! Stop talking!  
*(MOLINA goes to the window and looks out through binoculars.)*

ESCALANTE *(joins MOLINA)*. Principal Molina.

MOLINA. Mr. Escalante, please, call me Hugo.

ESCALANTE. Is it a fire drill?

MOLINA. No. Sneaky little bastards rigged the bell. *(The bell rings again and STUDENTS break for the doors screaming and laughing. MOLINA races after them shouting. The halls fill up as if the day was just beginning. MOLINA continues from offstage.)* Class is not over yet! Get back inside!

*(Alone in the classroom, ESCALANTE surveys the damage. The walls are filthy and covered in graffiti. He shakes his head and slowly starts to pick up the trash the STUDENTS left on the floor. The lights fade up into a tableau of the school. A spot comes up on PANCHO. As PANCHO speaks, we see ESCALANTE straightening up the desks and cleaning up the classroom in the background.)*

PANCHO. Let me tell you something about school. Besides the fact that it sucks—you got all these dense teachers tryin' to brainwash you into thinkin' the way

they do. I mean, like I really want to think like them. "Those who can, do. Those that can't, *teach*." That's what Uncle Nando says. He dropped out of school when he was younger than me. Talked himself into a job as a carpenter's apprentice. Now, Uncle Nando's like 32, and runs his own construction company. I mean, he's got it *made*. He don't even gotta work Saturdays if he don't wanna. Got a big-screen TV right in his office. Drives a bitchin' Trans Am that's already paid off. I'm tellin' you, the chicks are all over his shit. As soon as I get a decent job, I'm outta here. Probably start as an apprentice mechanic. This way I can get parts for my car at a discount. I got a '74 Mustang, and as soon as I start bringing in the dough, I'm gonna fix the body, paint it candy-apple red, turn the rims inside out, install a stereo system you can hear a block away and get my engine purring like a tiger. *Roaaaow!!* Shit, by the time I'm Nando's age, I'll be the boss of my own body shop. *(Like an exaggerated TV commercial.)* "You got a problem with your car take it down to Pancho's. Ten percent off to any woman who wears a dress up to here." *(Laughs at his own joke.)* Hey, I know some of you are thinkin', this **carnal** up here is full of himself. But I really know how to get around. I'm a walking road map. Ask anybody in Garfield. I get anyone anywhere fastest way possible, guaranteed. *(Rapid fire.)* El Dorado Disco in Long Beach? Even though it seems out of the way, jump on the 5 to the 710. Unless it's rush hour. Then you take Soto to Slauson, left on Atlantic but skip the light and cut through the Thrifty's parking lot, then you're on Atlantic all the way out to Ocean, make a right and then you hit Shoreline. And you can put pedal



to the metal on the way home 'cause the cops don't use radar at night. See? That's why I'm in no hurry. 'Cause I know where I'm going. Won't be long 'fore I'm cruising around in the fiercest piece of machinery in East Los. Pick up any *ruca* I want. That's right, man. Shit. Don't need no high school diploma for that. (*Lights fade out.*)

## SCENE TWO

*AT RISE: The first day of school is long over. The STUDENTS have left and so has most of the faculty. ESCALANTE has spread out newspapers on the floor of his classroom. He's surrounded by painting supplies. MRS. ORTEGA stops by and peeks into the classroom.*

ORTEGA. Mr. Escalante, is everything okay? The security guard told me you were staying late.

ESCALANTE. Needs some paint. Then it will only smell bad.

ORTEGA (*smiling*). Be careful. If the school board sees the faculty making repairs, pretty soon they'll have us sweeping the hallways.

ESCALANTE (*smiling back*). It'll be Top Secret.

ORTEGA. Bear with us, Mr. Escalante. Students can sense a new teacher's frustration. I'd hate for them to take advantage of you.

ESCALANTE. Mrs. Ortega, I'm not a new teacher. I taught for years at a Jesuit school in Bolivia.