
ZOOT SUIT

In some sense *Zoot Suit* is a musical drama, although it can be read as a straight drama as well. A zoot suit had baggy pleated trousers with narrow, pegged ankles and a jacket with wide lapels and long tails (drape), usually to the back of the knees. With it, a zoot suiter usually wore a gold watch chain that came down almost to the ankles and a hat with a long feather. In 1942 it was the epitome of "cool" in jazz circles and was a style favored by some Chicano youths in Los Angeles. Wartime rationing effectively banned the production of the suit, although demand continued to flout the regulations. El Pachuco in this play is the "spirit" of the zoot suiter, and Henry Reyna is the leader of the zoot suiters, a loosely formed gang.

The language of the play is a dialect that mixes English, Spanish, and Los Angeles Spanish slang. It is called Caló (for California/Los Angeles) or *pachuco*. Valdez makes no effort to translate for English-only speakers, but the sense of the language is generally clear to most audiences.

The play is partially based on the zoot-suit riots in Los Angeles in 1942 in which military personnel stripped the suits from zoot suiters, whom they felt were unpatriotic, and during which a murder was committed. In the play, Henry Reyna is falsely accused and convicted of the murder and is imprisoned until an appeal can demonstrate that he was not involved in the crime. The play itself investigates the hopes and yearnings of Henry Reyna and his friends and family. The structure of the play takes us from a dance hall in Los Angeles to a court for the trial, and then to San Quentin prison where Henry becomes close friends with Alice, a member of the press who buoys his hopes for justice.

Justice, however, seems less and less likely to be accorded to Henry, partly because the "system" needs a scapegoat, and Henry is available. But Henry has to make choices for himself, and in the process he changes some of his thinking. Although Henry eventually wins his appeal, the play ends without an ending. Instead of one ending, Valdez provides several possibilities, depending on who you think Henry Reyna is: a leader, victim, warrior, friend, or someone else. The audience decides.

Zoot Suit in Performance

Zoot Suit opened on July 30, 1978, in Los Angeles and played to full houses for almost a year. It then moved to a Broadway production in New York, where it ran for a month. It remains the first and only Chicano play to be performed on Broadway. Luis Valdez directed the film version of the play in 1981 with Daniel Valdez, his brother, in the role of Henry Reyna. Daniel Valdez also composed the music for the film. Despite the obvious challenges in producing *Zoot Suit*, the play continues to be staged. El Teatro Campesino produced the play in San Juan Bautista, California, in late 2002. Illinois State University staged the play in November 2003 as part of its "new vision of multiculturalism."

Luis Valdez (b. 1940)

ZOOT SUIT

1978

Characters

EL PACHUCO^o
HENRY REYNA

His Family:

ENRIQUE REYNA
DOLORES REYNA
LUPE REYNA
RUDY REYNA

His Friends:

GEORGE SHEARER
ALICE BLOOMFIELD

His Gang:

DELLA BARRIOS
SMILEY TORRES
JOEY CASTRO
TOMMY ROBERTS
ELENA TORRES
BERTHA VILLARREAL

The Downey Gang:

RAFAS
RAGMAN
HOBO
CHOLO
ZOOTER
GÜERA
HOBBA
BLONDIE
LITTLE BLUE

Detectives:

LIEUTENANT EDWARDS
SERGEANT SMITH

The Press:

PRESS
CUB REPORTER
NEWSBOY

The Court:

JUDGE F. W. CHARLES
BAILIFF

The Prison:

GUARD

The Military:

BOSUN'S MATE
SAILORS
MARINE
SWABBIE
MANCHUKA
SHORE PATROLMAN

Others:

GIRLS
PIMP
CHOLO

Setting: *The giant facsimile of a newspaper front page serves as a drop curtain.*

The huge masthead reads: LOS ANGELES HERALD EXPRESS Thursday, June 3, 1943.

A headline cries out: ZOOT-SUITER HORDES INVADE LOS ANGELES. U.S. NAVY AND MARINES ARE CALLED IN.

Behind this are black drapes creating a place of haunting shadows larger than life. The somber shapes and outlines of pachuco images hang subtly, black on black, against a background of heavy fabric evoking memories and feelings like an old suit hanging forgotten in the depths of a closet somewhere, sometime. . . . Below this is a sweeping, curving place of levels and rounded corners with the hard, ingrained brilliance of countless spit shines, like the memory of a dance hall.

ACT 1 • Prologue

(A switchblade plunges through the newspaper. It slowly cuts a rip to the bottom of the drop. To the sounds of "Perdido" by Duke Ellington, El Pachuco

El Pachuco: For some people the word *pachuco* indicates someone from El Paso. However, it also refers to a specific form of Chicano subculture that was prevalent in the 1940s in the Southwest. Considered gangsters by some, pachucos were characterized by their distinctive clothing, appearance, and language. Though not the only youth group to wear the zoot suit (an oversized suit), this was one of their cultural practices. They also developed particular versions of Spanish dialect. Some scholars call it Caló and trace it back to the language of gypsies in Spain; others see this language practice as innovation based on the encounter between two cultures, Mexican and American. In this account it is seen as a form of code switching and language adaptation. Regardless of their particular mannerisms, pachucos shared a general distrust of assimilation and insisted on forming their own identity outside of the U.S. mainstream, something that made them suspicious to both the U.S. legal system and Mexicans and Mexican Americans who were trying to assimilate.

emerges from the slit. He adjusts his clothing, meticulously fussing with his collar, suspenders, cuffs. He tends to his hair, combing back every strand into a long luxurious ducktail, with infinite loving pains. Then he reaches into the slit and pulls out his coat and hat. He dons them. His fantastic costume is complete. It is a zoot suit. He is transformed into the very image of the pachuco myth, from his pork-pie hat to the tip of his four-foot watch chain. Now he turns to the audience. His three-soled shoes with metal taps click-clack as he proudly, slovenly, defiantly makes his way downstage. He stops and assumes a pachuco stance.)

PACHUCO: ¿Que le watcha a mis trapos, ese?

¿Sabe qué, carnal?

Estas garras me las planté porque

Vamos a dejarnos caer un play, ¿sabe?

(He crosses to center stage, models his clothes.)

Watcha mi tacuche, ese. Aliviánese con mis calcos,
5 tando,

lisa, tramos, y carlango, ese.

(Pause.)

