

Sophie & Valentina

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SOPHIE'S BALCONY - DAY

A BIRDCAGE. Two Abyssinian LOVEBIRDS flap their wings.
Through the cage, the sun shines down on the city of LA.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

A BALLETT CLASS. A *Nocturne* from Chopin PLAYS while committed young STUDENTS do *pliés* and *tendus* on the *barre*.

Their instructor: SOPHIE LAVOIE, a woman in her mid-thirties. Graceful and delicate movements contrast her strong and lean physique. No makeup. No smile. Nostalgic eyes.

Sophie scans the Students' movements and corrects them by adjusting their limbs.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sensual LEGS draped in tights and stilettos strut the pavement as they enter:

INT. DINER - DAY

The catwalk-like steps steal glances from DINERS as they beeline into the:

KITCHEN

The stilettos come off and get thrown into a handbag. A hand pulls out a pair of comfy old dance sneakers. Puts them on.

JIMMY (O.S.)
Val! Table six.

And with a turn... we meet VALENTINA GARCÍA - a Mexican transgender woman in her late-twenties with a SCAR above her left eyebrow.

Red lipstick. Long eyelashes. Thick eyebrows. Wavy hair.

Without a doubt, a gorgeous human being. Think Salma Hayek with no breasts.

Valentina wraps a waitress apron on and heads to work.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

The Students are doing *pirouettes*. They seem flawless... to the untrained eye. Sophie approaches a STUDENT.

SOPHIE
Control it. Control it.

The Student holds the *pose*.

SOPHIE
Don't let go. Chin up. Up.

The Student buckles and stumbles. Sophie pinches her eyes before popping into a *tendu*.

SOPHIE
You cannot build a house without a strong foundation. Class?

The Class groan as they stop practicing to focus on Sophie. She gets in fifth position.

CLASS
Fifth. *Tendu*. Fourth.

The Class call out the steps of Sophie's impeccable *pirouette*. Every position with precision and conviction.

CLASS
Plié. Pose. Spot. Pirouette.

Sophie finishes her perfect *pirouette*.

SOPHIE
Okay?

The Students nod and get back to practicing. Sophie helps the fallen Student get back up.

SOPHIE
Foundation first, yeah?

The fallen Student nods but then gets distracted --

By the door stands LEON, an arrogant yet charming man. He looks forty but he's over fifty. He's the director of the Dance Academy and... Sophie's husband.

Leon calls Sophie with a smile. She approaches.

LEON
How are they doing?

SOPHIE
I'll get them there.

LEON
I know you will.
(beat)
And the other thing?

Sophie stares blankly.

SOPHIE
It's taking longer than expected.

LEON
I bet, but time's running out. Why
don't you let me help?

SOPHIE
Because it's my problem.

LEON
It's our problem, Sophie. The new
intake starts in July.

SOPHIE
It's my replacement we're talking
about, Leon. I cannot leave them
with someone who doesn't know the
difference between a *pique* and a
pirouette.
(beat)
I'll find you someone.

Sophie goes back to her class as Leon swallows his unspoken words and departs.

VALENTINA (PRE-LAP)
This is what you ordered.

INT. DINER - DAY

A busy classic American diner.

Valentina, with omelette in hand, stands in front of a stubborn BUSINESSMAN who stops Valentina from placing the plate on his table. He stares at her in awe. Unpleasant awe.

BUSINESSMAN
No. No, this isn't what I ordered.

VALENTINA

(reads her notepad)

Ah... actually, it is. Fat free omelette with extra cheese, right?

BUSINESSMAN

Exactly, fat free. Does this look fat free to you? It's a plate of nothing but fat. Take it back.

Valentina stares at the omelette. It looks delicious.

VALENTINA

Do you wanna try some and see if it tastes better than it looks?

BUSINESSMAN

It's swimming in oil.

VALENTINA

It's vinegar --

BUSINESSMAN

The cheese stinks.

The Businessman scrunches his face as he takes a smell. Valentina takes a second.

VALENTINA

Would you like to try something else? We have --

BUSINESSMAN

I don't want "something else". What I wanted was my fat free omelette.

VALENTINA

And here it is.

BUSINESSMAN

This is not fat free.

VALENTINA

This is our fat free.

A beat. The Businessman scans Valentina -- he finds her presence offensive. This isn't about the omelette.

Customers stare. Some curious, some uncomfortable.

BUSINESSMAN

I don't want it.

VALENTINA

Then I encourage you to go to one of the other twenty seven diners on this avenue. I'm sure one of them has your perfect fat free omelette. Have a nice day, sir.

As the Businessman realizes everyone's eyes are on him, Valentina takes the omelette back into the:

KITCHEN

The diner's manager; JIMMY, holds a disapproving look.

JIMMY

What part of "the customer is always right" you don't understand?

VALENTINA

The part when the customer is an asshole.

Jimmy shakes his head and leaves. Valentina eyes the delicious omelette.

INT. SOPHIE'S LOFT - DAY

The loft is incredibly clean and neat. A germaphobe's home.

Sophie enters rubbing her eyes.

INT. SOPHIE'S BATHROOM - DAY

Sophie puts a couple of eye drops in both eyes. In her left eye there's a tiny RED SPOT on the edge of the iris, barely noticeable.

Sophie doesn't show much worry or concern. This is routine.

EXT. SOPHIE'S BALCONY - SUNSET

Sophie's delicate hand opens the birdcage. Her lovebirds; SANDY and DANNY, eat eagerly as Sophie feeds them.

Sophie smiles. A real, peaceful smile.

INT. OLD BEETLE (MOVING) - NIGHT

Valentina drives her clunker while eating the rejected omelette. She places the last piece on a NEWSPAPER opened in the 'JOBS' section.

INT. MAILROOM, VALENTINA'S STUDIO COMPLEX - NIGHT

Valentina enters. Omelette in mouth. Newspaper in hand.

She opens her mailbox, grabs her correspondence and slams the mailbox SHUT.

INT. VALENTINA'S STUDIO - NIGHT

The door OPENS.

Valentina gets in. Her studio is cheaply feminine and cozy.

She drops the newspaper on her desk. Goes through her mail.

She opens the first envelope: her AT&T bill.

Next: some car insurance promo.

Next: A yellow envelope with 'A VALENTÍN GARCÍA' handwritten.

She turns the envelope around. Reads the sender. Hesitates. Scared. Doesn't open it. She can't. She puts it aside.

She continues going through more promos and bills when --

A VIOLENT KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

LANDLORD (O.S.)

I know you're there! I saw you getting in!

The knocks continue -- then they stop.

Valentina rushes to the door. Sees the plump LANDLORD through the peephole.

She hears the shuffling of his keys. Valentina chain locks the door -- and the knocks come back.

LANDLORD (O.S.)

Where's my money?

The knocks get aggressive.

VALENTINA

Calm down! I'm not paying for this door if you bring it down!

LANDLORD (O.S.)
Of course not, you don't even pay
rent!

VALENTINA
You'll have it tomorrow. Or
Wednesday. Possibly Thursday.
Friday at the latest.

LANDLORD (O.S.)
I've given you two months! Two
fucking months! And three days! I'm
done counting, if I don't have my
money tomorrow -- Aarghh!

Silence on the other side. The Landlord is gone.

Valentina collects the money she has on her. In her jacket.
From her skirt. Her handbag. Hell, even tights and shoes. She
counts it out. Not enough.

Valentina rubs her scar. A nervous tic.

She kneels and pulls out her HANDMADE MEMORY BOX from under
the bed and opens it.

Inside the box: A bunch of letters from 'GRANDMA' next to --
Several pamphlets about SEX CHANGE SURGERY and WESTERN UNION
MONEY TRANSFERS to MEXICO.

She throws the yellow letter on top of the box to reveal it's
from a different sender: 'JOSÉ GARCÍA.'

Valentina grabs the omelette stained newspaper. She passes
her finger along several jobs until she finds one that reads:

'DANCE INSTRUCTOR REQUIRED.'

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Sophie judges from behind a table. A DANCER finishes changing
her dance shoes for sport shoes.

SOPHIE
Thank you for coming.

The Dancer smiles and exits.

SOPHIE'S POV. On the table, her cell phone vibrates. An
INCOMING CALL -- It's all BLURRY -- She tries to put the
words together and spots an "L". It must be Leon. Who else?

The door OPENS. Sophie turns to it, but her distorted vision only allows her to spot a BLURRY WOMAN'S SILHOUETTE.

SOPHIE

Come in.

The Woman's Silhouette approaches holding a PURPLE PURSE -- No, it's not a purse, it's a PURPLE BOX. It looks like a box.

The Woman places her resume on the table. Sophie can't read. The words blend with one another.

BLURRY WOMAN

As you can see, I'm a salsa
danseuse.

Sophie, fighting panic, pretends to be fine as the Woman heads to the center of the room with the purple box in hand.

There's a piercing BUZZ in the background.

Sophie presses her temples with her fingers. Pain.

SOPHIE

This is a ballet audition.

BLURRY WOMAN

Ballet, salsa, tap. Whatever you
need. I can do it all.

The Woman touches the purple box and SALSA MUSIC PLAYS. Her silhouette dances but --

Sophie's SIGHT BECOMES WORSE. Sounds become DEAFENING.

Sophie is terrified, she stands up but gets dizzy --

Sophie FALLS DOWN and passes out.

INT. OLD BEETLE (MOVING) - DAY

SOPHIE'S POV. She opens her eyes and spots that purple box again. As the blurriness slowly fades away, she realizes it's not a box. It's a radio. It now broadcasts a soccer game.

Sophie scans the clunker she's in. An old yet cute beetle.

Sophie turns to the driver seat. A Woman drives. Sophie examines the Woman's red nails. Her gorgeous dark hair. Her skirt and fit legs, and -- her male chest. It's Valentina.

Sophie; surprised. Valentina; relieved to see Sophie awake.

VALENTINA

You scared the hell out of me. I
thought you checked out.

Valentina is a skilled driver, but she drives like a maniac.
The old beetle squeaks and squirms.

Sophie holds onto the seat belt in the passenger seat while
her vision slowly comes back.

The old beetle turns around the corner and abruptly stops in
a hospital's parking lot.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

- A bright light passes by Sophie's beautiful eye. A few tiny
red spots are barely visible.

- Sophie's face rests on a chin-rest while a slit-lamp
examines her eyes.

- She forces her eyes to be able to look at a few letters
displayed on the wall.

INT. DR. LIBERATO'S OFFICE - DAY

Sophie is absorbed by a painting hanging from the wall:
'Woman with a Parasol, Facing Left' by Claude Monet.

In front of her is DR. DAVID LIBERATO, a man in his fifties
who truly cares about his patients.

SOPHIE

How long?

DR. LIBERATO

A month at the most.

SOPHIE

You said that three months ago.

DR. LIBERATO

We have been very fortunate. We did
our best to slow down progression
of the disease... but now there's
not much left to do.

(beat)

I'm sorry, Sophie.

Sophie fights back tears.

INT. WAITING ROOM, HOSPITAL - DAY

Sophie comes out to a bleak waiting room. Wipes her eyes and makes her way out when --

VALENTINA (O.S.)
There you are! How did it go?

Valentina emerges from the hall. Sophie is disoriented.

VALENTINA
I figured you need a lift back.

Sophie's taken aback.

VALENTINA
Valentina.

Sophie didn't expect a female name.

VALENTINA
I drove you here.

SOPHIE
Yes. I'm sorry. My head is -- Thank you, Valentina, but you've done enough, I can call a cab.

VALENTINA
A cab? C'mon, I'll über you back, I'm heading that way anyway.

Valentina guides Sophie outside.

INT. OLD BEETLE - DAY

Sophie and Valentina get in but the clunker doesn't start. Valentina tries a couple more times.

VALENTINA
Vamos, vamos.

The engine roars and gets going. Valentina is relieved.

INT. OLD BEETLE (MOVING) - DAY

The old beetle makes its way through SUNSET BOULEVARD.

VALENTINA
So, do you have a name?

SOPHIE

Sophie.

VALENTINA

Sophie, what was all that about?

Sophie doesn't respond, rubs her temples. Valentina gets it.

VALENTINA

So, how long have you been dancing?
Do you do ballet only? I love
ballet! And tap. And zamba. But
mostly salsa. Oh, *mami*, do I love
salsa! I'd be proud to show you
some real Latin magic when we --

SOPHIE

You can just let me out here.

VALENTINA

No, *señorita*. Don't be silly.

Sophie doesn't have the energy to argue. She stares at herself in the broken rearview mirror.

VALENTINA

What did the doctor say?

Sophie shakes her head, slightly shrugs her shoulders.

VALENTINA

My Grandma doesn't trust doctors.
When I was eight she took me to a
curandera 'cause she thought I had
the plague.

A beat as Sophie doesn't know if that was a joke.

SOPHIE

She took you to a what?

VALENTINA

A *curandera*.

SOPHIE

What's a *cooranderra*?

VALENTINA

(corrects her)
Cu-ran-de-ra. How can I word this?
Let's say it's a... witch, slash,
doctor.

Sophie loses interest, but Valentina loves talking.

VALENTINA

Some say *curanderas* can heal almost everything. The one in my town cured all my family from diabetes. Either that or they just stopped eating aunt María's *churros*.

Sophie listens but doesn't comment.

VALENTINA

Curanderas are said to have contact with spirits, mother nature, Gods. They clean your aura, your soul, your body. Crazy, huh?

SOPHIE

(skeptical)

Yeah, I've never seen a *cooranderra*.

VALENTINA

Of course not! Do you think they wander around LA? A real *curandera*, a good one, only in Mexico.

Sophie takes this in as Valentina parks outside the Dance Academy.

EXT. DANCE ACADEMY - DAY

They exit the old beetle.

A joyless Sophie pulls out \$100 from her purse. Hands the bill to Valentina with a thankful yet weary smile.

VALENTINA

Oh, please. Don't.

SOPHIE

Well, thank you.

Sophie doesn't insist and heads to the main entrance. Valentina follows. Sophie stops and turns.

VALENTINA

I know you're having a bad day, but I was hoping we could jump to the rest of my audition. Try me, I'm good and I work very hard.

SOPHIE

I'll hand your resume to the director.

VALENTINA

Look, I really need the job.

Sophie's eyes travel along Valentina's outfit: despite her cheap and old clothes, she has a clear sense of style.

VALENTINA

Maybe we can reschedule? I promise
I won't disappoint, my salsa --

SOPHIE

We don't teach salsa, we're looking
for ballet instructors only.

VALENTINA

I can try some ballet too, I --

SOPHIE

I said not now! Okay?

Valentina stands there frozen. Sophie's eyes show regret but her apology gets stuck in her throat.

VALENTINA

I get it. Well, thank you for the
opportunity.

Valentina heads back to her clunker. But before she enters --

SOPHIE

Did it work? When your Grandma took
you to see the *coorra*...?

VALENTINA

Curandera.

SOPHIE

Did it work?

Valentina smiles.

VALENTINA

Well, I never got the plague.

Valentina hops in and drives away.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Sophie OPENS the door of her red convertible. It's a gorgeous MERCEDES BENZ E550 CABRIOLET. She gets in.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Sophie drives, forcing her eyes when --

SOPHIE'S POV. A few blurry spots distort her central vision. As if there were Monet's brushstrokes here and there.

