

La Llorona

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La Llorona
A ten-minute play

SYNOPSIS

A woman watches as her husband slowly falls out of love with her, devoting his time to his travels and children.

Rosa, a woman with beauty beyond belief, catches the eyes of Manuel, a traveling merchant. The two fall in love and marry, giving birth to two sons. As the years go by, Rosa finds that Manuel is traveling more and more, and visiting her less and less. Her jealousy and fear of losing her youthful beauty take hold of Rosa, and cause her to do the unthinkable.

Note: “La Llorona” translates to “The Weeping Woman.”

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ROSA, a woman who is known for her beauty and jealous tendencies. Wears a white veil at all times.

MANUEL, a man, Rosa's husband, a traveling merchant.

MARIA, Rosa's wheelchair-bound mother. An elderly woman.

ENRIQUE, Rosa and Manuel's first son, seen as a baby and again as a young child.

HECTOR, Rosa and Manuel's second son, seen as a young child.

MARGARITA, Manuel's lover. She is never onstage, so it is possible for one of the other actresses to record her line or say it off-stage.

Casting Note: All actors should be Latinx.

Scene: A small city by a river in Mexico. One part of the stage will be ROSA's house, and the other will shift between MANUEL's stall and the river.

Time: Between 1810 and 1890.

SETTING: The center of a little village in Mexico. We see MANUEL's stall, a table with a cloth on it. A variety of roses, carnations, and other flowers cover it, along with some pastries.

AT RISE: MANUEL stands outside of his stall. ROSA walks onto stage holding a small basket.

MANUEL
Flowers! Pastries! Specialties of every kind from all around Mexico!

ROSA slows down as she approaches MANUEL's stall, but has not walked towards it yet. He notices and picks up a flower.

A flower, Señorita?

ROSA wants to play a bit before going over to him.

ROSA
What do you have?

MANUEL
I've got carnations, tulips, marigolds from the heart of Mexico City!

ROSA
What do you have that's worthy of me?

MANUEL sees right through ROSA and joins in her game.

MANUEL
Ah ha. I'm sorry, Señorita, but I don't think any of my flowers are as pretty as you are. But here, take this.

MANUEL picks up a red rose. ROSA walks over.

It will draw more attention to your beauty.

ROSA begins to reach for the rose, but MANUEL pulls back.

Ah, on second thought, never mind.

ROSA

What?

MANUEL

I'm not sure I want you to attract the eyes of anyone else.

ROSA takes the rose.

The lights go out, and when they come back on, ROSA is on the other side of the stage in her house. The necessities for this are only a wall and door. She is looking at her appearance in a mirror on the wall, and has a rose in her hair. There is also a vase full of fresh roses sitting on a small table. MARIA sits on a wheelchair, crocheting.

MARIA

I don't care how much money he has. I don't like him.

ROSA

Mamá...

MARIA

A man who travels that much will hardly make a good husband.

ROSA

Husband? He hasn't even proposed yet. And Manuel will make a fine husband, Mamá. Not just any man can catch my eye.

MARIA

What makes him different from any other man who has fawned over you, hm? So many see nothing but a pretty figure when they look at you. How do you know he values you any more than the flowers he sells?

ROSA

Because we're in love. And you can't marry a flower.

MARIA

Men have tried worse.

ROSA

Mamá!

MARIA

Just be careful. Do not lose yourself in him, okay mija?

Okay.

ROSA

Someone knocks on the front door.

That's him. Adios, Mamá.

ROSA gives MARIA a quick kiss on the cheek. She then stands up and begins to walk away.

Adios, mija.

MARIA

The lights go off on the stage where MARIA is and follow ROSA to MANUEL. They are in the middle of the stage. Off to the side is a long, blue tarp being wiggled by stage hands to mimic a river. The sound of rushing water can be heard.

MANUEL

Rosa, mi corazón, I've been all over the country, and never once have my eyes seen anything as beautiful as you.

ROSA

Oh really? Not even the beaches of the Gulf?

MANUEL

No.

ROSA

Well what about this river right here?

MANUEL

It pales in comparison.

ROSA

And the endless fields of Marigold flowers?

Beat.

MANUEL

Well...Marigolds are beautiful flowers.

ROSA drops MANUEL's arms to shove him and takes a step away from him.

ROSA

Manuel!

MANUEL

What?

ROSA

How could you say such a thing?

MANUEL

Rosa, mi Rosa, I was only joking...

MANUEL reaches for ROSA but she turns away.

ROSA

Well, it was a very bad joke.

MANUEL

Oh, I'm sorry, mi corazón. You know I love you.

MANUEL hugs ROSA from behind, and she lets him.

ROSA

I suppose I do...but you could show it more often.

MANUEL

Well how about this?

MANUEL takes a step back and gets down on one knee, proposing.