Nel, sabe qué, usted está muy verdolaga. Como se
me hace

que es puro square.°

(El Pachuco breaks character and addresses the audience in perfect English.)

Ladies and gentlemen

10 the play you are about to see

is a construct of fact and fantasy.

The Pachuco Style was an act in Life

and his language a new creation.

His will to be was an awesome force

15 eluding all documentation . . .

A mythical, quizzical, frightening being

precursor of revolution

Or a piteous, hideous heroic joke

deserving of absolution?

20 I speak as an actor on the stage.

The Pachuco was existential

for he was an Actor in the streets

both profane and reverential.

It was the secret fantasy of every bato

25 in or out of the Chicanada°

to put on a Zoot Suit and play the Myth

más chucote que la chingada.°

1, Prologue. 1-8. ¿Que le watcha . . . que es puro square: You're looking at my clothes, man? / You know what, brother (sense of soul brotherhood)? / I dressed up in these duds because / We are going to drop by a play, you know? Look at my suit, man. It goes well with my shoes, hat, / shirt, pants, and coat, dude. No, you know what, you are very inexperienced. It seems to me / that you're a pure square. 25. Chicanada: Chicano world or community. 27. más chucote que la chingada: More pachuco-like than hell.

(Puts hat back on and turns.)

¡Pos órale!°

(Music. The newspaper drop flies. El Pachuco begins his chuco stroll upstage, swinging his watch chain.)

Scene 1. Zoot Suit

(The scene is a barrio dance in the forties. Pachucos and Pachucas in zoot suits and pompadours.

They are members of the 38th Street Gang, led by Henry Reyna, 21, dark, Indian-looking, older than his years, and Della Barrios, 20, his girlfriend in miniskirt and fingertip coat. A sailor called Swabbie dances with his girlfriend Manchuka among the Couples. Movement. Animation. El Pachuco sings.)

PACHUCO: PUT ON A ZOOT SUIT, MAKES YOU
FEEL REAL ROOT
LOOK LIKE A DIAMOND, SPARKLING,
SHINING
READY FOR DANCING
READY FOR THE BOOGIE TONIGHT!

(The Couples, dancing, join the Pachuco in exclaiming the last term of each line in the next verse.)

THE HEPCATS UP IN HARLEM WEAR THAT
DRAPE SHAPE
5 COMO LOS PACHUCONES° DOWN IN L.A.
WHERE HUISAS° IN THEIR POMPADOURS
LOOK REAL KEEN
ON THE DANCE FLOOR OF THE BALLROOMS
DONDE BAILAN° SWING.

YOU BETTER GET HEP TONIGHT
10 AND PUT ON THAT ZOOT SUIT!

(The Downey Gang, a rival group of pachucos enters upstage left. Their quick dance step becomes a challenge to 38th Street.)

DOWNEY GANG: Downey . . . ¡Rifa!°

HENRY (gesturing back): ¡Toma!°

(The music is hot. El Pachuco slides across the floor and momentarily breaks the tension. Henry warns Rafas, the leader of the Downey Gang, when he sees him push his brother Rudy.)

¡Rafas!

PACHUCO (sings): TRUCHA, ESE LOCO, VAMOS AL
BORLO°

15 WEAR THAT CARLANGO, TRAMOS Y TANDO

28. ¡Pos órale!: Well listen! 1, 1. 6. COMO LOS PACHUCONES: Like the pachucos. 7. HUISAS: Girls. 9. DONDE BAILAN: Where they dance. 12. ¡Rifa!: The best. An equivalent expression might be "Rules!" 13. ¡Toma!: Take that (referencing the gesture). 15. TRUCHA . . . AL BORLO: Hey, crazy man, we are going to party (dance).

DANCE WITH YOUR HUISA
DANCE TO THE BOOGIE TONIGHT!

'CAUSE THE ZOOT SUIT IS THE STYLE IN
CALIFORNIA
TAMBIÉN EN COLORADO Y ARIZONA°
THEY'RE WEARING THAT TACUCHE EN EL
PASO
Y EN TODOS LOS SALONES DE CHICAGO°

YOU BETTER GET HEP TONIGHT
AND PUT ON THAT ZOOT SUIT!

Scene 2. *The Mass Arrests*

(We hear a siren, then another, and another. It sounds like gangbusters. The dance is interrupted. Couples pause on the dance floor.)

PACHUCO: Trucha, la jura. ¡Pélenle!°

(Pachucos start to run out, but Detectives leap onstage with drawn guns. A Cub Reporter takes flash pictures.)

SGT. SMITH: Hold it right there, kids!

LT. EDWARDS: Everybody get your hands up!

RUDY: Watcha! This way! (Rudy escapes with some others.)

5 LT. EDWARDS: Stop or I'll shoot!

(Edwards fires his revolver into the air. A number of pachucos and their girlfriends freeze. The cops round them up. Swabbie, an American sailor, and Manchuka, a Japanese-American dancer, are among them.)

SGT. SMITH: ¡Ándale!° (Sees Swabbie.) You! Get out of here.

SWABBIE: What about my girl?

SGT. SMITH: Take her with you.

(Swabbie and Manchuka exit.)

10 HENRY: What about my girl?

LT. EDWARDS: No dice, Henry. Not this time. Back in line.

SGT. SMITH: Close it up!

LT. EDWARDS: Spread!

(The Pachucos turn upstage in a line with their hands up. The sirens fade and give way to the sound of a teletype. The Pachucos turn and form a lineup, and the Press starts shooting pictures as he speaks.)

15 PRESS: The City of the Angels, Monday, August 2, 1942.

The Los Angeles Examiner Headline:

THE LINEUP (in chorus): Death Awakens Sleepy Lagoon
(Breath.) L.A. Shaken by Lurid "Kid" Murder.

20. TAMBIÉN . . . ARIZONA: Also in Colorado and Arizona.
21-22. TACUCHE . . . CHICAGO: Zoot suit in El Paso and in all of the dance halls of Chicago. 1, 2. 1. Trucha . . .
¡Pélenle!: Watch out, the police. Get out of here (beat it)!
6. ¡Ándale!: Move it!

PRESS: The City of the Angels, Monday, August 2, 1942.