Sophie rubs her eyes while her sweet stubbornness convinces her she can control it. As soon as she turns left --

SMASH!

Sophie jumps out of the car. The Mercedes is stuck against a LAMP POST -- The left headlight is broken -- The front bumper dented.

Sophie let's out a frustrated, heartrending SCREAM.

INT. DINER - DAY

Valentina rushes inside. The diner is busy and she's late again. She spots Jimmy politely handing meals to some DINERS. He's doing her job.

His disappointed glance wraps Valentina as they enter the:

KITCHEN

Jimmy prepares a customer's meal. Valentina puts her apron on and tries to help.

VALENTINA

I know I'm late, it's been a crazy day, I had to take a complete stranger to the hospital.

JIMMY

It's not the first time, Val.

VALENTINA

What are you talking about? I've never taken a complete stranger to the hospital before.

Jimmy is not in the mood.

VALENTINA

I'm sorry. There was a posting for a dance instructor.

Jimmy gives her a stern look as he works around her to prepare the meal.

VALENTINA

Oh, come on, don't look at me like that. You know how much I love to dance.

JIMMY

Then go dance.

VALENTINA

Jimmy, I need the money.

JIMMY

And I need a waitress who shows up on time.

VALENTINA

I promise it won't happen again.

Jimmy turns to Valentina.

JIMMY

I hired someone else this morning.

VALENTINA

Jimmy.

JIMMY

And she starts tonight... Look, if you put your shit together there will always be a job here for you. But now, I really need someone who I can rely on.

(beat)

I'm sorry, Val. You're fired.

Valentina tries to read Jimmy's expression; he means it. She paralyzes as her entire world crashes down.

INT. SOPHIE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sophie takes a bath in her jacuzzi, absent from the world.

SOPHIE'S POV. Her palm is blurry, but for a moment the wrinkles on her fingertips become clear.

She tilts her head up and faces a mirror. She studies her eyes; her wrinkles, her bags and the color of them.

Something catches her attention; a small engraving on the edge of the mirror. Sophie focuses on the tiny letters and reads: 'MADE IN MEXICO'.

INT. SOPHIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sophie sits on the bed wearing only a bathrobe. She opens her laptop. Pulls out her glasses from a drawer. Throws them on.

She types in: 'COORANDERRA'

The search web corrects: 'Did you mean CURANDERA?'

Sophie clicks and reads a few headlines:

- 'Curandera: Real or Scam?'
- 'Curanderas and Quack Doctors. Don't let them fool you'
- 'My Fascinating Experience in Mexico with a Curandera'
- 'I don't know if they're all legit, but this curandera cured my kid from cancer.'

Sophie takes off her glasses.

EXT. VALENTINA'S STUDIO COMPLEX - NIGHT

Valentina's old beetle barely makes it to the front door. It drags and squeaks until it stops. Smoke steams from the engine.

Valentina is visibly consumed by her bad day. She gets out from her car and sees --

A FEW BOXES, a couple of SUITCASES with CLOTHES, SHOES, MAKEUP, BOOKS, and a few DISHES spilled all over the street.

It takes Valentina second... THOSE ARE HER BELONGINGS!

VALENTINA

No, no, no, no -- Fuck!

She kneels down and rummages through her MEMORY BOX. Her Grandma's letters are there. This is all she has.

INT. SOPHIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sophie stares at the city lights through the window.

Her cell phone vibrates with an INCOMING CALL from LEON. Sophie ignores it while she swallows some pills.

She turns to her laptop, the CURANDERA search is still there.

INT. OLD BEETLE - NIGHT

Valentina covers herself with a jacket as she tries to sleep. She can't.

Her belongings are now jammed in the back seat.

Valentina pulls out the recent letter from 'JOSÉ GARCÍA'. She finally dares to read... Her eyes fill with sadness.

Trying to keep the tears inside, she takes out her old mobile. Dials a number. A FEMALE VOICE answers.

The following conversation plays out in SPANISH.

MARIANA (O.S.)

Hello?

VALENTINA

Mariana? Hey, it's me, --

MARIANA (O.S.)

Val? Oh my God!

(an emotional beat)

How are you? Are you okay?

VALENTINA

Yeah, I'm good. Everything's fine... How about you? You good?

MARIANA (O.S.)

Things could be better but I'm glad you called.

Valentina fights tears.

VALENTINA

I know. Dad told me about Grandma.

MARIANA (O.S.)

He told you? You spoke to him?

VALENTINA

Not exactly. He sent a letter.

MARIANA (O.S.)

Oh.

VALENTINA

Can you put Grandma on the phone? I would love to hear her voice.

In the background, JOSÉ GARCÍA chimes in.

JOSÉ GARCÍA (O.S.)

Who is it?

MARIANA (O.S.)
*It's Val. Wants a word with
 Grandma.*

JOSÉ GARCÍA (O.S.)
She's sleeping.

MARIANA (O.S.)
Dad says she's sleeping.

VALENTINA
Right... Hmm... Can I talk to Dad?

MARIANA (O.S.)
Val wants to talk to you.

JOSÉ GARCÍA (O.S.)
*I'm too tired. I'm going to bed and
 you should too.*

This hurts.

MARIANA (O.S.)
Val...

VALENTINA
I heard.

MARIANA (O.S.)
I'm sorry.

On the other end, Mariana hangs up. Valentina tries not to break down.

INT. SOPHIE'S LOFT - DAY

Sophie cleans the kitchen as if she were on a mission. Gloves on. Face mask. Leon lets himself in with his own keys. Sophie startles. Takes her mask off.

SOPHIE
 You can't keep coming in like that.

LEON
 You're not answering my calls.

SOPHIE
 You could've knocked. I'm changing
 the locks tomorrow.

LEON
 Or I can just give you my keys.

Leon holds up his keys with a smile. Almost a 'Hi'. Sophie hides her smile as she carves the table with a wet tissue.

LEON

I just want to know how the auditions went...

SOPHIE

Nothing yet.

LEON

...And I wanted to know how you're doing.

Leon sits on a chair. Sophie shakes her hand as in 'get up'.

SOPHIE

It's still wet.

Leon gets up. Grabs a tissue and cleans the chair before she does. Then wags his pants to dry them up.

SOPHIE

Look, as soon I find a replacement, you'll be the first to know.

LEON

There are other things we need to talk about. Us, mainly.

SOPHIE

There is no "us", Leon. Why do you think I'm leaving the Academy?

LEON

You're not leaving the Academy, you're leaving me.

SOPHIE

Exactly.

LEON

So, this has nothing to do with your disea -- your condition?

Leon poked a delicate spot. He's about to sit on another chair. A beat. Sophie's furious. He stays still.

SOPHIE

I'm perfectly capable of doing my job. I've got it under control.

LEON

I'm sure you do, but I'm worried about you. Let's have dinner next week. A friendly dinner. Promise.

Sophie sighs. She turns to clean another chair. There's a folder open. Valentina's resume on top. A beat.

SOPHIE

I can't. I'm going to Mexico.

Leon can't help it, he lets out a short LAUGH.

SOPHIE

What's so funny?

LEON

You don't speak a word of Spanish. You throw up every time you're on a plane and you can't drive there.

Sophie's about to defend herself --

LEON

I saw the Mercedes downstairs.

SOPHIE

I'm going with a friend.

LEON

What friend? My friends are your friends and we don't have any friends.

Leon embraces how pathetic that sounds.

LEON

You're my only friend, Sophie.

Pathetic but true. Sophie gives in to a smile. Almost a laugh. And then, in a genuine friendly tone:

SOPHIE

Okay friend, I'm going to Mexico for a week and when I'm back I want those divorce papers signed.

Leon's smile fades away. He looks around. All chairs are still wet. Nowhere to sit.

LEON

I'll leave you to your cleaning then.

Leon gives Sophie a gentle kiss on the cheek and when he's about to leave, he leaves his keys on the table.

Sophie stays there. Processing. Then turns to Valentina's resume. Grabs the phone and dials a number.

SOPHIE

Hi, I'm Sophie from the Academy...
Are you still looking for a job?

CUT TO:

EXT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

Valentina's old beetle arrives and that's itself a miracle.

She gets out, approaches the fancy apartment block and presses number 9 on the buzzer.

EXT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT BLOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Valentina waits. Sophie comes out carrying a suitcase and her BIRDCAGE. Sandy and Danny inside.

Valentina smiles; there's something sweet about a woman unable to leave her pets behind.

VALENTINA

Ready?

Valentina opens the old beetle's door for Sophie.

SOPHIE

Oh no. We're taking my car.

EXT. SOPHIE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Valentina struggles to get her belongings in the Mercedes. One suitcase over another. Her purple radio and memory box.

Sophie stands waiting impatiently.

SOPHIE

You know we're only going for a
week, right?

Valentina takes a glimpse at Sophie's birdcage.

VALENTINA

Yeah, then why are you taking the
zoo with us?

SOPHIE

Can't leave them alone.

Valentina finishes packing her belongings. She stands back and admires the gorgeous car. She spots the BROKEN HEADLIGHT.

VALENTINA

What happened?

Sophie ignores the question. Puts her luggage and birdcage in the back seat. Then, with car keys in hand, nears Valentina.

SOPHIE

You have to promise to be very,
very careful and drive safe.

Valentina nods. Sophie hands her the keys.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Valentina, in the driver seat, explores the superb Mercedes.

Sophie, in the passenger seat, is stressed by the idea of someone else driving her car. She puts on her seat belt as she swallows some pills.

VALENTINA

What are those for?

SOPHIE

Seat belt, please.

Valentina mimes 'Okay' and does as she's told. Continues to get comfortable, adjusting seat and mirrors.

SOPHIE

Respect the speed limit. No driving
at night; the headlight's broken.

VALENTINA

Is it because you fainted at the
studio?

Valentina converts the roof by pressing a button. Sophie presses the button to send the roof back on.

SOPHIE

No drinking in the car. No eating
in the car. Let's keep it clean.

VALENTINA

Is it going to happen again?

Valentina turns on the radio. Sophie switches it off.

SOPHIE

We stop three times a day for gas
and food.

VALENTINA

Because if it is, then this is
something that I need to know. I
can't be driving and keeping an eye
out for you at the same time.

Sophie gives Valentina a stern look.

SOPHIE

You just focus on the driving.

Valentina takes the punch and sighs. Sophie never talks
about her disease. She takes a moment.

SOPHIE

I have macular degeneration.

VALENTINA

I feel super ignorant right now.

SOPHIE

It's a disease. I'm going blind.

Silence.

SOPHIE

There is no cure.

VALENTINA

And you think the *curandera* can...

It's all clear now.

VALENTINA

Okay.

Valentina slips on her sunglasses and starts the car.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAY

A beautiful morning in Los Angeles, bright and sunny.

The red Mercedes stands out from the rest of the cars.
Traveling along MULHOLLAND DRIVE -- HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD --
SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD until it reaches:

THE 101 FREEWAY

The Mercedes slowly joins the TRAFFIC. It's bumper to bumper.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (STUCK IN TRAFFIC) - DAY

Sophie pulls out a LARGE MAP almost blocking Valentina's view.

VALENTINA

Oh Dios mío! What is that?

SOPHIE

It's a map.

VALENTINA

I can see that. I mean, have you never heard of Google Maps?

Sophie picks up Valentina's old mobile.

SOPHIE

I don't think you can talk about technology.

VALENTINA

I'm broke, not stuck in the 80s.

SOPHIE

It's Mexico, who knows if I'll have reception below the border.

Valentina shakes her head and peeks into the map. It has notes and lines drawn everywhere.

VALENTINA

Did you really make a route of a country you've never been to?

SOPHIE

Just because you're Mexican doesn't mean you know every single highway down there.

VALENTINA

There's no need to, I'll improvise.

SOPHIE

(slightly scared)

What do you mean improvise?

Sophie folds away the map as Valentina SLAMS the brake. Sophie tenses her body.

VALENTINA

Sorry. LA drivers are the worst!

Valentina hits the horn. Sandy and Danny SCREECH.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Sandy and Danny SING, they're NOISY.

VALENTINA

Are they always this cranky?

SOPHIE

They're not cranky. They're nervous.

VALENTINA

They're trapped in a cage in the backseat of Mercedes traveling faster than what they could possibly fly. I'd say they're nervous... and cranky. Is this their first time out?

SOPHIE

Yeah, I never let them out.

Sophie stretches to feed Sandy and Danny in the back seat. She calms them down. Valentina hates silences.

VALENTINA

Nobody could've taken care of Tweety and Woody Woodpecker?

SOPHIE

Sandy and Danny. No, no one I could trust.

Valentina smiles at the 'Grease' reference as she wonders if Sophie knows who Tweety and Woody Woodpecker are.

VALENTINA

Your Mom? Sister? Friend? Neighbor?

Sophie shakes her head.

VALENTINA

Husband? Boyfriend?... Girlfriend?

SOPHIE

Girlfriend? No. I'm divorced. Well, almost.

VALENTINA

Ah! There it is!

SOPHIE

There what is?

VALENTINA

The reason you're so... you.

SOPHIE

You've known me for a few hours!

VALENTINA

I'm just saying that anyone going through a break up would be a little, you know --

SOPHIE

Leon's a great guy, but he couldn't take care of a relationship let alone Sandy and Danny.

VALENTINA

Birds are easier to take care of than relationships, *mamita*.

SOPHIE

Obviously you don't have any pets.

Valentina spots the sign: 'US-MEXICO BORDER. 50 MILES.'

VALENTINA

Yeah, well, I hope they're not going to be a problem crossing the border.

SOPHIE

They won't be, I have all the papers needed.

Sophie shows Valentina a folder full of organized papers. Thicker than a Tarantino script.

CUT TO:

EXT. IMMIGRATION STALL, BORDER CROSSING - DAY

A STERN CUSTOMS OFFICER stands by the driver's window. He flicks through Sophie's folder.

Sophie and Valentina wait inside the car. The lovebirds SING.

STERN OFFICER
We don't need all of this.

The Stern Officer is overwhelmed by Sophie's paperwork.

STERN OFFICER
We just need current health certificates for the birds. Have you got them?

SOPHIE
They're right in front of you.

STERN OFFICER
I can't see them. There are expired health records, invoices from the Veterinary clinic, a receipt for a birdcage. Just a bunch of random papers that are no use to us. Without those certificates then --

SOPHIE
In your right hand. The one that clearly states Health Certificates from 2017.

STERN OFFICER
I can't find --

The Stern Officer finds it. Gives Sophie an annoyed look.

STERN OFFICER
Next time, just bring only what we ask for.

The Stern Officer stamps the documents and Sophie's passport. Hands them back to Sophie, who's in the passenger seat. His arm crosses Valentina.

The Stern Officer keeps Valentina's passport in his hand. Focuses on: A MALE'S PHOTO NEXT TO THE NAME 'VALENTÍN GARCÍA CISNEROS.'

The Stern Officer struggles to take his inquisitive eyes away from the passport. Valentina gets nervous.

SOPHIE
Is there a problem?

The Stern Officer disregards Sophie.

STERN OFFICER
Valentín García Cisneros.

VALENTINA
I prefer "Valentina".

STERN OFFICER
Do you mind removing your wig?

VALENTINA
My wig? Are you serious?

STERN OFFICER
We need to confirm your identity as
the same one in this passport.