The lights go out, and when they come back on, ROSA is in her house, cradling a baby. Crying noise sounds. The roses have lost some color. MARIA's wheelchair is empty, a black cloth draped over it.

ROSA

Hush, little one. No llores. Don't cry.

MANUEL enters the stage and heads for the door. He gives the baby a quick kiss on the head as he passes ROSA.

ROSA

Manuel! Could you hold our son for a moment?

MANUEL

I'm sorry, Rosa. I can't. I've got another trip planned and I have to leave now if I want to make it to the next town before the sun sets.

ROSA

You're leaving again? You just got back two days ago.

MANUEL

I need more supplies if I am to buy you dresses and presents and everything that keeps you beautiful.

ROSA

Keeps me... Manuel, wait.

MANUEL

I'll be back in a week, mi corazón.

ROSA

Manuel, we're—

MANUEL

Love you.

MANUEL exits. ROSA places her hand onto her stomach. The baby continues to cry.

ROSA

We're...expecting again.

MARIA enters the stage. ROSA doesn't look at her. Instead, she goes over to the mirror and checks her face in it.

MARIA

He's up to no good, mija.

ROSA

He loves me. He has no reason not to love me. I'm beautiful.

MARIA

Nothing is forever. Not beauty. Not even love.

ROSA

He loves me!

The baby stops crying for a beat only to wail even louder than before. MARIA exits the stage. ROSA turns to look at her, but she is gone.

The lights go out. When they come back on, ENRIQUE and HECTOR are running around the house playing. ROSA enters the stage. The boys run into the table and almost knock over the vase with withered roses. ROSA runs over and steadies it before it falls.

ROSA

Ay! Boys, you need to be careful!

HECTOR

Sorry.

ENRIQUE

Sorry, Mamá...

ROSA

You shouldn't be running around inside here. Go outside and play.

The front door opens and MANUEL walks in. ROSA is visibly surprised. The boys run up and hug him.

HECTOR and ENRIQUE

Papá!

MANUEL

Mis hijos! Hi! How have you been?

HECTOR

You've been gone for a while, Papá.

ROSA

You sure have.

MANUEL

Go to your rooms, boys. I'll come talk to you later.

HECTOR and ENRIQUE leave the stage.

ROSA

One month and six days.

MANUEL

Rosa...

ROSA

What kind of a husband leaves his wife for one month and six days?

MANUEL

I'm not here for you, Rosa.

ROSA

Not here for...what are you talking about?

MARAGARITA (OFF-STAGE)

Manuel, mi amor! Are you done yet?

MANUEL

Just a moment, mi corazón.

ROSA

Your...you...

MANUEL

I didn't want to do this to you, Rosa. I just wanted to see my boys and leave. If there was a way I could have done this without seeing you, I would have.

ROSA

Your boy...your boys?

MANUEL

It just didn't work out. I don't see you the same way I once did, Rosa. I'll see my boys, and then leave you be.

MANUEL tries to walk past ROSA in the direction that HECTOR and ENRIQUE walked off in, but ROSA forcefully stops him.

ROSА
Your boys!

MANUEL
Rosa, let me got to them.

ROSА
I won't let you near my boys again!

MANUEL
Rosa!

ROSА throws MANUEL out of the house. She knocks over the flower vase. She punches the mirror, and the sound of glass shattering plays. MARIA appears onstage.

MARIA
You've lost yourself, mija.

ROSА
No...I

MARIA
He's used you. He got children out of you, and wants nothing more.

ROSА
He's hurt me.

MARIA
Will you hurt him back?

ROSА
Boys...boys!

ROSА exits stage the same direction as HECTOR and ENRIQUE did earlier.

The lights go out. When they come back on, ROSА is dragging HECTOR and ENRIQUE around the stage. They are back at the river, which is moving more violently than before.

Rushing water sounds. It is darker than when ROSA was here with MANUEL.

HECTOR

Mamá, I'm cold.

ENRIQUE

Where are we going?

ROSA

Your papá doesn't love me anymore, boys.

ENRIQUE

What?

ROSA stops walking.

ROSA

He doesn't love me.

ROSA throws the children into the river.

ENRIQUE

What are you doing? Mamá?

HECTOR

Mamá! No, Mamá!

The tarp swallows them up. They scream.

ENRIQUE

I'm sorry, Mamá!

HECTOR

I'm sorry!

ROSA stares off into the river, and a few moments pass before she's realized what she's done.

ROSA

No! No, it's not your fault! Mis hijos! Come back to me! Mis hijos! What have I done?

ROSA runs the length of the river.

Mis hijos!

ROSA collapses and cries. Spotlight on MARIA, who seemingly just appears on stage.

MARIA

You've done the unthinkable, mija. You've killed those whom you brought into this world. Your boys. You may wander the river, the banks, the world, but you will never find them. So weep, mija. Weep.

The lights go out. ROSA's weeps echo.