The Los Angeles Times Headline:

20 THE LINEUP: One Killed, Ten Hurt in Boy Wars:
(Breath.) Mexican Boy Gangs Operating Within City.

PRESS: The City of the Angels, August 2, 1942. Los Angeles Herald Express Headline:

25 THE LINEUP: Police Arrest Mexican Youths. Black Widow Girls° in Boy Gangs.

PRESS: The City of the Angels . . .

PACHUCO (sharply): El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles de Porciúncula, pendejo.°

PRESS (eyeing the Pachuco cautiously): The Los Angeles Daily News Headline:

BOYS IN THE LINEUP: Police Nab 300 in Roundup.

GIRLS IN THE LINEUP: Mexican Girls Picked Up in Arrests.

35 LT. EDWARDS: Press Release, Los Angeles Police Department: A huge showup of nearly 300 boys and girls rounded up by the police and sheriff's deputies will be held tonight at eight o'clock in Central Jail at First and Hill Street. Victims of assault, robbery, purse snatching, and similar crimes are asked to be present for the identification of suspects.

PRESS: Lieutenant . . . ?

(Edwards poses as the Press snaps a picture.)

LT. EDWARDS: Thank you.

PRESS: Thank you.

(Smith gives a signal, and the lineup moves back, forming a straight line in the rear, leaving Henry up front by himself.)

LT. EDWARDS: Move! Turn! Out!

(As the rear line moves off to the left following Edwards, Smith takes Henry by the arm and pulls him downstage, shoving him to the floor.)

Scene 3. *Pachuco Yo*

SGT. SMITH: Okay, kid you wait here till I get back. Think you can do that? Sure you can. You pachucos are regular tough guys.

(Smith exits. Henry sits up on the floor. El Pachuco comes forward.)

HENRY: Bastards. (He gets up and paces nervously. Pause.) ¿Ese? ¿Ese?°

PACHUCO (behind him): ¿Qué pues, nuez?°

26-27. Black Widow Girls: Female gang whose members' distinctive dress included zoot jackets, short black skirts, and black fishnet stockings. 29-30. El Pueblo de . . . pendejo: The city of Our Lady Queen of the Angels Portiuncula, idiot (the original Spanish name for Los Angeles). 1, 3. 5. ¿Ese? ¿Ese? Man? (Also dude or homeboy.) 6. ¿Qué pues, nuez?: Well what, nut?

- HENRY (*turning*): Where the hell you been, ese?
 PACHUCO: Checking out the barrio. Qué desmadre, ¿no?°
 HENRY: What's going on, ese? This thing is big.
 10 PACHUCO: The city's cracking down on pachucos, carnal.° Don't you read the newspapers? They're screaming for blood.
 HENRY: All I know is they got nothing on me. I didn't do anything.
 15 PACHUCO: You're Henry Reyna, ese — Hank Reyna! The snarling juvenile delinquent. The zootsuiter. The bitter young pachuco gang leader of 38th Street. That's what they got on you.
 HENRY: I don't like this, ese. (*Suddenly intense.*) I DON'T LIKE BEING LOCKED UP!
 20 PACHUCO: Calmantes montes, chicas patas.° Haven't I taught you to survive? Play it cool.
 HENRY: They're going to do it again, ese! They're going to charge me with some phony rap and keep me until they make something stick.
 25 PACHUCO: So what's new?
 HENRY (*pause*): I'm supposed to report for the Navy tomorrow. (*The Pachuco looks at him with silent disdain.*) You don't want me to go, do you?
 30 PACHUCO: Stupid move, carnal.
 HENRY (*hurt and angered by Pachuco's disapproval*): I've got to do something.
 PACHUCO: Then hang tough. Nobody's forcing you to do shit.
 HENRY: I'm forcing me, ese — ME, you understand?
 35 PACHUCO: Muy patriotic, eh?
 HENRY: Yeah.
 PACHUCO: Off to fight for your country.
 HENRY: Why not?
 PACHUCO: Because this ain't your country. Look what's
 40 happening all around you. The Japs have sewed up the Pacific. Rommel is kicking ass in Egypt but the Mayor of L.A. has declared all-out war on Chicanos. On you! ¿Te curas?°
 HENRY: Órale.°
 45 PACHUCO: Qué mamada, ¿no?° Is that what you want to go out and die for? Wise up. These bastard paddy cops have it in for you. You're a marked man. They think you're the enemy.
 HENRY (*refusing to accept it*): Screw them bastard cops!
 50 PACHUCO: And as soon as the Navy finds out you're in jail again, ya estuvo, carnal.° Unfit for military duty because of your record. Think about it.
 HENRY (*pause*): You got a frajo?
 PACHUCO: Simón. (*He pulls out a cigarette, hands it to Henry, lights it for him. Henry is pensive.*)
 55 HENRY (*smokes, laughs ironically*): I was all set to come back a hero, see? Me la rayo.° For the first time in

8. Qué desmadre, ¿no?: What a mess. 10–11. carnal: Brother. 21. Calmantes . . . patas: Take it easy, Chicano. 43. ¿Te curas?: Are you charged (excited)? 44. Órale: O.K. 45. Qué mamada, ¿no?: What stupidity, right? 51. ya estuvo, carnal: That's enough, brother. 56. Me la rayo: I would be in good circumstances.

- my life I really thought Hank Reyna was going someplace.
 PACHUCO: Forget the war overseas, carnal. Your war is on the homefront.
 HENRY (*with new resolve*): What do you mean?
 PACHUCO: The barrio needs you, carnal. Fight back! Stand up to them with some style. Show the world a Chicano has balls. Hang tough. You can take it. Remember, Pachuco Yo!
 60 HENRY (*assuming the style*): Con safos, carnal.° 65

Scene 4. The Interrogation

(*The Press enters, followed by Edwards and Smith.*)