Valentina ties her hair in a bun. Shows every angle of her
face to him. The Stern Officer gets irate.

STERN OFFICER
If you do not comply, then we will
not be granting you entry into
Mexico. Now, could you please
remove your wig?

VALENTINA
I can't. It's attached to my skull.

STERN OFFICER
Pull over to the side, please?

SOPHIE
What's the problem?

STERN OFFICER
To the side. Now.

Sophie is visibly annoyed. Valentina sighs in concern,
assuming what's coming next.

EXT. BORDER CROSSING - DAY

Sophie waits inside the Mercedes, parked to the side while
CARS enter and leave the country. She hears and witnesses:

VALENTINA AND THE STERN CUSTOMS OFFICER,

Arguing a few feet away.

VALENTINA
It's me. How many times do I have
to tell you?

STERN OFFICER

And how many times do I have tell
you that this is procedure?

The Stern Officer points at the passport photo.

STERN OFFICER

You don't resemble the person from
your passport. Can you see why we
have a problem?

VALENTINA

You have a problem. It's not my
fault that you can't identify a
person with longer hair.

STERN OFFICER

It's not just your hair. This photo
was taken ten years ago, and if you
add the way you dress --

VALENTINA

(nears her face to him)
Chin. Nose. Eyes. Look carefully.
Oh, I have a scar too, right here.
You'll find it in the photo too.

The Stern Officer sees the scar, but hates being wrong.

STERN OFFICER

Like I said, this is procedure. If
we suspect that an individual is
not representing their image in
their passport, then we have every
right to conduct a full body
search.

VALENTINA

Excuse me? Only my face is visible
in the photo...

STERN OFFICER

Either that or you're not crossing
the border.

Valentina is left speechless. Then:

VALENTINA

Fine, I'm not crossing.

Sophie jumps out the Mercedes and rushes to a second and
FRIENDLY OFFICER nearby. She inaudibly explains the situation
to him. He mimes her to stay in the car.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (PARKED), BORDER CROSSING - DAY

Sophie watches from inside.

SOPHIE'S POV... Inaudible:

The Friendly Officer joins the chaos. -- The Stern Officer shows his colleague Valentina's passport, while Valentina explains, heated. -- The Stern Officer argues too.

The Friendly Officer listens.

A beat.

The Friendly Officer guides Valentina and his colleague into an office.

SOPHIE

Damn, no.

Sophie is about to get out of the car when Valentina passes by. Valentina signals her to stay as in 'All good'. But Valentina certainly doesn't look 'good'.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (PARKED), BORDER CROSSING - DAY

Sandy and Danny SING in the back seat. Sophie waits, impatient, worried, looking around when --

Valentina opens the door and gets in. Slams the door shut and chucks her passport on the dashboard. Sophie turns to her...

Valentina's eyes are tearfully red. Black mascara has dried up down her cheeks. The red lipstick is gone and the scar above her left eyebrow isn't hiding under makeup.

Valentina stretches to the back seat for her makeup kit. She can't reach it. Sophie can and passes it to her.

Sophie stays still not knowing what to say as she watches Valentina elegantly put her makeup back on.

Valentina spots Sophie's confused and questioning look.

VALENTINA

We need to get to Mexico, don't we?

SOPHIE

We should report him. Actually, you know what? I'll go and make a complaint right now.

Sophie tries to hop out of the car but Valentina stops her.

VALENTINA

Let's just go.

SOPHIE

Just go? That's why they think they can get away with it because --

VALENTINA

I just had to remove my makeup, Sophie, it's fine --

SOPHIE

It's not fine! We can't just shut up. I'm reporting him.

VALENTINA

I already did!
(beat)
That's why I took so long.

Sophie chooses to believe her. They share a faint smile.

EXT. HIGHWAY, BAJA CALIFORNIA - DAY

The red Mercedes travels on the empty highway surrounded by the Mexican landscape and the scorching sun.

LATER - SUNSET

The sunset embraces the Mercedes as it travels with the Pacific Ocean by its side.

The one-eyed Mercedes keeps moving with its only light catching a sign that reads: 'GUAYMAS - 5KM'

EXT. GUAYMAS - NIGHT

A dry small town with short buildings and even shorter trees.

The Mercedes approaches an old building with a handwritten sign on top: 'MOTEL: LA ROSA LINDA.'

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

SOPHIE'S POV. The blurry sign on the small building. The letters resemble messy brushstrokes.

The motel looks more like an abandoned house. The walls haven't been painted in years.

Valentina slows down the Mercedes.

VALENTINA

Are you sure this is the place?

Sophie doesn't respond.

INT. ROOM, MOTEL 'LA ROSA LINDA' - NIGHT

A simple room. A window with a washed out curtain. Plain white walls. An old TV. A small bathroom and A SINGLE BED.

Valentina drops her luggage by the door. Sophie doesn't. She holds her suitcase and birdcage as she explores the room, frustrated.

SOPHIE

This isn't the one I booked.

Valentina sits on the bed. Takes off her heels.

SOPHIE

What are you doing? We're not staying.

VALENTINA

Why not? It's perfect.

Valentina bounces on the bed.

SOPHIE

We're leaving.

VALENTINA

Sophie, it's 1:00 AM and I've been driving for 9 hours straight. I'm not going anywhere.

Valentina lays back. Sophie mutters to herself as she looks around.

SOPHIE

This is no place for two ladies.

'Ladies' - Valentina smiles.

INT. BATHROOM, MOTEL 'LA ROSA LINDA' - NIGHT

Sophie turns on the light and looks around in disgust, it's old and rusty, but to be fair, it's pretty clean.

Sophie swallows her pills. Brushes her teeth. Washes her face. Examines her eyes.

Then opens her suitcase and pulls out her pajamas: A SEXY NIGHTGOWN.

INT. ROOM, MOTEL 'LA ROSA LINDA' - MOMENTS LATER

Sophie exits the bathroom wearing SWEAT PANTS and a baggy SWEATSHIRT.

She carefully sits on the edge of the bed. Next to her, Valentina is asleep.

Sophie takes out her cell phone to charge it. ON SCREEN: '13 MISSED CALLS FROM LEON.' She listens to her voicemails.

LEON (VOICEMAIL)

*Sophie, where are you? And please
don't tell me you're in Mexico!
Stop avoiding me, I saw you took
the Mercedes, I'm worried about
you. Call me back.*

Sophie turns off her cell and lets it charge.

She gets underneath the blankets and struggles to find a comfortable position to sleep.

A fresh breeze slides in through the window. Valentina shivers a little. Sophie gets up and shuts the window.

She drapes Valentina with the bed sheet trying not to wake her up. And as she does, Sophie can't help but admire Valentina's soft skin.

Sophie walks away.

INT. ROOM, MOTEL 'LA ROSA LINDA' - EARLY MORNING

Sophie is on the floor. Asleep. Her head rests on the birdcage. She spent the night there. She slowly wakes up with a smile almost forgetting where she was.

SOPHIE'S POV. A distorted, blurry image of a SLITHERING TAIL crossing over her chest...

She SCREAMS!

Sophie frantically gets up. Shakes her hands all over her body. Valentina wakes up, startled by Sophie's SHRIEKS.

VALENTINA

What happened?

SOPHIE

A snake!

VALENTINA

What? Where?

Valentina jumps like a little girl back on the bed.

SOPHIE

I don't know, there! It was huge!
 (points next to the bed)
 There. There!

Sophie cowers in the corner, brushing off her body, making sure she doesn't have anything else on her.

Valentina peeks around the bed looking for the 'huge snake'. And then, she spots the monster: A TINY GECKO. She sighs in relief and giggles.

SOPHIE

Why are you laughing? Is it dead?

VALENTINA

It's only a little gecko.

Sophie feels stupid but still keeps her distance as Valentina tenderly picks up the gecko.

VALENTINA

These little guys are everywhere.
 They can't hurt you.
 (to the gecko)
Hola, amigo.

SOPHIE

This place is a nightmare, I don't know how you could sleep.

VALENTINA

Yeah, well. I've had worse.
 (playfully to the Gecko)
 Yes, I have. Oh, you have too, haven't you?

Valentina talks to her new friend as she takes it outside.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

The blue sky contrasts with the elegant desert.

Valentina enjoys the breeze on her face while Sophie is too busy checking the map.

VALENTINA

Look, look!

Valentina points outside.

SOPHIE'S POV. A gorgeous eagle flies above them. The beautiful animal slowly becomes blurry as if it were created by Monet's paintbrush.

Sophie's frustration is noticeable as every blurry vision becomes a reminder of her fate.

SOPHIE

Do we still have gas?

VALENTINA

Wow, that eagle's huge.

SOPHIE

Valentina?

VALENTINA

We have gas. I wish I could fly.

SOPHIE

You didn't even check.

VALENTINA

I did check. And when you asked me to check 15 min ago, I checked then, too. What's wrong with you?

Sophie takes a deep breath.

SOPHIE

You're right. You're driving. I'll just... trust you.

VALENTINA

Good. Now, would you just put that thing down and relax?

Sophie does. She pulls out an apple and takes a bite. Valentina checks the gas: ALMOST EMPTY.

VALENTINA

What do yo say we stop for lunch?

SOPHIE

Lunch is not for another hour.

VALENTINA

C'mon, we'll get a bite to eat and
if it makes you feel better...
we'll get some gas too.

Sophie loves the idea.

They take an exit following a sign that reads: '*BIENVENIDOS A
LOS MOCHIS, SINALOA*'

EXT. LOS MOCHIS - DAY

A tiny warm city. Mostly flat, not a single skyscraper.
Plazas. Kiosks. People walk more than they drive.

The one-eyed Mercedes pulls into a Mexican Restaurant.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY

SOPHIE'S POV. A blurry menu in Spanish.

Sophie's eyes beg for Valentina's help, but Valentina
concentrates on her own menu.

A WAITER approaches. He stares at Valentina for a few
seconds, unsure how to address her.

WAITER

(in Spanish)

*Welcome... ladies, may I take your
order?*

VALENTINA

(all in Spanish)

*5 chilorio tacos, please. Ah, and a
Victoria, a very cold Victoria.*

He writes it down. Scans Valentina one more time. Turns to
Sophie who has no clue what the menu says.

Valentina gently grabs the menu off Sophie's hands.

VALENTINA

Here, let me. Would you like some
tacos, burritos? Enchiladas?

SOPHIE

Wait, what's their sanitary rating?

VALENTINA

What?

SOPHIE

Every restaurant goes through a
sanitary inspection to make sure --

VALENTINA

I know what it is.

SOPHIE

Ask him.

VALENTINA

(to the Waiter in Spanish)
*Forgive my friend, she doesn't know
what she wants.*

WAITER

(in Spanish)
Take your time.

VALENTINA

(to Sophie)
Good news. A+. Now, what do you
want?

Sophie detects the lie.

SOPHIE

I'm not eating.

VALENTINA

You haven't eaten all day, except
for that tiny apple.

SOPHIE

It's okay, you go ahead.

VALENTINA

Are you sure? Something to drink at
least? A beer?

SOPHIE

I don't drink. Actually, you
shouldn't either, you're driving.

Valentina can't believe this. The Waiter bounces his eyes
between Sophie and Valentina.

SOPHIE

Bottled water, please.

VALENTINA
 (to the Waiter in Spanish)
*Only a bottle of water for her,
 please. I guess she's on diet.*

The Waiter nods and leaves.

Sophie startles when a dirty STREET KID (7) approaches. He holds a fragile box full of chocolates and chewing gum.

KID
*¿Chocolate o chicles? 6 pesos cada
 uno, o dos por 10.*

Sophie is shocked by the Kid's appearance. Valentina checks her handbag but... not enough.

VALENTINA
 Do you have cash?

Sophie pulls out her purse, she opens it: US dollars and Mexican currency she's not familiar with. She spreads some bills on the table to count them when --

Valentina grabs a 200 pesos bill. Before Sophie speaks --

VALENTINA
 It's not even 20 dollars.

Valentina gives the 200 pesos to the Kid whose eyes widen in surprise. The Kid is thankful and tries to hand the whole box to Valentina. Valentina pushes it away.

VALENTINA
 (in Spanish)
Eat something, kid.

The Kid nods speechless and departs as Sophie studies Valentina's act. Loving it.

The Waiter comes back with their order.

Sophie notices how the CUSTOMERS and STAFF occasionally glance at their table. Valentina pours salsa on her tacos.

SOPHIE
 Why is everyone staring at us?

VALENTINA
 They're looking at me, not you.

It's true. The stares are on Valentina.

SOPHIE

You don't mind?

VALENTINA

I mean, it's not nice, but problem solved when I get my surgery. People will finally look at who I am, not how I look.

SOPHIE

It sounds like you're doing this for them.

VALENTINA

What? No, I'm doing this for me.

SOPHIE

But you want to fit, be accepted.

VALENTINA

And who doesn't? -- But acceptance is not why I'm doing it. You wouldn't understand.

SOPHIE

Why not? I'm not that uptight.

VALENTINA

I didn't say that. But you're not in my situation. When you wake up in the morning and look in the mirror, you see a beautiful woman. You don't feel trapped. You're comfortable in your own skin with nothing to fix. I don't have that luxury.

SOPHIE

That's not true. I'm trying to fix my eyes.

VALENTINA

Well, there you go. You should understand than most. When there's a problem, we fix it. Some have sex changes, some go all the way down to Mexico just to see a *curandera*.

Sophie smiles to herself as Valentina keeps eating.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Back on the road, Valentina smears red lipstick on. Bounces her eyes between the rearview mirror and the road.

Once finished, Valentina drops the lipstick inside her Bordelle bra, which pops out from her shirt.

SOPHIE

Is that Bordelle real?

VALENTINA

Ouch!

SOPHIE

That's not what I meant. I mean, they're really expensive.

VALENTINA

Do you really think I'd spend \$300 on a bra?

SOPHIE

So, it's fake.

VALENTINA

Oh no, it's definitely real.

Sophie's intrigued.

VALENTINA

There was this guy that used to come to the diner every day after work. Sit at the same booth and order the same apple pie. He did it for months. Anyway, one day he came in with flowers and this lingerie and said they were for me.

SOPHIE

That's a little creepy.

VALENTINA

My manager thought so too, so, he banned the poor guy from the diner. Haven't seen him since.

SOPHIE

And you just kept the lingerie?

VALENTINA

It's a Bordelle! It was a bit of a shame really. He was kinda cute, too.

Valentina's story makes Sophie smile, then --

SOPHIE
Wait, so... you're into men?

VALENTINA
I'm into love.

Sophie takes that in as she stares at Valentina's Bordelle.

EXT. BEACH, MAZATLÁN - DAY

On one side of the highway: green mountains. On the other side: the beach and its powerful waves. Beautiful nature.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Sophie's cell reception: ONE BAR LEFT. She gives up and pulls out her large map.

SOPHIE
Okay, you have to take the next exit.

VALENTINA
Are you sure?

SOPHIE'S POV. The map becomes blurry. The city names are impossible to read.

SOPHIE
Yeah, we take the next exit and then we stay on that road for a while. Just keep going straight.

Valentina doesn't question it. Sophie yawns, exhausted.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - SUNSET

Sophie sleeps cramped in her seat. Valentina wakes her up.

VALENTINA
Sophie... Sophie... Hey, Sophie!

Sophie wakes up. Rubs her eyes.