- PRESS (*to the audience*): Final Edition, the *Los Angeles Daily News*. The police have arrested twenty-two members of the 38th Street Gang, pending further investigation of various charges.
 LT. EDWARDS: Well, son, I was hoping I wouldn't see you in here again.
 HENRY: Then why did you arrest me?
 LT. EDWARDS: Come on, Hank, you know why you're here.
 HENRY: Yeah. I'm a Mexican.
 10 LT. EDWARDS: Don't give me that. How long have I known you? Since '39?
 HENRY: Yeah, when you got me for stealing a car, remember?
 LT. EDWARDS: All right. That was a mistake. I didn't
 15 know it was your father's car. I tried to make it up to you. Didn't I help you set up the youth club?
 SGT. SMITH: They turned it into a gang, Lieutenant. Everything they touch turns to shit.
 LT. EDWARDS: I remember a kid just a couple of years
 20 back. Head boy at the Catholic Youth Center. His idea of fun was going to the movies. What happened to that nice kid, Henry?
 PRESS: He's "Gone with the Wind," trying to look like Clark Gable.
 25 SGT. SMITH: Now he thinks he's Humphrey Bogart.
 PACHUCO: So who are you, puto? Pat O'Brien?
 LT. EDWARDS: This is the wrong time to be antisocial, son. This country's at war, and we're under strict orders to crack down on all malcontents.
 30 SGT. SMITH: Starting with all pachucos and draft dodgers.
 HENRY: I ain't no draft dodger.
 LT. EDWARDS: I know you're not. I heard you got accepted by the Navy. Congratulations. When do you
 35 report?
 HENRY: Tomorrow?
 SGT. SMITH: Tough break!
 LT. EDWARDS: It's still not too late, you know. I could still release you in time to get sworn in.
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66. Con safos, carnal: Be safe, brother.

HENRY: If I do what?

LT. EDWARDS: Tell me, Henry, what do you know about a big gang fight last Saturday night, out at Sleepy Lagoon?

45 PACHUCO: Don't tell 'em shit.

HENRY: Which Sleepy Lagoon?

LT. EDWARDS: You mean there's more than one? Come on, Hank, I know you were out there. I've got a statement from your friends that says you were beaten up. Is that true? Were you and your girl attacked?

50 HENRY: I don't know anything about it. Nobody's ever beat me up.

SGT. SMITH: That's a lie and you know it. Thanks to your squealer friends, we've got enough dope on you to indict for murder right now.

55 HENRY: Murder?

SGT. SMITH: Yeah, murder. Another greaser named José Williams.

HENRY: I never heard of the bato.

60 SGT. SMITH: Yeah, sure.

LT. EDWARDS: I've been looking at your record, Hank. Petty theft, assault, burglary, and now murder. Is that what you want? The gas chamber? Play square with me. Give me a statement as to what happened at the Lagoon, and I'll go to bat for you with the Navy. I promise you.

65 PACHUCO: If that ain't a line of gabacho bullshit, I don't know what is.

LT. EDWARDS: Well?

70 PACHUCO: Spit in his pinche face.

SGT. SMITH: Forget it, Lieutenant. You can't treat these animals like people.

LT. EDWARDS: Shut up! I'm thinking of your family, Hank. Your old man would be proud to see you in the Navy. One last chance, son. What do you say?

75 HENRY: I ain't your son, cop.

LT. EDWARDS: All right, Reyna, have it your way.

(Edwards and Press exit.)

PACHUCO: You don't deserve it, ese, but you're going to get it anyway.

80 SGT. SMITH: All right, muchacho, it's just me and you now. I hear tell you pachucos wear these monkey suits as a kind of armor. Is that right? How's it work? This is what you zooters need — a little old-fashioned discipline.

85 HENRY: Screw you, flatfoot.

SGT. SMITH: You greasy son of a bitch. What happened at the Sleepy Lagoon? Talk! Talk! Talk!

(Smith beats Henry with a rubber sap. Henry passes out and falls to the floor, with his hands still handcuffed behind his back. Dolores his mother appears in a spot upstage, as he falls.)

DOLORES: Henry!

(Lights change. Four Pachuco Couples enter, dancing a 40s pasodoble (two-step) around Henry on the floor, as they swing in a clothesline of newspaper sheets. Music.)

PACHUCO: Get up and escape, Henry . . .

leave reality behind

90

with your buenas garras

muy chamberlain°

escape through the barrio streets of your mind

through a neighborhood of memories

all chuckhole lined

95

and the love

and the pain

as fine as wine . . .

(Henry sits up, seeing his mother Dolores folding newspaper sheets like clothes on a clothesline.)

DOLORES: Henry?

PACHUCO: It's a lifetime ago, last Saturday night . . . before Sleepy Lagoon and the big bad fight.

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DOLORES: Henry!

PACHUCO: Tu mamá, carnal.°

(He recedes into the background.)

DOLORES (at the clothesline): Henry, ¿hijo? Ven a cenar.°

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HENRY (gets up off the floor): Sorry, jefita,° I'm not hungry. Besides, I got to pick up Della. We're late for the dance.

DOLORES: Dance? In this heat? Don't you muchachos ever think of anything else? God knows I suffer la

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pena negra° seeing you go out every night.

HENRY: This isn't just any night, jefa.° It's my last

chance to use my tacuche.°

DOLORES: Tacuche? Pero tu padre . . .°

HENRY (revealing a stubborn streak): I know what mi

115

'apá° said, 'amá. I'm going to wear it anyway.

DOLORES (sighs, resigns herself): Mira, hijo.° I know

you work hard for your clothes. And I know how

much they mean to you. Pero por diosito santo,° I

just don't know what you see en esa cochinateda de

120

"soot zoot."°

HENRY (smiling): Drapes, 'amá, we call them drapes.

DOLORES (scolding playfully): Ay sí, drapes, muy funny,

¿verdad?° And what do the police call them, eh?

They've put you in jail so many times. ¿Sabes qué?°

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I'm going to send them all your clothes!

HENRY: A qué mi 'amá.° Don't worry. By this time next

week, I'll be wearing my Navy blues. Okay?

1, 4. 91-92. buenas . . . chamberlain: Good threads, very high class (literally, good rags). 103. Tu mamá, carnal: Your mother, brother. 104-105. Henry . . . cenar: Henry, son? Come to dinner. 106. jefita: Mom (literally, little boss, an affectionate term for a parent). 110-111. la pena negra: Through hell (literally, the black pain). 112. jefa: Mom. 113. tacuche: Zoot suit. 114. Pero tu padre: But your father. 115-116. mi 'apá: My dad. 117. Mira, hijo: Look, son. 119. Pero . . . santo: But for God's sake. 120-121. en esa . . . "soot zoot": In that filthy thing, that "soot zoot" (mispronunciation indicating her generational distance from pachuco culture). 124. ¿verdad?: Truthfully. 125. ¿Sabes qué?: You know what? 127. A qué mi 'amá: That's my mom.

DOLORES: Bendito sea Dios.° I still can't believe you're going off to war. I almost wish you were going back to jail.

HENRY: ¡Órale!°

(Lupe Reyna, 16, enters dressed in a short skirt and baggy coat. She is followed by Della Barrios, 17, dressed more modestly. Lupe hides behind a newspaper sheet on the line.)

LUPE: Hank! Let's go, carnal. Della's here.

HENRY: Della . . . Órale, esa.° What are you doing here?

135 I told you I was going to pick you up at your house.

DELLA: You know how my father gets.

HENRY: What happened?

DELLA: I'll tell you later.

140 DOLORES: Della, hija, buenas noches.° How pretty you look.

DELLA: Buenas noches.

(Dolores hugs Della, then spots Lupe hiding behind the clothesline.)

DOLORES (to Lupe): ¿Oye y tú?° What's wrong with you? What are you doing back there.

LUPE: Nothing, 'amá.

145 DOLORES: Well, come out then.

LUPE: We're late, 'amá.

DOLORES: Come out, te digo.°

(Lupe comes out exposing her extremely short skirt. Dolores gasps.)

¡Válgame Dios!° Guadalupe, are you crazy? Why bother to wear anything?

150 LUPE: Ay, 'amá, it's the style. Short skirt and fingertip coat. Huh, Hank?

HENRY: Uh, yeah, 'amá.

DOLORES: ¿Oh sí? And how come Della doesn't get to wear the same style?

155 HENRY: No . . . that's different. No, chale.°

ENRIQUE (off): ¡VIEJA!°

DOLORES: Ándale.° Go change before your father sees you.

160 ENRIQUE: I'm home. (Coming into the scene.) Buenas noches, everybody. (All respond. Enrique sees Lupe.) ¡Ay, jijjo!° Where's the skirt?!

LUPE: It's here.

ENRIQUE: Where's the rest of it?

DOLORES: She's going to the dance.

165 ENRIQUE: ¿Y a mí qué me importa?° Go and change those clothes. Ándale.

LUPE: Please, 'apá?

129. Bendito sea Dios: Blessed be God. 132. ¡Órale!: Come on! 134. Órale, esa: Hey, girl. 139. hija, buenas noches: Honey (literally, daughter), good evening. 142. ¿Oye y tú?: Listen and you? 147. te digo: I told you. 148. ¡Válgame Dios!: Goodness, gracious! 155. No, chale: No, no. 156. ¡VIEJA!: Old woman (wife). 157. Ándale: That's it. 161. ¡Ay, jijjo!: My goodness! 165. ¿Y . . . importa?: What difference does that make to me?

ENRIQUE: No, señorita.

LUPE: Chihuahua,° I don't want to look like a square.

ENRIQUE: ¡Te digo que no!° I will not have my daughter looking like a . . .

DOLORES: Like a puta° . . . I mean, a pachuca.

LUPE (pleading for help): Hank . . .

HENRY: Do what they say, sis.

LUPE: But you let Henry wear his drapes.

ENRIQUE: That's different. He's a man. Es hombre.

DOLORES: Sí, that's different. You men are all alike. From such a stick, such a splinter: De tal palo, tal astillota.

ENRIQUE: Natural, muy natural, and look how he came out. ¡Bien macho! Like his father. ¿Verdad, m'ijo?°

HENRY: If you say so, jefito.°

ENRIQUE (to Della): Buenas noches.

DELLA: Buenas noches.

HENRY: 'Apá, this is Della Barrios.

ENRIQUE: Mira, mira . . . So this is your new girlfriend, eh? Muy bonita.° Quite a change from the last one.

DOLORES: Ay, señor.

ENRIQUE: It's true. What was her name?

DELLA: Bertha?

ENRIQUE: That's the one. The one with the tattoo.

DOLORES: Este hombre.° We have company.

ENRIQUE: That reminds me. I invited the compadres to the house mañana.°

DOLORES: ¿Que qué?°

ENRIQUE: I'm buying a big keg of cerveza° to go along with the menudo.°

DOLORES: Oye, ¿cuál menudo?°

ENRIQUE (cutting her off): ¡Qué caray, mujer!° It isn't every day a man's son goes off to fight for his country. I should know. Della, m'ija, when I was in the Mexican Revolution, I was not even as old as my son is.

DOLORES: N'ombre,° don't start with your revolution. We'll be here all night.

HENRY: Yeah, jefe, we've got to go.

LUPE (comes forward. She has rolled down her skirt): 'Apá, is this better?

ENRIQUE: Bueno. And you leave it that way.

HENRY: Órale, pues.° It's getting late. Where's Rudy?

LUPE: He's still getting ready. Rudy!

(Rudy Reyna, 19, comes downstage in an old suit made into a tacuche.)°

RUDY: Let's go everybody. I'm ready.

169. Chihuahua: Expression of frustration. 170. ¡Te digo que no!: I told you no! 172. puta: Whore. 181. ¿Verdad, m'ijo?: Right, son? 182. jefito: Dad. 186. Mira, mira: Look, look. 187. Muy bonita: Very pretty. 192. Este hombre: This man. 194. mañana: Tomorrow. 195. ¿Que qué?: What's that? 196. cerveza: Beer. 197. menudo: Tripe soup, a dish eaten at special occasions. 198. Oye, ¿cuál menudo?: Hey, what menudo? 199. ¡Qué caray, mujer!: Damn it, woman! 204. N'ombre: No, man. 209. Órale, pues: Come on, then. 210. tacuche: Zoot suit.

ENRIQUE: Oye, oye, ¿y tú?° What are you doing with my coat?

RUDY: It's my tacuche, 'apá.

ENRIQUE: ¡Me lleva la chingada!°

DOLORES: Enrique . . . ¡por el amor de Dios!°

ENRIQUE (to Henry): You see what you're doing? First that one and now this one. (To Rudy.) Hijo,° don't go out like that. Por favor. You look like an idiot, pendejo.°

RUDY: Órale, Hank. Don't I look all right?

HENRY: Nel, ese,° you look fine. Watcha. Once I leave for the service, you can have my tacuche. Then you can really be in style. ¿Cómo la ves?°

RUDY: Chale.° Thanks, carnal, but if I don't join the service myself, I'm gonna get my own tacuche.