SOPHIE
What?

VALENTINA
We took the wrong exit.

Sophie looks outside. They're approaching what it looks like a ghost town.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (PARKED) - SUNSET

No sign of movement. No people, no cars. Silence outside.

SOPHIE
Why did you get off?!

VALENTINA
I didn't, you said "keep going straight", that's what I did.

SOPHIE
Then why are you saying we took the wrong exit?!

VALENTINA
Before you passed out you told me which exit to take. That's the one I'm talking about.

Sophie pulls out her cell: NO RECEPTION. She pulls out the large map, frustrated.

SOPHIE
I don't know what happened, I swear that was the exit.

VALENTINA
No, it wasn't.

SOPHIE
Yes it was, it said --

VALENTINA
Sophie, you made a mistake. It's fine, just let me have a look.

Sophie is about to respond but her eyes divert toward the top of the street. Sophie is confused, Valentina is moved by --

A MOB OF SAD PEOPLE marching slowly. Some pray, Some cry.

They all wear black and hold candles between their hands. The People at the front carry a COFFIN.

SOPHIE
What's going on?

Valentina spots a BLACK RIBBON above the door of a house.

VALENTINA

See the ribbon on that house?

Sophie forces her eyes, takes a moment to find it. She nods.

VALENTINA

It's a symbol of mourning, they put it on their door when a family member or a friend dies.

SOPHIE

Why do they carry the body like that?

VALENTINA

It's how we say goodbye.

Sophie is caught up by the moment.

The People walk toward them. Valentina starts the Mercedes and makes a U turn to get out of their way. Out of the town.

Sophie takes a last look at the black ribbon on the door.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The Mercedes approaches a beach and parks near the sand.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (PARKED) - NIGHT

Valentina, visibly tired, hops out of the Mercedes.

VALENTINA

Let's go.

SOPHIE

Go where?

SOPHIE'S POV. The beach is deserted, except for some blurry SURFERS riding the distorted waves.

Sophie gets out the Mercedes. Valentina pulls out their luggage and the birdcage. Hands Sophie her luggage.

SOPHIE

What are you doing?

VALENTINA

I've been driving for hours in the wrong direction, we might as well just crash here.

SOPHIE'S POV. A blurry CABIN.

SOPHIE
You're kidding, right?

Valentina locks the Mercedes and heads for the 'cabin'.

Sophie grabs her belongings and follows. After a few steps, she's surprised to find out it isn't a cabin, it is --

A *PALAPA*. Thick wooden beams in the sand hold up the leafy roof. A dozen hammocks hang underneath. Think of a large beach shack with no doors, no windows and no walls.

I/E. PALAPA, BEACH - NIGHT

Sophie is genuinely confused.

SOPHIE
Where are the walls?

VALENTINA
Palapas have no walls. It's a surfers' spot.

Sophie takes a look around while Valentina approaches a MEXICAN WOMAN sitting behind a wooden table.

SOPHIE'S POV. A couple of Monet-blurry silhouettes of other GUESTS resting in the hammocks.

Valentina comes back. Hands Sophie a beer. Sophie rejects it.

VALENTINA
It came with the hammock.

SOPHIE
What do you mean, "it came with the hammock"?

VALENTINA
50 *pesos* a night and we get one, no, two beers. I'd say it's a pretty good deal.

Sophie looks around.

SOPHIE
I can't sleep here.

VALENTINA
A hammock, a beer and a great view.

THE VIEW: Topless surfers.

VALENTINA

I can definitely sleep here.

Sophie places the birdcage on the sand and hesitantly sits on a hammock.

I/E. PALAPA, BEACH - NIGHT

Valentina sways with a bottle of beer in hand and an empty one by her side. Sophie doesn't drink, only sways.

Sandy and Danny SING peacefully.

VALENTINA

Your canaries must love it here.

SOPHIE

They're Abyssinian lovebirds.

VALENTINA

Lovebirds. Sounds nice.

SOPHIE

They seek companionship. In order to be happy and healthy, they stay in pairs, otherwise, they'll get lonely, which can cause them to get sick and die.

VALENTINA

Urgh. Maybe not so nice.

SOPHIE

More of a Shakespearean tale.

VALENTINA

Or a Greek tragedy. Depending on others to survive and locked up in a cage like that.

Sophie turns to Sandy and Danny. They flap their wings and play with their beaks as if they were kissing.

SOPHIE

They're fine.

Valentina notices Sophie forcing her eyes.

VALENTINA

Shouldn't you be wearing glasses?

SOPHIE'S POV. Various COLORS make a SHAKY and BLURRY RAINBOW around the bright sunlight. Valentina's dances inside the 'brushtrokes' like the *Woman With A Parasol, Facing Left*.

As Sandy and Danny CHIRP, Sophie smiles. A beautiful moment.

EXT. HIGHWAY, NAYARIT - DAY

The one-eyed Mercedes travels along the highway. The beach disappears as they drive inland.

EXT. TEPIC, NAYARIT - DAY

The Mercedes crosses TEPIC, NAYARIT. A dry city with plazas and fountains surrounded by colossal trees.

I/E. SOPHIE'S CAR - DAY

They stop at a RED LIGHT. Two YOUNG MEN in raggy clothes approach the Mercedes from each side.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR - DAY

Sophie startles. No. Freaks out! Shuts her eyes. Holds her purse in front of her.

SOPHIE
Take it, take it!

Valentina LAUGHS.

VALENTINA
They're not robbing us.

Sophie opens her eyes. Confused. The Young Men move toward the windscreen.

SOPHIE
What are they doing?

SOPHIE'S POV. Monet-blurry soap bubbles on the windscreen. The two Young Men cleaning it.

VALENTINA
Their job.

Valentina pulls out some coins as the two Young Men finish cleaning the windscreen. She pays them.

Sophie's embarrassment turns into laughter.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - LATER

On another highway. Sophie rubs her eyes then shuts them. She enjoys the breeze on her face.

Valentina taps Sophie and points out.

Sophie opens and forces her eyes: FARMERS wave to them as they drive past huge AGAVE PLANTATION.

EXT. GUADALAJARA, JALISCO - DAY

A gorgeous, big city rich in culture. PEDESTRIANS rushing somewhere. The wonderful cathedral towers downtown.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Sophie and Valentina exit the car with their luggage and birdcage. A VALET gets in the Mercedes.

INT. LOBBY, HOTEL - DAY

Valentina checks-in at the reception while Sophie looks around satisfied with the hotel.

Sophie spots a poster sign that reads: '*ROOF GARDEN EN CONSTRUCCIÓN.*'

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sophie and Valentina enter.

A classy room. Nice and clean with two beds and a balcony with a beautiful view to the city.

Sophie takes a deep breath as she lays down on the bed.

SOPHIE

I forgot what a real bed feels
like.

Valentina just stands there, she's not used to luxuries.

EXT. BALCONY, HOTEL ROOM - LATER

THE BIRDCAGE: Danny stays still, weary, Sandy tries to make him move.

Sophie studies her lovebirds' behavior. Valentina joins her.

VALENTINA

They look sick.

SOPHIE

Sandy's fine, it's Danny who looks exhausted. Must be the weather.

VALENTINA

How can you tell them apart?

SOPHIE

The one with the red forehead is Danny. The other one is Sandy.

VALENTINA

They look the same to me.

SOPHIE

(joking)

Maybe you should get your eyes checked?

They share a smile before --

SOPHIE'S POV. A DARK SPOT slowly expands from the left, like ink spreading... it covers half of Danny.

Sophie's sits on the floor. Shields her eyes with her hands.

VALENTINA

Sophie?

Sophie's terrified, her body slightly shivers. Valentina bends down and takes Sophie's hands off of her eyes.

VALENTINA

It's okay.

She holds Sophie's hands, giving her comfort.

VALENTINA

Just deep breaths. Let it pass.

Sophie gets her breath back. And slowly her vision too.

VALENTINA

Better?

Sophie nods, still shaken. Valentina thinks for a second.

VALENTINA

Are you hungry?

CUT TO:

INT. CANTINA - AFTERNOON

A large Mexican cantina where everybody seems to be celebrating something. Drinks, music, and great food. WAITRESSES wander around in Frida Kahlo-style dresses.

On a small stage, a MARIACHI BAND sings *Amor Eterno*, Juan Gabriel's classic song.

Sophie and Valentina are at a table. Tequila shots and limes all around. Sophie takes ridiculously small sips from her tequila shot.

VALENTINA

No, no, no. You have to drink it all. Like this.

Valentina shoots her tequila. Sophie tries, but at most, its half a shot.

SOPHIE

Urgh! I can't do it. I can't do it.

VALENTINA

C'mon, just give me at least one good shot.

Sophie clears her throat and then takes a shot. Not a drop left. Valentina applauds.

VALENTINA

Yay! There you go. Now, one more!

SOPHIE

Baby steps.

VALENTINA

Okay, okay.

SOPHIE

Maybe some food?

Valentina is surprised.

VALENTINA

Are you sure? No sanitary rating this time?

They share a smile.

Valentina grabs a couple of menus from the empty table behind them. Hands one to Sophie.

The Mariachi band plays and Valentina mumbles along as she reads the menu. Sophie tries to read hers, forcing her eyes.

SOPHIE

What does "*ahogadas*" mean?

Valentina takes a peek at Sophie's menu.

VALENTINA

It means "drowned".

SOPHIE

The *tortas* are "drowned" in what?

VALENTINA

Sauce. But there's actually --

SOPHIE

I want those.

VALENTINA

Are you sure? They're pretty spicy. How about some soup, or a steak?

SOPHIE

Valentina, I don't want soup. I don't want steak. I want the drowned *tortas*.

Sophie shuts her menu.

INT. CANTINA - LATER

Empty plates. Sophie and Valentina laugh. They're DRUNK.

SOPHIE

You thought girls had penises?

VALENTINA

Hey, I was only seven! And I thought I was a girl so I just assumed all girls had a *pito* too.

Sophie laughs again. Valentina squeezes a lime in her mouth but it slips into her bra and rests on her lap.

VALENTINA

Que la chingada, see what I'm saying? I'm gonna fill these beauties one day.

Valentina pulls out the lime and throws it on the table.

VALENTINA

I'll be 34B. I know 36C is everyone's dream, but I'm not into big boobs, I like them small, like yours.

Sophie peeks into her shirt, analyzes her breasts.

SOPHIE

They're not that small.

VALENTINA

They're perfect. I like when they fit in your hands. A friend got a new pair of boobs almost the size of her head, I was like "honey, do you really wanna carry all that weight for the rest of your life?"

SOPHIE

Right? That's what I always say! One of my students has... big attributes, and she does ballet to help her posture... Leon can't complain, of course.

VALENTINA

Your husband?

SOPHIE

Oh yeah, his eyes always divert to big breasts, big bums. All that jazz.

VALENTINA

Is the sex any good?

Sophie is taken aback. She looks away, shy.

SOPHIE

What?... We haven't... in a long time but... it was okay.

VALENTINA

Honey, when it's good you don't say it's "okay". Is this why you two broke up?

SOPHIE

No! We broke up because... we work better as friends. Just friends.

(to a Waitress)

Hey Frida? Dos more shots, please!

Valentina tries to read Sophie.

INT. CANTINA - LATER

The Mariachi sings *Te Quiero Más Que A Mis Ojos*. A beautiful song with a romantic melody. Valentina sings along.

VALENTINA

*Te quiero, más que a mis ojos, más
a que a mis ojos te quiero, pero
quiero más a mis ojos, pero quiero
más a mis ojos...*

(looks into Sophie's eyes)

...porque mis ojos te vieron.

Sophie is carried away by it. She sways.

SOPHIE

I like this song, what does it say?

VALENTINA

The usual cheesy stuff. *'I love my
eyes more than I love you, because
it was my eyes that saw you first.'*

The lyrics have an impact on Sophie. They stare at each other, and for a moment, there's a hint of attraction -- connection. But the song finishes, and so does the moment.

They CLAP as the Mariachi switches to *Cielito Lindo*, a cheerful song. Valentina knows this one too and sings along.

SOPHIE

You're a karaoke machine!

VALENTINA

Everybody knows this song!

Valentina drags Sophie in front of the Mariachi band.

They rest their arms on each other's shoulder as they sway from side to side. Valentina sings passionately while Sophie follows the chorus.

VALENTINA

*Canta y no llores, porque
cantando se alegran --*

SOPHIE

*Ay, ay, ay, ay! Ay, ay, ay,
ay! Aaaay! Aaaay! Aaayaaay!*

As they LAUGH at their awful singing, A DRUNK MAN pats Sophie on the shoulder. Valentina doesn't notice and keeps singing.

DRUNK MAN
 (to Sophie in Spanish)
You and your friend should join us.

Sophie doesn't understand. The Drunk Man points at a table where his FRIENDS stare at them, smiling.

The Drunk Man leans to kiss Sophie. She backs off.

SOPHIE
 Wait! No!

The Drunk Man tries kissing her again. Sophie pushes him away, quite hard.

The Drunk Man gets it and gives it a try with Valentina. HE GRABS HER ASS.

Valentina turns around and the Drunk Man FREAKS OUT! Definitely not what he was expecting.

DRUNK MAN
 (in Spanish)
Wait, what? What the fu --

VALENTINA
 (in Spanish)
What the hell's wrong with you?

The Drunk Man stares at his beer, wondering what's in it. He turns to his Friends. They LAUGH and mock him.

FRIEND
 (in Spanish)
I didn't know you had such a good taste, man. If you don't take her home, I will.

DRUNK MAN
 (to his table in Spanish)
All yours.

Valentina shakes her head. This isn't new to her.

Sophie understands what's going on. As the Drunk Man LAUGHS, Sophie rushes toward him and --

SLAPS HIM! - The Drunk Man stumbles and falls.

CUSTOMERS try to get out of the way.

SOPHIE
 You're a bully! And a bad, bad man!

Sophie turns to the Drunk Man's Friends.

SOPHIE
You're all bullies! Awful --
disgusting bullies!

Sophie lacks any reprimand skills, but this wows Valentina anyway. She smiles, thankful. Moved.

The CANTINA MANAGER runs toward the fuss. He takes a look at the Drunk Man on the floor, and then at the ladies.

CANTINA MANAGER
*Les voy a pedir que se vayan, por
favor.*

Sophie doesn't understand, but the Cantina Manager pointing at the exit makes it clear to her.

SOPHIE
We didn't do anything. Those guys
over there -- they're mean! I want
another drink.

The Cantina Manager has no clue what Sophie's saying.

CANTINA MANAGER
*Por favor, están molestando a mis
clientes.*

SOPHIE
Where's Frida? Frida?!

VALENTINA
Sophie, we should leave.

SOPHIE
But I can drink tequila, now.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANTINA - NIGHT

Valentina pulls Sophie's arm while Sophie yells at the Cantina.

SOPHIE
We'll be back! This isn't fair!

VALENTINA
Come on, let's go.

SOPHIE

What a shame, I really liked this place.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Sophie and Valentina get in. Sophie struggles to put her seat belt on. Valentina is amused by drunk Sophie.

VALENTINA

Thank you.

SOPHIE

For what?

VALENTINA

Slapping that guy.

SOPHIE

I hope he's okay.

VALENTINA

You sent him to the floor!

SOPHIE

You're right. I should go back and apologize.