HENRY: You sure? I'm not going to need it where I'm going. ¿Tú sabes?°

RUDY: Are you serious?

HENRY: Simón.°

RUDY: I'll think about it.

HENRY: Pos, no hay pedo, ese.°

ENRIQUE: ¿Cómo que pedo? Nel, ¿Simón?° Since when did we stop speaking Spanish in this house? Have you no respect?

DOLORES: Muchachos, muchachos, go to your dance.

(Henry starts upstage.)

HENRY: Buenas noches . . .

(Enrique holds out his hand. Henry stops, looks, and then returns to kiss his father's hand. Then he moves to kiss his mother and Rudy in turn kisses Enrique's hand. Enrique says "Buenas Noches" to each of his sons.)

HENRY: Órale, we'd better get going . . .

(General "goodbyes" from everybody.)

ENRIQUE (as Rudy goes past him): Henry! Don't let your brother drink beer.

RUDY: Ay, 'apá. I can take care of myself.

DOLORES: I'll believe that when I see it. (She kisses him on the nose.)

LUPE: Ahí te watcho, 'amá.°

ENRIQUE: ¿Que qué?°

LUPE: I mean, I'll see you later.

(Henry, Della, Lupe, and Rudy turn upstage. Music starts.)

ENRIQUE: Mujer, why didn't you let me talk?

DOLORES (sighing): Talk, señor, talk all you want. I'm listening.

(Enrique and Dolores exit up right. Rudy and Lupe exit up left. Lights change. We hear hot dance music. Henry and Della dance at center stage. El Pachuco sings.)

PACHUCO: CADA SÁBADO EN LA NOCHE
YO ME VOY A BORLOTEAR 250
CON MI LINDA PACHUCONA
LAS CADERAS A MENEAR°

ELLA LE HACE MUY DE AQUELLAS
CUANDO EMPIEZA A GUARACHAR
AL COMPÁS DE LOS TIMBALES 255
YO ME SIENTO PETATEAR°

(From upstage right, three pachucos now enter in a line, moving to the beat. They are Joey Castro, 17; Smiley Torres, 23; and Tommy Roberts, 19, Anglo. They all come downstage left in a diagonal.)

LOS CHUCOS SUAVES BAILAN RUMBA
BAILAN LA RUMBA Y LE ZUMBAN
BAILAN GUARACHA SABROSÓN
EL BOTECITO Y EL DANZÓN!° 260

(Chorus repeats, the music fades. Henry laughs and happily embraces Della.)

Scene 5. The Press

(Lights change. El Pachuco escorts Della off right. The Press appears at upstage center.)

PRESS: Los Angeles Times: August 8, 1942.

(A Newsboy enters, lugging in two more bundles of newspapers, hawking them as he goes. People of various walks of life enter at intervals and buy newspapers. They arrange themselves in the background reading.)

NEWSBOY: EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT
IT. SPECIAL SESSION OF L.A. COUNTY GRAND
JURY CONVENES. D.A. CHARGES CONSPIRACY
IN SLEEPY LAGOON MURDER. EXTRA! 5

(A Cub Reporter emerges and goes to the Press, as Lieutenant Edwards enters.)

CUB REPORTER: Hey, here comes Edwards!

(Edwards is besieged by the Press, joined by Alice Bloomfield, 26, a woman reporter.)

249-252. CADA . . . MENEAR: Every Saturday night / I go to party (dance) / With my beautiful pachuca / Shaking her hips. 253-256. ELLA . . . PETATEAR: She seems very fine / When she begins to dance / To the rhythm of the drums / I feel like I'm dying. 257-260. LOS CHUCOS . . . DANZÓN!: The fine pachucos dance the rumba / Dance the rumba and they get high / They dance the dance (similar to the flamenco) deliciously / The botecito (literally little jail or little boat; the name of a dance) / And the danzón (a Cuban dance)!

212. Oye, oye, ¿y tú?: Listen, listen, and you? 215. ¡Me lleva la chingada!: I'm (vulgar term)! 216. ¡por el amor de Dios!: For the love of God! 218. Hijo: Son. 220. pendejo: Idiot. 222. Nel, ese: No, man. 224. ¿Cómo la ves?: How does that seem to you? 225. Chale: No. 228. ¿Tú sabes?: You know? 230. Simón: Yes. 232. Pos . . . ese: Well, that's no lie, man. 233. ¿Cómo . . . Simón?: What's this nonsense? No, Yes? (He is upset because his sons are speaking Chicano slang.) 243. Ahí . . . 'amá: See you later, mom. 244. ¿Que qué?: What's that?

PRESS: How about it, Lieutenant? What's the real scoop on the Sleepy Lagoon? Sex, violence . . .

CUB REPORTER: Marijuana?

10 NEWSBOY: Read all about it! Mexican Crime Wave Engulfs L.A.

LT. EDWARDS: Slums breed crime, fellas. That's your story.

ALICE: Lieutenant. What exactly is the Sleepy Lagoon?

15 CUB REPORTER: A great tune by Harry James, doll. Wanna dance?

(Alice ignores the Cub.)

LT. EDWARDS: It's a reservoir. An old abandoned gravel pit, really. It's on a ranch between here and Long Beach. Serves as a swimming hole for the younger
20 Mexican kids.

ALICE: Because they're not allowed to swim in the public plunges?

PRESS: What paper are you with, lady? The *Daily Worker*?

25 LT. EDWARDS: It also doubles as a sort of lovers' lane at night — which is why the gangs fight over it. Now they've finally murdered somebody.

NEWSBOY: EXTRA! EXTRA! ZOOT-SUITED GOONS OF SLEEPY LAGOON!

30 LT. EDWARDS: But we're not going to mollycoddle these youngsters any more. And you can quote me on that.

PRESS: One final question, Lieutenant. What about the 38th Street Gang — weren't you the first to arrest Henry Reyna?

35 LT. EDWARDS: I was. And I noticed right away the kid had great leadership potential. However . . .

PRESS: Yes?

LT. EDWARDS: You can't change the spots on a leopard.

PRESS: Thank you, sir.

(People with newspapers crush them and throw them down as they exit. Edwards turns and exits. Alice turns toward Henry for a moment.)

40 NEWSBOY: EXTRA, EXTRA. READ ALL ABOUT THE MEXICAN BABY GANGSTERS. EXTRA, EXTRA.

(The Press and Cub Reporter rush out happily to file their stories. The Newsboy leaves, hawking his papers. Alice exits, with determination. Far upstage, Enrique enters with a rolling garbage can. He is a street sweeper. During the next scene he silently sweeps up the newspapers, pausing at the last to read one of the news stories.)

Scene 6. *The People's Lawyer*

JOEY: ¡Chale, ese, chale! Qué pinche agüite.°

SMILEY: Mexican Baby Gangsters?!

TOMMY: Zoot-suited goons! I knew it was coming. Every time the D.A. farts, they throw us in the can.

1, 6. 1. ¡Chale . . . agüite: No, man, no! What a damned nuisance.

SMILEY: Pos, qué chingados,° Hank. I can't believe this. Are they really going to pin us with a murder rap? I've got a wife and kid, man!

JOEY: Well, there's one good thing anyway. I bet you know that we've made the headlines. Everybody knows we got the toughest gang in town.

TOMMY: Listen to this pip-squeak. The biggest heist he ever pulled was a Tootsie Roll.

JOEY (*grabbing his privates*): Here's your Tootsie Roll, ese.

TOMMY: What, that? Get my microscope, Smiley.

JOEY: Why don't you come here and take a little bite, joto.

TOMMY: Joto? Who you calling a joto, maricón?°

JOEY: You, white boy. Did I ever tell you, you got the finest little duck ass in the world.

TOMMY: No, you didn't tell me that, culero.°

(*Joey and Tommy start sparring.*)

SMILEY (*furious*): Why don't you batos knock it off?

HENRY (*cool*): Cálmenla.°

SMILEY: ¡Pinches chavalos!° (*The batos stop.*)

JOEY: We're just cabuliando, ese.

TOMMY: Simón, ese. Horsing around. (*He gives Joey a final punch.*)

SMILEY (*with deep self-pity*): I'm getting too old for this pedo,° Hank. All this farting around con esos chavalillos.°

HENRY: Relax, carnal. No te agüites.°

SMILEY: You and me have been through a lot, Hank. Parties, chingazos,° jail. When you said let's join the pachucada,° I joined the pachucada. You and me started the 38th, bato. I followed you even after my kid was born, but what now, carnal? This pinche pedo° is serious.

TOMMY: He's right, Hank. They indicted the whole gang.

JOEY: Yeah, you know the only one who ain't here is Rudy.

(*Henry turns sharply.*)

He was at the Sleepy Lagoon too, ese. Throwing chingazos.°

HENRY: Yeah, but the cops don't know that, do they? Unless one of us turned stoolie.

JOEY: Hey, ese, don't look at me. They beat the shit out of me, but that's all they got. Shit.

TOMMY: That's all you got to give. (*Laughs.*)

HENRY: Okay! Let's keep it that way. I don't want my carnalillo° pulled into this. And if anybody asks

5. Pos, qué chingados: Anyhow, what (vulgar term). 18. joto, maricón: Homosexual (derogatory). 21. culero: (Vulgar term), son-of-a-bitch. 23. Cálmenla: Cool it. 24. ¡Pinches chavalos!: Damned inexperienced boys. 28. pedo: Nonsense. 28-29. con esos chavalillos: With these little neophytes. 30. No te agüites: Don't let it get to you. 32. chingazos: Fights. 33. pachucada: World of the pachucos; pachuco population. 35-36. pinche pedo: Damned nonsense. 41. chingazos: Punches. 48. carnalillo: Little brother.

about him, you batos don't know nothing. You get me?

SMILEY: Simón.

TOMMY: Crazy.

JOEY (*throwing his palms out*): Say, Jackson, I'm cool. You know that.

HENRY: There's not a single paddy we can trust.

TOMMY: Hey, ese, what about me?

HENRY: You know what I mean.

TOMMY: No, I don't know what you mean. I'm here with the rest of yous.

JOEY: Yeah, but you'll be the first one out, cabrón.⁶⁰

TOMMY: Gimme a break, maníaco. ¡Yo soy pachuco!⁶¹

HENRY: Relax, ese. Nobody's getting personal with you.

Don't I let you take out my carnala?⁶² Well, don't I?

TOMMY: Simón.

HENRY: That's because you respect my family. The rest of them paddies are after our ass.

PACHUCO: Talk about paddies, ese, you got company.

(George Shearer enters upstage right and comes down. He is a middle-aged lawyer, strong and athletic, but with the slightly frazzled look of a people's lawyer.)

GEORGE: Hi, boys.

HENRY: Trucha!⁶³

GEORGE: My name is George Shearer. I've been retained by your parents to handle your case. Can we sit and talk for a little bit?

(Pause. The Boys eye George suspiciously. He slides a newspaper bundle a few feet upstage.)

PACHUCO: Better check him out, ese. He looks like a cop.

HENRY (*to the Guys, sotto voce*): Pónganse al alba. Este me huele a chota.⁶⁴

GEORGE: What was that? Did you say I could sit down? Thank you. *(He pulls a bundle upstage. He sits.)*

Okay, let me get your names straight first. Who's José Castro?

JOEY: Right here, ese. What do you want to know?

GEORGE: We'll get to that. Ismael Torres?

SMILEY (*deadpan*): That's me. But they call me Smiley.

GEORGE (*a wide grin*): Smiley? I see. You must be Thomas Roberts.

TOMMY: I ain't Zoot Suit Yokum.

GEORGE: Which means you must be Henry Reyna.

HENRY: What if I am. Who are you?

GEORGE: I already told you, my name's George Shearer. Your parents asked me to come.

HENRY: Oh yeah? Where did they get the money for a lawyer?

GEORGE: I'm a people's lawyer, Henry.

SMILEY: People's lawyer?

JOEY: Simón, we're people.

TOMMY: At least they didn't send no animal's lawyer.

HENRY: So what does that mean? You doing this for free or what?

GEORGE (*surprise turning to amusement*): I try not to work for free, if I can help it, but I do sometimes. In this case, I expect to be paid for my services. 100

HENRY: So who's paying you? For what? And how much?

GEORGE: Hey, hey, hold on there. I'm supposed to ask the questions. You're the one going on trial, not me. 105

PACHUCO: Don't let him throw you, ese.

GEORGE: I sat in on part of the Grand Jury. It was quite a farce, wasn't it? Murder one indictment and all.

SMILEY: You think we stand a chance?