Sophie unbuckles her seat belt. Valentina stops her.

VALENTINA

No, no. We're leaving.

They both share a smile while Valentina starts the car.

SOPHIE

Wait, wait, wait, you're drunk. You can't drive.

VALENTINA

This is Mexico.

SOPHIE

Yes, it is.

Sophie presses the button and the roof slides down as they drive away --

SOPHIE

Byeeee Fridaaaa!

I/E. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

As Valentina speeds through the city nightlife, Sophie enjoys the cold wind winnowing on her face.

Sophie stands up, opens her arms and CLOSES HER EYES.

EXT. ROOF GARDEN, HOTEL - NIGHT

The stars illuminate the unfinished rooftop: tiles and dust amongst plants, chairs, small tables and a garden swing.

Sophie and Valentina, still tipsy, jump the 'No Trespassing' sign and hop on the garden swing.

Valentina takes off her sweater and gives it to Sophie who shivers, but Sophie politely rejects it.

VALENTINA

I'm not cold.

Sophie puts on the old and lovely sweater.

VALENTINA

Looks good on you.

Sophie looks down inside the sweater. Touches her own breasts, still analyzing their size.

SOPHIE

How much do you need for the surgery?

VALENTINA

New boobs, new foo-foo down there, hospital fees, special hormone therapy, follow-up care, meds and all that, around \$50,000.

SOPHIE

And how much do you have?

VALENTINA

9 grand. I've been trying to save but... you know.

SOPHIE

Can your family help?

Valentina doesn't respond.

SOPHIE

You haven't told them?!

VALENTINA

My dad only cares about *fútbol* --
sorry, soccer -- He has his own
shit to worry about.

SOPHIE

What about your mom?

VALENTINA

She passed away when I was twelve.

Sophie readjusts in the swing and stares at Valentina, sad.

VALENTINA

It's okay, I had my Grandma, she
did a pretty good job raising me.

SOPHIE

The one that took you to the
curandera?

VALENTINA

Yeah. She was the one who paid for
my first dancing lessons. She said
I looked "beautiful" when she first
saw me in a dress. And when
everything's fucked up, all I can
think of is "I need a hug from *mi*
viejita".

Valentina gets a bit emotional.

SOPHIE

She sounds like a great woman.

VALENTINA

She is.

SOPHIE

We should stop by so you say "hi".
She'll love that. You'll love that.

Valentina lets out an unconvincing --

VALENTINA

Maybe.

Sophie takes a second. They share a silence. Then --

SOPHIE

Do you have your radio somewhere?
The purple one?

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF GARDEN, HOTEL - NIGHT

Sophie places the PURPLE RADIO on the floor. Switches it on.

SALSA MUSIC PLAYS. Celia Cruz's voice embraces them.

Sophie sits on the garden swing next to Valentina, who stares back at Sophie with a smile, wondering what's on her mind.

SOPHIE

You owe me an audition.

Valentina's smile grows as she shakes her head.

SOPHIE

Show me what you've got, *señorita*.

Valentina gets up. Closes her eyes. Listens to the song for a few seconds, letting the music in. And then --

She dances. And she's good. Her delightful movements reveal years of training.

Sophie enjoys watching her. Her shoulders move to the beat. Nobody's immune to Celia's salsa.

Valentina grabs Sophie's hand and pulls her close.

Sophie's ballet training is obvious as her movements are delicate, refined, while Valentina's are sensual, joyful.

Sophie takes a moment to catch Valentina's rhythm and study her movements.

VALENTINA

Don't think. Just dance.

SOPHIE

I'm trying to follow you.

VALENTINA

Follow your body, not mine.

Sophie dares to let herself go, and even if she's all about perfection, she allows her movements to be messy. Free.

The untidy roof garden becomes the perfect dance floor.

EXT. ROOF GARDEN, HOTEL - LATER

Sophie and Valentina tumble on the garden swing. Sweating. Catching their breath. A hint of happiness in their eyes.

Sophie takes deep breaths as she looks at the sky.

SOPHIE

Are those stars? I thought there
were no stars in Mexico. No
offense, but it's polluted.

Valentina looks at the sky too, and then at Sophie.

VALENTINA

It's true. We're lucky.

Sophie enjoys the stars when --

Valentina places a kiss on Sophie's stretched neck.

Sophie freezes and questions Valentina with a look, but...
Valentina kisses Sophie's lips.

Sophie's mouth doesn't respond. This is new to her.
Valentina gently closes Sophie's eyelids with her fingers.

Valentina kisses Sophie again. Sophie now responds to the
kiss. It becomes passionate and emotional.

Sophie doesn't open her eyes... her body shivers as
Valentina's hands travel over her legs.

Valentina possesses Sophie's skin with her touch. She
explores Sophie's female body. It's perfect.

Valentina goes down on her and Sophie gives in.

Beneath the stars, in the middle of the night, Sophie
climaxes.

SOPHIE'S POV. The stars go Monet-blurry.

EXT. ROOF GARDEN, HOTEL - DAY

Hungover, Sophie wakes up on the garden swing, covered by
Valentina's sweater.

SOPHIE'S POV. The blurry and lonely roof garden. Her
underwear and clothes on the floor. A FIGURE approaches.

UNKNOWN MAN (O.S.)

Está despierta, amigos.

Sophie's eyes adjust and it's --

Half a dozen CONSTRUCTION WORKERS. They stop working and
start clapping and laughing.

Sophie turns to Valentina. Not there.

Shameful yet satisfied, Sophie gets up and puts her clothes back on. Her shirt backwards.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sophie enters. Valentina comes out from the shower, already dressed, her hair wrapped in a towel. Sophie's taken by surprise.

VALENTINA

Girl, I just showered, I can't be that ugly.

SOPHIE

I thought you were...

VALENTINA

What?

SOPHIE

Gone.

VALENTINA

You were gone. I tried waking you up, but you were out. How are you feeling?

Valentina dries her hair with the towel, while Sophie fixes the bed pillows they didn't even use.

SOPHIE

Good. I'm feeling good. Why?

VALENTINA

Just checking. You were pretty drunk.

SOPHIE

No, I'm good. Just...

SOPHIE

Good.

VALENTINA

Good.

Valentina smiles as Sophie exchanges pillowcases between two pillows, avoiding eye contact.

VALENTINA

Should we also steam clean before we check out?

SOPHIE

Huh? I'm sorry... when I get nervous, I start cleaning.

VALENTINA

Nervous? There's nothing to be nervous about.

Valentina steps closer to Sophie. Sophie retreats but keeps removing pillowcases and refitting them. Valentina finds this amusing.

SOPHIE

This isn't me. I don't do that stuff.

VALENTINA

Do what stuff?

SOPHIE

Sleep in *palapas*. Get drunk. Have sex with strangers.

VALENTINA

I'm a stranger, now?

SOPHIE

You know what I mean. I just don't want there to be any confusion.

VALENTINA

Confusion? Who's confused?

SOPHIE

Listen, Valentina, I don't know why it happened... but, I... look, I'm not a lesbian, okay?

Sophie goes back to the pillows. Valentina takes a second.

VALENTINA

Wait, what?

SOPHIE

You say you're a woman, right? Well, I'm not a lesbian.

VALENTINA

Are you sure? Because last night --

SOPHIE

I'm sure.

Valentina's hurt.

VALENTINA

Fine, I'll take you to the
curandera, you pay me and we're
done. That was the deal, so let's
get to it.

SOPHIE

That's not --

A LOUD BIRDSONG from the cage interrupts.

EXT. BALCONY, HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sophie steps out, intrigued, worried.

SOPHIE'S POV. Sandy SINGS inside a Monet-blurry spot while
the Danny lies on the edge of the cage...

LIFELESS.

A broken heart is visible through Sophie's precious eyes.
She opens the cage and takes Danny between her hands.

Sophie strokes Danny's feathers as Sandy's goodbye SONG takes
over the city sounds. Valentina approaches the balcony and
realizes Danny has died.

VALENTINA

Oh Sophie, I'm so sorry.

Sophie doesn't respond.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

An awkward and sad silence embraces Sophie and Valentina.

Sandy is lonely in the birdcage resting in the backseat while
Danny's lies dead in a box resting on Sophie's lap.

Valentina, hits the horn when an SUV abruptly overtakes them,
almost hitting the Mercedes. She rolls down the window.

VALENTINA

(to the Driver in Spanish)
¡Fíjate por dónde vas, imbécil!

SOPHIE

Would you mind keeping it down?

VALENTINA

Did you see that idiot?

SOPHIE
I did, no big deal, take it easy!

VALENTINA
Take it easy. Like you always do?

Sophie sighs in search of a dose of tolerance.

SOPHIE
Look, we still have a few hours
ahead, if we are going to be like
this, then how about we just don't
talk?

VALENTINA
Fine by me.

Valentina speeds past the SUV.

VALENTINA
(to the Driver in Spanish)
¡Cabrón!

And then silence. A painful silence.

Sophie puts some music on. It takes her a few moments to realize Valentina is not angry, but sad. They both are.

I/E. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

The Mercedes leaves GUADALAJARA and jumps onto another stretch of HIGHWAY.

Sophie squints to read a sign: 'VUELVA PRONTO'. She swallows more pills. Valentina notices this.

EXT. PÁTZCUARO - DAY

The Mercedes travels through this small tourist town. Narrow streets with tiny houses painted orange, brown and red.

Music sets the vibe as gift shops sell handmade souvenirs.

INT. SOPHIE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Sophie and Valentina don't pay much attention to the gorgeous town they're in when --

The MERCEDES SLOWS DOWN TO A FULL STOP.

SOPHIE
Why did you stop?

VALENTINA
We need gas.

SOPHIE
How much left?

VALENTINA
The car just stopped, Sophie, what do you think?

SOPHIE
Why didn't you say something?

VALENTINA
Why didn't I say something? The last thing that came out of your mouth was "how about we just don't talk."

SOPHIE
Stop being a child and just admit that you forgot to check.

Valentina takes a breath.

VALENTINA
I forgot, okay. We both did.

SOPHIE
What did I forget?

VALENTINA
To ask. You always ask, you ask all the time, "do we have gas? Are we on time? Is this the right way?" --

SOPHIE
Alright, alright! You forgot to check, and I forgot to ask. Now what?

CUT TO:

EXT. PÁTZCUARO - DAY

Sophie and Valentina push the Mercedes. The car is heavy and they're sweaty.

VALENTINA
There.

SOPHIE

Where?

Valentina points to a TINY FOOD CART.

SOPHIE

We need a gas station.

VALENTINA

That is a gas station.

Valentina pops into the driver's seat. Steers to the right. Sophie keeps pushing.

EXT. TINY FOOD CART, PÁTZCUARO - DAY

The tiny food cart sells fresh fruit and juice. And hanging off the cart: a dozen two-litre bottles of gas.

The vendor is a smiling old GAS MAN.

GAS MAN

¿En qué les puedo ayudar?

Sophie scans the Gas Man and turns to Valentina.

SOPHIE

Can we trust him? Is this real gas?

VALENTINA

Yes, it's real gas. Would you relax? Now, how many bottles do you want?

Sophie looks at the tiny bottles and at her empty Mercedes.

SOPHIE

All of them, I think.

Valentina nods. The Gas Man has no idea what is being said.

CUT TO:

EXT. TINY FOOD CART, PÁTZCUARO - DAY

The Gas Man pours gas into the Mercedes. A bunch of empty bottles rest at his feet. Valentina helps by taking the empty one and giving the Gas Man a new one.

Sophie lets them do their thing when --

Mexican MUSIC plays nearby.

Sandy hops and SINGS in excitement, flapping its wings.
Sophie carries the birdcage towards the music.

VALENTINA
Where are you going?

Sophie doesn't respond and continues her way.

VALENTINA
(to the Gas Man)
Ya vuelvo.

Valentina sprints in Sophie's direction. After a block, she spots Sophie at a:

EXT. 'LAGO DE JANITZIO' PIER, PÁTZCUARO - DAY

The lake *Lago de Janitzio* has a tiny island in the middle. A statue of the Mexican hero: *Morelos*, rises in the center of the island.

Sophie walks on the pier in between a small crowd that listen to a *TRÍO*: A band of three musicians covering classic songs.

PEOPLE enjoy their music, dropping *pesos* in a hat.

Sophie approaches the end of the pier. She places the birdcage on the railing and OPENS its little door.

Valentina makes her way toward Sophie but stops when she realizes Sophie is trying to free Sandy. She stays there and watches from afar as Sophie waits for Sandy to fly.

SOPHIE
Go. Go Sandy.

But Sandy stays still. Tranquil. A beat. Sophie shuts the birdcage door, somewhat sad.

Sophie rubs her temples and closes her eyes. She's in pain.

She grabs the birdcage and heads back. Half way through she runs into Valentina.

VALENTINA
Hey, he's almost done.

EXT. TINY FOOD CART, PÁTZCUARO - DAY

Sophie and Valentina walk back toward the Mercedes, but --

NO MERCEDES. No Gas Man either. Only a stripped food cart and a dozen empty gas bottles.

SOPHIE

Please tell me you moved the car.

VALENTINA

No, no, no, no.

Valentina taps her pockets, then looks inside her HANDBAG for the keys. Not there. At least her memory box is inside.

SOPHIE

You left that man alone with the car? And the keys?!

Valentina doesn't respond, ashamed.

SOPHIE

What is wrong with you?

VALENTINA

Nothing is wrong with me! You just wandered off. I had to go --

SOPHIE

It was your responsibility! The only thing you had to do --

VALENTINA

It's your car! It's your responsibility too!

SOPHIE

No, it isn't. This is what I'm paying you for.

A cold beat.

VALENTINA

You know what, Sophie? You blame me, but the truth is you're mad at yourself 'cause you can't accept that I licked your lady business and you loved it!

SOPHIE

What -- ? How dare you?!

VALENTINA

I just want you to accept it so we can stop acting like fools.

SOPHIE

What does this have to do with the car?

VALENTINA

It's not about the car!

Sophie sighs.

SOPHIE

Okay whatever, it did. It happened.

VALENTINA

What happened?

SOPHIE

Dammit, Valentina! You went...
(lowers her voice)
...down on me, happy?

VALENTINA

And?

SOPHIE

And nothing.

VALENTINA

And you liked it!

Sophie's frustration comes out in a furious SCREAM. She tries to cry but she can't, then -- She LAUGHS.

Sophie laughs, and laughs, all her stress breaks free with every laugh. Valentina is confused.

VALENTINA

Why are you laughing?

SOPHIE

(hysterically laughing)
Because I'm losing my eyesight,
Sandy lost Danny, and now you lost
the Mercedes.
(stops laughing)
Danny was in the Mercedes.

Valentina doesn't respond. She walks away.

SOPHIE

Where are you going?

VALENTINA

I'm going to see my Grandma.

SOPHIE

So she can hug you and tell you
that you're beautiful? That doesn't
make things better, Valentina.

Valentina ignores her. Sophie takes the birdcage and walks
the opposite direction. She begins to cross the street when --

A CAR almost hits her but stops right on time!

Valentina turns around and rushes toward her.

Sophie's body shakes in fear as she holds onto the birdcage.
Valentina guides her back to safety.

VALENTINA

Are you nuts?

Sophie panics. Valentina guides Sophie to take a seat. Sophie
rubs her eyes, terrified.

SOPHIE'S POV. The DARK SPOT again. It covers half of
Valentina's face.

VALENTINA

You didn't see it coming, did you?

Sophie takes deep breaths. It's getting worse.

EXT. PÁTZCUARO - DAY

Sophie and Valentina make their way through the streets of
Pátzcuaro with the birdcage and their purses.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Sophie and Valentina try to hitch a lift. A few cars pass by.

One car stops, rolls down the window, but when the DRIVER
scans Valentina, he changes his mind and leaves.

Finally an OLD VAN stops. The driver is a joyful guy: DIEGO,
in his late twenties. He gives the girls an honest smile and
signals them to get in.

Sophie hesitates.

SOPHIE

Are you sure about this?

VALENTINA

I was a stranger too when you came
looking for my help.

INT. OLD VAN (MOVING) - DAY

All three sit at the front. Sophie in the middle. No room
in the back seat as it's packed with music instruments.

Valentina and Diego share a warm vibe as they sing a Mexican
song playing on the radio. They sing and speak in *SPANISH*.

VALENTINA

(singing)

*Querida, por lo que quieras
tú más ven, más compasión de
mí tu ten...*

DIEGO

(singing)

*Querida, por lo que quieras
tú más ven, más compasión de
mí tu ten...*

Sophie feels completely out of place.

DIEGO

You don't know the song?

Sophie just smiles.

VALENTINA

She doesn't speak Spanish.

Diego's eyes light up. And in his thick accent:

DIEGO

American?

SOPHIE

American.

DIEGO

Land of the free. Huh?

SOPHIE

A land for everyone.

DIEGO

American in *Michoacán*. *¿Y eso?*

VALENTINA

To see a Doctor.

JOYFUL GUY

Ahh. Doctor. My papa want me to be
doctor.

Sophie nods along.

VALENTINA
You became a doctor?

JOYFUL GUY
Me? Noooo. I travel and sing in
Cantinas.
(sings)
"Oh, say can you see.."

SOPHIE
Yes. The national anthem.

VALENTINA
What does your dad say now?

DIEGO
Nada. We don't speak 7 years. And
now... He with God.
(beat)
Mucha, um.... How you say... *culpa?*

VALENTINA
Regret.

Valentina is visibly upset. Sophie notices.

EXT. LÁZARO CÁRDENAS - NIGHT

The old van pulls over by the beach. Sophie and Valentina
hop out and wave Diego goodbye, grateful.

They walk in silence, taking glimpses of each other.
Sophie's arms hold the birdcage.

VALENTINA
I'm sorry about your car.

SOPHIE
I know. I just wanted to bury
Danny.

Valentina stops walking. After a few steps, Sophie stops too.
Valentina looks down the street.

Sophie turns to the street name: 'CALLE BELLAVISTA'.

Sophie realizes Valentina is looking at a particular house.
An old square-shaped house with red door.

SOPHIE
You should go in.

Valentina comes back from her thoughts.

VALENTINA
The *curandera* is this way.

Valentina heads off.

SOPHIE
No culpa.

Valentina stops walking.

EXT. CALLE BELLAVISTA - NIGHT

Valentina takes nervous steps toward her old home. Sophie by her side.

EXT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Valentina takes a deep breath. Knocks. She adjust her hair and clothes while she waits. Sophie's behind her.

ADELA, an adorable teen opens the door. Valentina's youngest sister.

Valentina's eyes light up in affection, but Adela doesn't recognize her. Their conversation plays in *SPANISH*.

ADELA
Can I help you?

Valentina takes a moment. It's been too long.

VALENTINA
Adela...

Adela's eyes browse Valentina...

ADELA
Val?

Valentina nods. The sisters take a second to digest their own emotions.

ADELA
Val!

They hug.

VALENTINA
I can't believe how much you've grown.

Sophie longingly smiles as the sisters end the hug.

ADELA

What am I doing? Come in!

Valentina signals Sophie to follow.

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie and Valentina get in. Adela shuts the door.

Valentina scans her house. A home that was once bright and cozy is now cold and shadowy. In *SPANISH*:

ADELA

Mariana!

VALENTINA

Adela, this is my friend; Sophie.

(to Sophie)

Sophie, this is my lil sis; Adela.

Adela kisses Sophie on the cheek.

ADELA

Bienvenida, Sophie.

(yells)

Mariana! Guess who's here?

MARIANA, Valentina's energetic middle sister rushes down the stairs. She jumps in to Valentina's arms.

Sophie is surprised by their explosive affection.

Mariana holds Valentina's face between her hands, they stare at each other's eyes.

MARIANA

Time has been good to you. You're beautiful, sis. Welcome home.

Valentina's teary eyes light up with a smile.

INT. STAIRWELL, VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Valentina, Sophie, Mariana and Adela whisper on the stairs. Adela holds a cup of tea. In *SPANISH*:

MARIANA

She stopped taking her pills.

ADELA

That's because she doesn't need them.

Valentina and Mariana look at Adela's naiveness.

MARIANA

The doctor's said with the medication, then maybe a few more months. But now... I don't know.

ADELA

You're such a pessimistic. Grandma's not going anywhere.

Sophie doesn't understand. She spots a wheelchair on the hall. Valentina does too.

MARIANA

For dad, he needs one up here too.

GRANDMA (O.S.)

You girls going to gossip all day, or are you going to come in and say "hello"?

All three let out half a smile. They all enter:

INT. GRANDMA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the bed, a frail looking GRANDMA, 80s. The room is full of books. From Ángeles Mastretta to Gabriel García Márquez.

Adela places the tea on Grandma's nightstand. In *SPANISH*:

ADELA

Brought you some tea. And Grandma, guess who's here...

Grandma's eyesight is not the best.

VALENTINA

Hi Grandma.

GRANDMA

Vale!

Grandma welcomes her with a hug.

Sophie stands by the door with Valentina's sisters. She's taken aback by Grandma's condition.

Valentina kisses Grandma's hand.

GRANDMA

My pretty girl.

VALENTINA
How are you feeling?

GRANDMA
Better now.

Grandma reaches for her tea. Valentina helps her but her hand is gently slapped away by Grandma.

Valentina smiles until she notices an unopened medication bottle by the nightstand.

VALENTINA
They tell me you're not taking your medication.

GRANDMA
They're just worried. All I need is some good, strong tea.

Grandma takes a sip and spots Sophie.

GRANDMA
Who's your friend?

Valentina turns to Sophie and mimes her to come closer. Sophie does, she kneels down next to Valentina and Grandma.

VALENTINA
Grandma, this is Sophie. Sophie, this is my Grandma.

Grandma welcomes Sophie into her arms. Sophie eyes Valentina.

SOPHIE
You should have told me.

Valentina shrugs, not knowing what to say.

Sophie and Grandma hug. Sophie rests her head on the shoulder of this stranger that for a moment, feels like family.

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie, Valentina, Mariana and Adela drink a glass of milk on the sofa. In *SPANISH*:

ADELA
How long are you staying?

VALENTINA
I don't know, honey.

They are interrupted by the sound of KEYS OPENING THE DOOR.

They share a worried look. Sophie looks confused when --

JOSÉ GARCÍA, a man in his fifties, in a wheelchair and consumed by his own bitterness, enters the house.

His eyes show deep sadness when he sees Valentina. Their eyes meet -- Silence -- Then,

VALENTINA
How are you, dad?

INT. LIVING ROOM, VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie, Mariana and Adela sit while Valentina and José García chat in the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN, VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

José García is at the dining table scanning Valentina's outfit as she makes coffee. In *SPANISH*:

VALENTINA
2 sugars, drop of milk?

He nods. She smiles.

JOSÉ GARCÍA
What are you doing?

VALENTINA
Making coffee.

Valentina turns to her stubborn father. Places their coffee down and takes seat at the dining table. She takes a sip.

VALENTINA
Watch out, it's still a little hot.

José García just stirs the coffee. Silence. Then:

JOSÉ GARCÍA
Who's the woman with you?

VALENTINA
Sophie. She's going blind. I'm taking her to see Emilia.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

You and your Grandma are exactly the same. Believing in that curandera nonsense.

VALENTINA

Wasn't nonsense when she got rid of your migraines.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

Yeah, well, it didn't work 'cause I'm starting to feel a migraine coming back now.

VALENTINA

So, what are you saying? You want me to leave?

JOSÉ GARCÍA

You can stay... as Valentín.

VALENTINA

Oh no, I can stay, because Grandma wants me to stay.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

Grandma is in her last days and is refusing medication. You think she knows what she wants?

VALENTINA

She wants her family. I am her family. You sent me the letter because you wanted me here --

JOSÉ GARCÍA

I sent you the letter hoping that my son would be walking through the front door!

Valentina looks deep into her father eyes, and realizes how much this hurts him too. He wheels out from the table.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

You can stay here, but as long as you're in this house, and in this town, you will dress like the man I raised.

José García rolls out. Valentina looks at her father's untouched coffee.

INT. VALENTINA'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Valentina opens the door and enters. There's no bed. Her childhood belongings are packed in boxes.

Valentina opens one of the boxes. She finds A PHOTO OF HER AS A YOUNG BOY, WITH GRANDMA. Then, inside another box --

Some of her MENS CLOTHES. Valentina stares at them.

INT. LIVING ROOM, VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie plays the Mexican board game *LOTERÍA* with Mariana and Adela. Adela gets easily distracted with Sandy.

SOPHIE'S POV. Monet brushstrokes of MENS SHOES coming down the stairs. MENS JEANS and a MENS LONG SLEEVE SHIRT.

An aching surprise takes over Sophie when she finally recognizes...

VALENTINA.

Her hair in a ponytail. No makeup. No high heels. Valentina is trapped inside this handsome yet sad man: VALENTÍN.

Valentina notices how shocked all three ladies are. She kisses Mariana and Adela goodnight.

VALENTINA
(in Spanish)
I'll see you tomorrow, alright?

Mariana and Adela understand Valentina needs a moment. They leave.

Sophie remains quiet, her eyes show deep sadness.

VALENTINA
Let's get out of here.

EXT. LÁZARO CÁRDENAS - NIGHT

Sophie carries the birdcage while Valentina walks with her hands in her pockets, scanning the entire town.

Sophie can't stop studying Valentina, forcing her eyes.

SOPHIE
What happened?

VALENTINA

Let's just focus on getting your
eyes fixed.

Valentina heads to the beach. Sophie follows.

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

Sophie and Valentina walk on the sand.

SOPHIE

Can you tell me why?

VALENTINA

It's just for a few days...
You wouldn't understand.

SOPHIE

What wouldn't I understand?

Valentina sighs.

VALENTINA

It's just up ahead.

SOPHIE

Can you just talk to me?

VALENTINA

I am talking to you.

SOPHIE

What did your father say to you?

Sophie stops walking, Valentina continues.

SOPHIE

It was your father wasn't it?
That's how you got the scar.

Valentina doesn't stop.

SOPHIE

Valentina. Valentina.

(beat)

VALENTÍN!

Valentina stops. After a beat, she marches back to Sophie.

VALENTINA

You don't know what you're talking
about! My dad has never laid a hand
on any of us.

SOPHIE

Okay! I'm sorry. I didn't know.

VALENTINA

We fought the day I left, okay? He gave me an ultimatum; live in his house or live in high heels.

(beat)

I made my choice.

Sophie listens. Valentina points at her scar.

VALENTINA

I got this the day I left. I was upset and frustrated. It would've been smarter to punch the wall, but I smashed my head in the mirror.

Sophie looks at Valentina and realizes she isn't lying. She tries to comfort Valentina but is shrugged off.

VALENTINA

I love my dad. And if he needs Valentín right now while his mother slowly fades away on her deathbed, then he can have Valentín.

Sophie doesn't know what to say.

VALENTINA

Anything else you need to know?

Valentina walks off. A long beat, before Sophie follows.

LATER

Valentina treads between a couple of giant rocks to find a CABIN.

EXT. CABIN - DAWN

A handwritten sign next to the door reads: "*CURACIONES Y PURIFICACIONES*"

As Sophie and Valentina approach the unkempt cabin, the door SWINGS open.

A BOY and a GIRL, around 8, run out laughing. They sprint in between Sophie and Valentina, who watch as the kids play on the beach.

EMILIA (O.S.)
¡No lleguen tarde a cenar!

Startled, Sophie and Valentina turn to the front door again -- It's the *CURANDERA*; EMILIA - A humble and beautiful old lady with one eye and a contagious smile.

VALENTINA
Hola, Emilia.

Emilia gives them a quick look up and down, pays extra attention to Sophie, making her uncomfortable.

EMILIA
 (in Spanish)
You girls better come inside.

Emilia lets them in.

INT. CABIN - DAWN

Cozy and welcoming. Jars of herbs, teas and salts sit at a window still. No electricity, just carefully placed candles.

Sophie hugs the birdcage as she and Valentina glance around the cabin while Emilia lights up another candle.

A cat rushes toward Sandy. Sophie tenses.

EMILIA
Is okay.

The cat stops at the cage and just stares. It is okay.

Emilia studies Valentina with a penetrating look. They remember each other. They speak in *SPANISH*.

EMILIA
Valentín or Valentina?

Valentina looks at Sophie.

VALENTINA
Valentín.

EMILIA
Valentín?

Valentina hesitates.

VALENTINA
Sí.

EMILIA

Then, I cannot help you.

Emilia walks to a shelf and pulls down a jar full of herbs.

VALENTINA

I don't need your help. She needs your help.

Emilia ignores her and puts a pot of water to boil over a small fire. A long beat. Emilia hobbles over to Sophie.

Sophie, confused, hugs the birdcage tighter. Emilia grasps it out of Sophie's hands. Places it on the table.

SOPHIE

Hey, what are you -- ?

EMILIA

Is okay.

Emilia opens the birdcage, takes out Sandy and stares at it. Sadness in Emilia's eyes as Sandy just rests on her fingers.

EMILIA

A bird that cannot fly.

Emilia puts Sandy back inside but doesn't shut the birdcage door. Sophie eyes the cat, she shuts the door.

Emilia studies Sophie's face. Intrigued, she caresses Sophie's cheeks and forehead with her wrinkled fingers. She looks deep into Sophie's eyes.

EMILIA

A woman that cannot see.

Emilia is immersed in Sophie's broken soul. Sophie looks for Valentina's eyes in the hopes of some translation.

EMILIA

I can't do anything.

VALENTINA

What do you mean you can't?

EMILIA

It means what it means.

Emilia returns to the now boiling pot of water.

VALENTINA

But you're Emilia. You heal people since you were ten.

EMILIA
That is true.

Emilia pours the boiling water into a mug.

EMILIA
*But your friend, she doesn't want
 to see.*

She sprinkles just the right amount of herbs into the mug.

VALENTINA
*Of course she wants to see. That's
 why we're here!*

SOPHIE
 (to Valentina)
 What is going on?

Sophie and Valentina exchange a quick look. Valentina turns back to Emilia.

VALENTINA
*This woman gave up on everything to
 come here so you can cure her. She
 has faith in you.*
 (beat)
*And what, you're not even going to
 try? What are you afraid of?*

EMILIA
I have a reputation in this town.

VALENTINA
*So, my friend goes blind because
 you're afraid of what people might
 think? That is not fair.*

EMILIA
Not fair at all, is it Valentín?

Valentina ponders at what Emilia meant, but Emilia just grins before fetching the herbal tea. She hands the tea to Sophie.

EMILIA
 Is okay.

Emilia smiles comfortingly as Sophie anxiously tries to read their faces before taking a sip.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Valentina waits in the corner next to the birdcage.

Sophie kneels inside a circle drawn with chalk. The cat just stares at her.

Emilia puts a herbal necklace on Sophie's neck. The scent is strong and causes Sophie to shut her eyes for a second and --

Emilia places a long hand-rolled cigarette in Sophie's mouth. Sophie pops her eyes open and lets the cigarette hang in her mouth. Emilia lights it and Sophie takes a puff. Sophie coughs a couple times. This is not tobacco.

SOPHIE'S POV. The whole cabin spins around her. The blurriness becomes shaky and more intense.

Emilia closes Sophie's eyes with her fingers as she mumbles an odd, native song.

Sophie begins to sweat. She turns to Valentina. Tries to speak but can't articulate a word.

This is the first time Sophie doesn't have control over her legs, her voice, her hands. Herself.

Valentina rushes toward Sophie to help her up, but Emilia pokes Valentina and stops her from entering the circle.

EMILIA
(to Valentina)
Go home, she will sleep now.

Sophie's ears catch Emilia distorted voice as she passes out.

EXT. LÁZARO CÁRDENAS - DAY

Uncomfortable in her men's clothes, Valentina drags her feet across town, avoiding eye contact with PEDESTRIANS.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Valentina walks down the aisle with a shopping basket. She buys groceries for the household.

INT. CHECKOUT COUNTER, CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Valentina places her groceries on the counter where PEPE, 50s, packs them.

Valentina avoids making eye contact with him. After a moment, Pepe looks up from packing groceries. In *SPANISH*:

PEPE
Valentín?

Valentina nervously smiles.

PEPE
Valentín García?

VALENTINA
How are you, Pepe?

PEPE
Holy shit, kid. What a surprise!

Valentina doesn't have time to reply, as an excited Pepe runs around the counter and gives Valentina a hug.

PEPE
I heard you were in town, but I
thought it was just a rumor.

An ELDERLY COUPLE walking past recognize Valentina.

ELDERLY WOMAN
I knew it. I knew it was you.

The Elderly Woman turns to her husband.

ELDERLY WOMAN
I told you, I said it's Valentín.
And you said no. But I know.

The Elderly Man shakes Valentin's hand.

ELDERLY MAN
Welcome back.

VALENTINA
I forgot how fast news are spread
around here.

ELDERLY WOMAN
We heard you brought a beautiful
woman with you. American. Is
someone getting married?

ELDERLY MAN
Woman, please, don't be nosy.

VALENTINA
I'm not getting married.

PEPE

Kids don't get married these days anymore. Hey, how's your father?

VALENTINA

He's good.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Glad to hear. How's your Grandma feeling? Tell them I say hi.

VALENTINA

Will do, thanks.

The Elderly Couple exit. Valentina turns to Pepe, confused.

PEPE

Don't you remember them? It's Anita and Roberto.

Valentina still doesn't remember.

PEPE

They own the fish restaurant at the pier. Nobody really knows much about them, but they sure know a lot about everybody.

Valentina nods, grabs her groceries and pays.

PEPE

Put your money away.

VALENTINA

No... For the times when I used to steal chocolates behind your back.

PEPE

What? You think I never knew? Your pockets were bigger than your head.

VALENTINA

Alright then, so this is payback.

Both as stubborn as each other.

PEPE

Okay. This... you pay. But these...

Pepe grabs a box of Herbal Teas from under the counter.

PEPE

These... are for your Grandma, and they're on the house.

Valentina and Pepe share a cozy smile.

VALENTINA
Thanks, Pepe.

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - DAY

Valentina enters with groceries in hand.

José García, Mariana and Adela have a conversation in the kitchen, in *SPANISH*. Valentina eavesdrops.

ADELA (O.S.)
This isn't fair.

JOSÉ GARCÍA (O.S.)
*It doesn't matter if it's fair.
You're 15. You're not going.*

ADELA (O.S.)
You can't tell people what to do.

MARIANA (O.S.)
Adela?!

ADELA (O.S.)
*No. He tells Valentina not to wear
a dress, and she doesn't. Now, he's
telling me that I can't go and live
with Valentina. He's not the boss.*

JOSÉ GARCÍA (O.S.)
*You're not going and that's the end
of it.*

Valentina diffuses the situation and enters the --

KITCHEN

Everyone shuts up. Valentina drops the groceries on the table. She gives her father a fragile smile. He looks away.

VALENTINA
*How about I make some huevos
revueltos for breakfast?*

JOSÉ GARCÍA
We already ate.

A beat.

VALENTINA

*Anita and Roberto say hi. Pepe too.
He gave us some tea for Grandma.*

Nothing. José García doesn't even bother looking at Valentina. She just unpacks the groceries.

Mariana helps Valentina. Adela can't deny the room's tension and storms outside.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

*You see what you bring to this
house --*

SMASH! - Mariana terrifies everyone by smashing a plate on the ground.

MARIANA

Enough!

All eyes on Mariana as she takes a deep breath and walks out. It's just Valentina and her father now.

After a beat, José García rolls to the broken pieces and picks them up. Valentina kneels and helps.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

I can do it. Just leave it.

Valentina stops helping and stands. José García throws the broken plate in the trash can.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

We don't need your help.

He wheels out. Left alone, Valentina grabs a dust pan and cleans up the rest of the broken plate.

INT. GRANDMA'S ROOM - DAY

Valentina comes in with a plate of *quesadillas* and a cup of tea. Grandma wakes up, inhales and smiles from her bed. In *SPANISH*:

GRANDMA

Smells good.

VALENTINA

It's from Pepe.

GRANDMA

Bless him.

VALENTINA

I think he has a crush on you.

GRANDMA

Don't be ridiculous.

Grandma moves to the side to make room for Valentina. Valentina takes the spot like a little kid sneaking into mommy's bed. Grandma grabs a *quesadilla* from the plate.

GRANDMA

What did your father do this time?

VALENTINA

Nothing. Why?

GRANDMA

Only your father can make you this sad.

Valentina takes a breath. Grandma takes Valentina's hand. She touches Valentina's mens shirt sleeves.

GRANDMA

I haven't seen this shirt in years.

Grandma looks at Valentina's sad eyes.

GRANDMA

Why are you doing this?

VALENTINA

Because dad needs me to.

GRANDMA

What he needs is his child.

They share a silence. Then,

GRANDMA

Grab the box on top of that shelf.

INT. STAIRWELL, VALENTINA'S HOUSE - DAY

Mariana helps her father up the stairs and onto the wheelchair. She then comes in and out of a room filling a basket of dirty clothes to wash.

José García heads to Grandma's room but stops as he hears she's not alone: Valentina and Grandma's GIGGLE.

INT. VALENTINA'S OLD ROOM - DAY

The room is empty and José García lets himself in.

He unintentionally wheels over Valentina's makeup kit. Next to it, he finds Valentina's memory box. Picks it up. He goes through the several pamphlets about SEX CHANGE SURGERY --

He opens one of the pamphlets. There's a pink post-it with '\$50,000' handwritten.

He then finds WESTERN UNION MONEY TRANSFERS to MEXICO. He holds the receipts when Mariana walks by. She spots her father, frozen. She approaches. In SPANISH:

JOSÉ GARCÍA

I thought the house payments were coming from you.

MARIANA

You didn't want Grandma to sell her land. You definitely wouldn't have taken the money if you knew it was from Val.

José García's bitterness fades away for a second.

INT. GRANDMA'S ROOM - DAY

Valentina and Grandma huddle in bed with a box full of old photos on their lap. They reminisce through photographs as they flick through one by one. Valentina picks one up.

IN PHOTO: Valentina, age 12, with her dad and an attractive woman; her mom. They are just posing. None of them smile.

GRANDMA

Your mom got the results from the lab that day.

Valentina can't contain her own tears. She puts it back, takes another one.

IN PHOTO: Valentina, age 11, putting makeup on Mariana. Grandma is taking the photo and can be seen in the reflection of the mirror.

Valentina smiles. Grandma passes her more photos.

PHOTOS:

- Valentina, age 10, freeing turtles to the ocean with her mother. José García near them.

- Valentina, age 8, and a younger José García, both wearing a soccer team uniform. They're in the middle of a soccer field.

- Valentina, age 4, has a red lipstick in her hand and mischievously draws it all over José's sleeping face.

- Valentina, age 4, right after the previous photo. José García is awake and covered in lipstick. He is LAUGHING with Valentina in his arms who is also covered in lipstick.

GRANDMA

*Whatever your father's fighting
against has nothing to do with you.*

This time, Valentina loses the battle against her tears as Grandma holds her hand.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Sophie slowly wakes up... and throws up. She finds herself underneath old blankets. Her birdcage by her feet.

SOPHIE'S POV. Complete blurriness, then, an intermittent clarity comes and goes. Emilia is in front of her.

Emilia hands Sophie a cup of fresh tea. Sophie hesitates.

EMILIA

(in Spanish)

This will make you feel better.

Sophie tries to take a sip but Emilia tilts Sophie's mug up to make sure she finishes all in one go. Sophie does.

EMILIA

Is okay... Go.

Emilia points at the door.

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

Sophie is a bit disoriented, she walks on the sand holding her birdcage. Her purse hangs from her shoulder.

SOPHIE'S POV. A Monet-blurry image of the sea. On the beach, a family; a FISHERMAN and his two young BOYS.

As she gets closer, Sophie realizes the family has baskets of tiny turtles beside them.

The Boys grab some, run to the seashore, free them, and come back to the basket for more.

Sophie is absorbed by this. The Fisherman spots Sophie.

FISHERMAN

(in Spanish)

*They hatched yesterday. If we don't
take care of the eggs, predators
won't let them be born. Today,
they're ready for the sea.*

Sophie doesn't understand, but the Fisherman waves his hand inviting her to get closer. She does.

SOPHIE

Mi Español no bueno.

FISHERMAN

(heavy Mexican accent)

*¡Ah, turista! Sorry. No inglés...
My English no good.*

The Boys come back again for more turtles. One of them smiles at Sophie and offers her a turtle. She places the cage on the sand and takes it.

Sophie carefully approaches the seashore and frees the turtle. She smiles while it runs toward the ocean.

The family frees all the turtles and get ready to go.

FISHERMAN

¡Vámonos, hijos!

As they leave, the Fisherman smiles at Sophie and then glances at Sandy in the cage, confused.

Sophie looks at Sandy too. She kneels and opens the cage.

Sandy SINGS but stays still, then gives a couple of tiny hops inside the cage and flaps its wings. Sophie leaves the door open, looks away and enjoys the sunset.

When she looks back down, she's surprised to see Sandy outside the cage, close to her feet. After a moment --

It FLIES. With immense courage it finally flies.

EXT. BEACH - MORNING

Sophie sleeps under a palm tree. The empty cage is beside her. Her purse tangled around her shoulders.

The sun wakes her up. She opens her eyes --

SOPHIE'S POV. Complete darkness. No more blurriness, no more color, no more images. No more Monet.

-- BLINDNESS.

Sophie's entire body paralyzes -- then shakes. She rubs her eyes, tightens them up and opens them. Nothing.

In panic, she kneels and desperately touches the sand with her anxious hands, trying to remember where she is.

As soon as her hands reach the palm tree, she hugs it -- holds onto it, vulnerable, defeated.

Sophie's body still shakes. But then...

The peaceful sound of the OCEAN WAVES lull Sophie's pain.

She slowly lets go of the palm tree and grabs some sand, explores it in her hand. She then crawls toward the ocean.

Sophie's hands are covered by a small wave and suddenly, the fear is gone from her face. Her body no longer shakes.

She stands up, slowly but with conviction. She lets the waves touch her feet, giving a couple of slow steps forward.

The seawater reaches her hips, she touches it with her fingers, as she lets the ocean purify her entire self.

There is a different light in Sophie's beautiful eyes. A new one. They don't show sadness anymore, but courage.

Sophie welcomes her freedom.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Sophie waddles back on the beach. She collapses on the sand, arms wide open, facing the sun, eyes closed. Absolute peace.

Then -- Her cell phone RINGS!

Sophie turns around facing the direction of her ringtone.

Her hands search for the cell phone inside her purse, once she finds it, her fingers try to recognize the mobile. She finally manages to answer.

SOPHIE

Hello?

LEON (O.S.)
 Finally! Where are you? Dammit
 Sophie, are you okay?

Sophie takes a moment to process.

LEON (O.S.)
 You haven't answered your phone in
 days! Where are you? I'll come and
 pick you up.

SOPHIE
 I'm fine. I'm in Mexico. Are you
 okay?

LEON (O.S.)
 Well, I am now... hearing you.

Sophie smiles. Leon calms down.

LEON (O.S.)
 I remember when you left your
 parents 'cause you refused to go to
 med school...

Recollections come to Sophie.

SOPHIE
 Right! They just wouldn't give up.

LEON (O.S.)
 And you went to this ice skating
 rink at the plaza. And I found you
 there. I saw you... skating... it
 was like you were flying.

Sophie enjoys the memory.

SOPHIE
 And then you bought me a burger.

LEON (O.S.)
 No pickles. No onion...

SOPHIE
 No cheese.

LEON (O.S.)
 No cheese.

A giggle and then - a beat.

LEON (O.S.)
 You needed a friend. But I offered
 a husband.

Sophie wasn't expecting this realization from him.

LEON (O.S.)
I'm sorry.

She's genuinely touched.

SOPHIE
You're my best friend, Leon.

LEON (O.S.)
You're my only friend, Sophie.

They share a laugh. Then:

LEON (O.S.)
We'll find love, won't we?

Sophie realizes...

SOPHIE
Definitely.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Sophie faces her new reality with natural fear and courage.

Her feet sink in the sand as she walks. Each movement that was insignificant before, is now a complete challenge.

She loses her balance once in while and falls down, but gets up and continues, using her hands to explore the way ahead. It takes her long to get to the:

CURBSIDE

When she finally reaches the street, giving that little step up it's itself a victory. She continues walking but --

BEEP! BEEP!

Sophie stops.

The aggressive sound of a car HORN as it zooms right by Sophie. Close. Very close.

Sophie gives one frightened step back and falls down, paralyzed to realize she has to cross the street.

The NOISES of the little town haunt Sophie's ears: CARS, LAUGHS, STEPS, VOICES, MUSIC, OCEAN WAVES.

Sophie is terrified when...

A HAND grabs her arm.

It's the Fisherman and his two Boys. They help her get up. They notice her blindness.

FISHERMAN
¿Está usted bien? ¿Necesita ayuda?

SOPHIE
I don't understand.

BOY 1
Ayuda. Ayuda... help?

SOPHIE
Help! Yes, yes. *Sí*. I need to find a street.

FISHERMAN
Slow, please.

SOPHIE
A street... A road...

The Fisherman turns to his Boys for help.

BOY 2
¿Una calle?

SOPHIE
Yes! *Sí! Una calle. Bellavista.*

They help Sophie cross the street.

EXT. FARMERS MARKET - DAY

Sophie is guided by the Fisherman and his Boys as they slalom through a packed farmers market.

Fruit and vegetables. Vivid colors everywhere. Sophie sniffs. Inhales the delicious smell of the food around her.

She lets go of the Boys' hands and slows down. She follows a distinct smell and finds the source. She picks up a peach from a fruit stand.

The STAND VENDOR is a beautiful pregnant woman. She notices Sophie is blind.

STAND VENDOR
(in Spanish)
Can I help you?

Sophie doesn't respond, she puts the peach down. The Stand Vendor grabs the peach and places it back in Sophie's hand.

STAND VENDOR
(in Spanish)
Take it.

Sophie does. One of the Boys continue to guide Sophie out of the market.

EXT. CALLE BELLAVISTA - DAY

Sophie, the Fisherman and his Boys arrive to *Calle Bellavista*. Sophie leans against a wall, resting a bit. Finishes eating her peach.

FISHERMAN
Llegamos, ¿qué número es?

Sophie doesn't even realize the Fisherman's talking to her. He pats her shoulder.

FISHERMAN
¿Cuál es el número de la casa?

Sophie doesn't understand.

BOY 1
Número es number. Number.

FISHERMAN
Number. House. Number.

Sophie shakes her head.

SOPHIE
I don't remember... but it has a red door.

The Fisherman and his Boys exchange confused looks. Sophie points down at her red purse.

SOPHIE
Red! Red.

CUT TO:

EXT. CALLE BELLAVISTA - DAY

Sophie walks up the street with the Fisherman and his Boys trailing behind, watching her in case she falls.

Sophie guides herself by touching the houses' walls.

When her hands find a door, she knocks several times until an OLD LADY opens.

SOPHIE
Valentina?

The Old Lady mumbles 'no' and shuts the door. The Boys look at each other and run over to Sophie to help.

QUICK CUTS:

- Sophie drags herself onto the next house. The Boys help her when she's about to fall down. She knocks. A LITTLE KID opens the door. Wrong house.

- Next house. They knock. A MAN opens, Sophie speaks, the Fisherman translates, the Man shakes his head.

- Sophie moves slowly to the next house followed by the Fisherman and his Boys. They knock. No answer.

BOYS
VALENTINA?!

- Another house. Sophie knocks. A shirtless OLD MAN opens and closes immediately, giving Sophie no chance to speak.

EXT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - DAY

The Fisherman and his Boys in the background. Knocking and trying different houses.

Sophie KNOCKS on the red door, and stops.

SOPHIE
Valentina?
(louder)
Valentina!

Sophie is about to knock again when her hand reaches a --

PIECE OF SILK.

Sophie touches it slowly. Her fingers examine the cloth. Her eyes come alive with worry and sorrow as she realizes...

It's a ribbon hanging from the door. Needless to say:

A BLACK RIBBON.

The Fisherman and his Boys stand back. They know what the Black Ribbon means. They 'cross' themselves.

INT. VALENTINA'S OLD ROOM - DAY

Valentina is in a BLACK MENS SUIT. Her hair's tied in a pony tail and she's doing up her tie.

She tries, one, two, three, four times. She can't get the tie done. She doesn't know how to, she doesn't want to either.

She stares at the mirror. In her eyes: infinite pain when --

SOPHIE (O.S.)
Valentina?!

EXT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - DAY

THE RED DOOR OPENS.

It's Valentina. With the tie undone around her neck. Valentina freezes as she notices Sophie can't see anymore.

VALENTINA
Oh, dear.

SOPHIE
Valentina?

Valentina guides Sophie into her arms and they hug. Valentina kisses Sophie's forehead. Worried and sad.

SOPHIE
I'm okay. It's fine.

Valentina looks behind Sophie. Sees the Fisherman and his Boys staring, moved.

VALENTINA
Who are they?

FISHERMAN
(in Spanish to Valentina)
I'm so sorry for your loss.

VALENTINA
Gracias.

SOPHIE
It's a long story.

Sophie pats Valentina's face and torso, realizing she wears a suit and a tie. Sophie wipes away Valentina's tears.

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - DAY

Valentina guides Sophie inside. Dozens of MOURNERS crowd around a --

COFFIN, placed in the center of the living room. Our peaceful Grandma lies in it.

Pepe and the Elderly Couple also pay their respects.

Sophie holds onto Valentina's arm as all she hears are SOBS.

José García prays an inch away from the coffin.

Mariana and Adela turn to Valentina, and in their sadness, there's still room for empathy when they notice Sophie's blindness.

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie sits on the couch with Valentina and Mariana. Adela is comforted by an OLD WOMAN nearby. Mourners keep praying and sobbing.

José García is still by his mother's side.

Valentina gets up and nears Grandma too. She stands right next to her father. He senses her presence but keeps praying. In *SPANISH*:

ESTEBAN (O.S.)
She was a wonderful woman.

ESTEBAN, 40s, a family friend and a lawyer by profession, approaches.

ESTEBAN
Mr. García, I have gathered what you asked for. Are you sure you this is the right time?

José García nods.

VALENTINA
The right time for what?

ESTEBAN
I'm sorry, but since you're leaving tomorrow --

VALENTINA
I'm leaving tomorrow?

Valentina turns to her father. They share a stare.

ESTEBAN
*If I am mistaken, I am truly sorry,
 I didn't mean any disrespect...*

VALENTINA
What's this about?

José García buries his head in his hand, somewhat ashamed.

JOSÉ GARCÍA
Your Grandma's will.

Valentina doesn't know what to say. José finally looks up.

JOSÉ GARCÍA
We need everyone present, Valentín.

A beat.

VALENTINA
Then lets get everyone.

CUT TO:

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie is on the couch surrounded by Mourners. Mariana and Adela argue in a corner near the stairs with José García, almost whispering. In *SPANISH*:

ADELA
We have do this now? Today?

MARIANA
Grandma's not even buried yet.

JOSÉ GARCÍA
*Who knows when we are going to be
 together again.*

ADELA
What about Valen --

JOSÉ GARCÍA
Valentín is leaving tomorrow.

VALENTINA (O.S.)
It's Valentina.

Coming down the stairs --

VALENTINA. In a simple and elegant BLACK DRESS. Beautiful.

VALENTINA

Valentina is leaving tomorrow.

Mourners gasp! All we can hear are MUMBLES and WHISPERS. Pepe remains quiet. He loves this family too much to judge.

Mariana and Adela smile while José García hangs his head in shame. He looks around. He can't stand the stares and the mumbles. He wheels into the kitchen. The sisters follow.

Valentina nears Sophie, grabs her hand and kisses it.

VALENTINA

I'll be right back.

Sophie nods. Valentina heads to the kitchen.

INT. VALENTINA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Esteban is there. Documents spread out on the table when José García wheels in. Mariana and Adela behind him. In *SPANISH*:

ESTEBAN

Is everyone here? Where's Valentín?

Valentina walks in. Esteban scans the makeup and dress and gives a look to José García.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

We're all here.

ESTEBAN

Okay... Take a seat. This may take a while.

Everyone does. As Esteban reads the legalities, the three sisters hold hands.

ESTEBAN

I, Esteban Martínez Juárez, will execute the last Will and Testament of your mother, your grandmother...

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie is uncomfortable, surrounded by whispers in *SPANISH* she can't understand.

MOURNER 1
Was that Valentín?

MOURNER 2
I think so.

MOURNER 3
*No respect. Dressing up like that,
 today of all days.*

MOURNER 2
I knew that boy always had issues.

MOURNER 3
Poor José. His only son...

Pepe can't help it. He jumps in.

PEPE
*He's always been a great kid, what
 matters is that he's here.*

Sophie plays with her hands, anxious.

INT. VALENTINA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Esteban continues...

ESTEBAN
*Before we continue, Grandma had
 some parting words...*
 (beat)
*"Adela, your smile is as contagious
 as your love. It saddens me that I
 won't be around to see you grow up
 to a beautiful woman. For you, I
 leave you my necklace of St. Mary,
 so you know that I'll always be
 watching over you..."*

Adela cries.

ESTEBAN
*"Mariana, you left school to look
 after your mother, then your
 father, and then me. It's time to
 start looking after yourself and
 go back to school. For you, I leave
 my book collection..."*

Mariana tries to smile.

ESTEBAN

"Valentina, you are more than your name. Valentín's memories are what drives Valentina's dreams. You taught me that we are what we love, and that we can build ourselves from scratch. For you, I leave you our land to sell..."

A surprise to all.

ESTEBAN

"My only hope is that whoever buys it, builds a house and fills it with loving memories..."

José García takes a deep breath to control his emotions.

ESTEBAN

"José, my son. When Pamela died, I was afraid. I know how much you loved her, and was scared that the kids would be neglected. But they were not. You have raised three beautiful children. I'm sorry that I underestimated you. For you, I leave you this house.... But with one condition; that you forgive me. Forgive me, for as a parent, not being able to take away my child's pain and anger..."

This hurts too much. Valentina storms out.

INT. VALENTINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Valentina enters the lounge room with the Mourners. They murmur again. Sophie senses something's up and stands.

VALENTINA

Let's go.

SOPHIE

Are you okay?

VALENTINA

I'll be fine.

Valentina guides Sophie to the front door. José García rolls from the kitchen and maneuvers within the crowded room.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

Valentín!

The room turns to him. Valentina turns to her father.

Mariana, Adela and Esteban join them. José García looks around the room, naturally uncomfortable but for the first time -- he's not worried about the people.

Sophie stays still, she can feel the vibe. In *SPANISH*:

JOSÉ GARCÍA

Let's just go back inside and finish this.

Valentina stares at her father, too hurt to speak. She looks at Esteban and then back at her father.

VALENTINA

You can have the land. You need it more than I do.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

She wanted you to have it --

VALENTINA

You're right, it's mine, and this is what I want to do with it!

The room goes silent. Valentina holds Sophie's hand. Tight.

VALENTINA

*I'm done. I never cared about them.
(turns to the Mourners)
I left out of respect. For you. But I shouldn't have. This was my home. I sacrificed a lot to avoid hurting you without thinking how much it was hurting me. But I'm done. If I'm not your child, then, that's fine.*

José García. Vulnerable.

JOSÉ GARCÍA

When you were born I became the luckiest man, I had a son. When your sisters were born, I became the luckiest man again.

(beat)

I just wanted a son to watch soccer with, drink some Coronas...

Valentina struggles to find these words as an excuse.

VALENTINA

I never miss a Chivas game, and I can't live without my Coronas.

Valentina wipes away her tears. José García lowers his head. Then they stare at each other, maybe for the last time.

Valentina hugs her sisters. Says goodbye to them.

VALENTINA
You take care, okay?

Mariana and Adela nod. Valentina turns to Esteban.

VALENTINA
Make sure my father gets the land.

Valentina then approaches her Grandma, and, as if the coffin weren't there, she places a kiss on Grandma's forehead.

VALENTINA
Thank you, Grandma.

Valentina exchanges a smile with Pepe, and then takes Sophie by the hand again.

VALENTINA
Let's go home.

As Mourners mumble, Sophie and Valentina exit while José García looks at his only son walking out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE & VALENTINA DANCE ACADEMY - DAY

SUPER: "MONTHS LATER"

Beautiful legs with TIGHTS dance to SALSA rhythm.
Red LIPSTICK. Long eyelashes. Beautiful thick eyebrows...

The Valentina we know.

Valentina gives a dance class. The STUDENTS are engaged. She smiles when her eyes spot --

SOPHIE, who stands by a sign that reads: "SOPHIE & VALENTINA DANCE ACADEMY"

Sophie has two envelopes in a hand. An adorable Golden Retriever; FRIDA, is by her side. Her guide dog.

Valentina CLAPS dismissing class. While the Students exit, she approaches a smiling Sophie.

VALENTINA
Why are you so happy?

Leon pops in from behind Sophie.

LEON
I think I may be responsible.

SOPHIE
He signed!

Leon nods.

VALENTINA
What? That's great!

Sophie gives Leon a kiss on the cheek.

SOPHIE
Told you he was the best.

VALENTINA
Thank you, Leon.

Sophie cradles Valentina's face.

VALENTINA
Does this mean... We can...

Sophie nods with a huge smile before her and Valentina embrace in a loving kiss. While Leon --

LEON
Oh no, don't do that. I'm right here. I... I... just need -- okay. Just a little heads up when you two are going to -- do that.

VALENTINA
We've got some sugar for you too.

Valentina gives Leon a huge kiss on the cheek. Sophie and Valentina laugh it off. Leon enjoys this: Sophie is okay.

Leon points to the dance floor.

LEON
Just take some time to actually work, don't make me regret investing on this.

SOPHIE
Your money is safe. Julliard watch out!

LEON

You're very realistic lately.
 (beat)
 Anyway, I'm running late. Have
 brunch with Carol. Still want you
 to meet her, by the way. Bye ex-
 wife. Girls.

SOPHIE

Bye Leon.

VALENTINA

Love you.

They smile as they love their new game of annoying Leon.
 Leon walks out.

SOPHIE

Oh, and this one is for you.

Sophie gives Valentina an envelope. She opens it.

A CHECK inside, from JOSÉ GARCÍA for the quantity of \$50,000.
 It comes with a note in *SPANISH*: 'I'm building something.'

Valentina's eyes fill up with happy tears.

SOPHIE

What is it?

Valentina gets rid of the lump in her throat.

VALENTINA

I owe my dad some Coronas.

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Valentina has her torso naked on an operating table. Circles
 are drawn around her pectorals. She breathes heavily, nervous
 yet excited. She's been waiting for this far too long.

A HAND with GLOVES carefully places the ANESTHESIA BREATHING
 MASK on Valentina. She loses consciousness.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. TERRACE, BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Brushstrokes on a canvas. Fingers covered in oil painting.
 A delicate hand holds a paintbrush, mixing colors.

It's Sophie, painting.

Her art has no shape, but it's got soul. Her MAGNIFICENT
 EYES shine brighter than ever.

Sophie washes paint off her hands and dries them with a towel. Her clean hand grabs a beer. Takes a sip. FRIDA rests by her feet.

The terrace is elegant and cozy. It's Sophie's creative spot. But she's done for the day. She gets up and:

INT. BEDROOM, BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Sophie enters from the terrace and sits on the bed. The SUN sneaks through the open sliding door.

The bathroom's door OPENS.

She turns around, her hands patting the bed. She stands up.

SOPHIE
It's about time.

Valentina steps out, covered in a nightgown... Nervous, she nears Sophie.

Sophie raises her hand until her fingers find Valentina's nightgown. Sophie gets close. Sophie holds Valentina's face in her hands and slowly touches her NOSE... LIPS... CHEEKS...

Valentina stares at Sophie's eyes.

Sophie's fingers travel along Valentina's NECK and when she reaches her shoulders, she takes off the nightgown... It slides down to the floor.

Sophie's hands explore Valentina's ARMS... Then her HANDS... they interlock their fingers.

Sophie's hands travel back on Valentina's ARMS until she reaches... Valentina's NEW BREASTS, female delicate breasts.

Valentina closes her eyes while Sophie's fingers examine her NIPPLES... Then Sophie's hands go around Valentina's WAIST... they slide down to her BUTT... she grabs it.

Her hands go back to explore Valentina's BELLY BUTTON... and slowly, one of her hands go down to her NEW VAGINA...

SOPHIE
You're perfect.

Valentina opens her eyes and smiles in relief.

Sophie's eyes glow in their own beautiful light.

FADE OUT.