GEORGE: There's always a chance, Smiley. That's what trials are for. 110

PACHUCO: He didn't answer your question, ese.

HENRY: You still didn't answer my question, mister. Who's paying you? And how much?

GEORGE (*getting slightly peeved*): Well, Henry, it's really none of your damned business. 115

(The Boys react.)

But for whatever it's worth, I'll tell you a little story.

The first murder case I ever tried, and won incidentally, was for a Filipino. I was paid exactly three dollars and fifty cents plus a pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes, and a note for a thousand dollars — never redeemed. Does that answer your question? 120

HENRY: How do we know you're really a lawyer?

GEORGE: How do I know you're Henry Reyna? What do you really mean, son? Do you think I'm a cop? 125

HENRY: Maybe.

GEORGE: What are you trying to hide from the cops? Murder?

(The Boys react.)

All right! Aside from your parents, I've been called into this case by a citizens' committee that's forming in your behalf, Henry. In spite of evidence to the contrary, there are some people out there who don't want to see you get the shaft. 130

HENRY: ¿Sabes qué, mister?⁶⁵ Don't do us any favors.

GEORGE (*starting to leave*): All right, you want another lawyer? I'll talk to the Public Defender's office. 135

JOEY (*grabbing his briefcase*): Hey, wait a minute, ese. Where are you going?

TOMMY: De cincho se le va a volar la tapa.⁶⁶

JOEY: Nel, este bolillo no sabe nada.⁶⁷ 140

GEORGE (*exploding*): All right, kids, cut the crap!

SMILEY (*grabs his briefcase and crosses to Henry*): Let's give him a break, Hank. *(Smiley hands the briefcase to George.)*

60. cabrón: Son-of-a-bitch. 61. maníaco... pachuco!: Maniac. I'm a pachuco! 62. carnala: Sister. 63. Trucha!: Heads up! (Watch out!) 75-76. Pónganse... chota: Put yourselves on alert. I will uncover this cop.

134. ¿Sabes qué, mister?: You know what, mister? 139. De cincho... tapa: It's a cinch he's going to blow his top. 140. Nel... nada: No, this Anglo (derogatory) doesn't know a thing.

GEORGE: Thank you. *(He starts to exit. Stops.)* You
 145 know, you're making a big mistake. I wonder if you
 know who your friends are? You boys are about to
 get a mass trial. You know what that is? Well, it's a
 new one on me too. The Grand Jury has indicted you
 all on the same identical crime. Not just you four.
 150 The whole so-called 38th Street Gang. And you
 know who the main target is? You, Henry, because
 they're saying you're the ringleader. *(Looks around
 at the Guys.)* And I suppose you are. But you're lead-
 ing your buddies here down a dead-end street. The
 155 D.A.'s coming after you, son, and he's going to put
 you and your whole gang right into the gas chamber.

*(George turns to leave. Smiley panics. Joey and Tommy
 react with him.)*

SMILEY/JOEY/TOMMY *(all together)*: Gas chamber! But
 we didn't do nothing! We're innocent!

HENRY: ¡Cálmenla!°

(The batos stop in their tracks.)

160 Okay. Say we believe you're a lawyer, what does that
 prove? The press has already tried and convicted us.
 Think you can change that?

GEORGE: Probably not. But then, public opinion comes
 and goes, Henry. What matters is our system of jus-
 165 tice. I believe it works, however slowly the wheels
 may grind. It could be a long uphill fight, fellas, but
 we can make it. I know we can. I've promised your
 parents the best defense I'm capable of. The question
 is, Henry, will you trust me?

170 HENRY: Why should I? You're a gringo.

GEORGE *(calmly, deliberately)*: ¿Cómo sabes?°

TOMMY *(shocked)*: Hey, you speak Spanish?

GEORGE: Más o menos.°

JOEY: You mean you understood us a while ago?

175 GEORGE: More or less.

JOEY *(embarrassed)*: ¡Hijole, qué gacho, ese!°

GEORGE: Don't worry. I'm not much on your pachuco
 slang. The problem seems to be that I look like an
 Anglo to you. What if I were to tell you that I had
 180 Spanish blood in my veins? That my roots go back to
 Spain, just like yours? What if I'm an Arab? What if
 I'm a Jew? What difference does it make? The ques-
 tion is, will you let me help you?

(Pause. Henry glances at the Pachuco.)

PACHUCO: ¡Chale!

185 HENRY *(pause)*: Okay!

SMILEY: Me too!

JOEY: Same here!

TOMMY: ¡Órale!

190 GEORGE *(eagerly)*: Okay! Let's go to work. I want to
 know exactly what happened right from the begin-
 ning. *(George sits down and opens his briefcase.)*

159. ¡Cálmenla!: Cool it. 171. ¿Cómo sabes?: How do you
 know? 173. Más o menos: More or less. 176. ¡Hijole...
 ese!: Heavens, how bad is that!

HENRY: Well, I think the pedo° really started at the
 dance last Saturday night...

*(El Pachuco snaps his fingers and we hear dance music.
 Lights change. George exits.)*

Scene 7. The Saturday Night Dance

*(Swabbie and Manchuka come running onstage as the
 barrio dance begins to take shape. Henry and the batos
 move upstage to join other Pachucos and Pachucas
 coming in. Henry joins Della Barrios; Joey teams up
 with Bertha Villarreal, Tommy picks up Lupe Reyna;
 and Smiley escorts his wife Elena Torres. They represent
 the 38th Street neighborhood. Also entering the dance
 comes the Downey Gang, looking mean. Rudy stands
 upstage, in the background, drinking a bottle of beer. El
 Pachuco sings.)*

PACHUCO: CUANDO SALGO YO A BAILAR
 YO ME PONGO MUY CATRÍN
 LAS HUISITAS TODAS GRITAN, DADDY
 VAMOS A BAILAR EL SWING!°

*(The Couples dance. A lively swing number. The music
 comes to a natural break and shifts into a slow number.
 Bertha approaches Henry and Della downstage on the
 dance floor.)*

BERTHA: Ese, ¡surote!° How about a dance for old time's
 sake? No te hagas gacho.°

HENRY *(slow dancing with Della)*: Sorry, Bertha.

BERTHA: Is this your new huisa? This little fly chick?

DELLA: Listen, Bertha...

HENRY *(stops her)*: Chale. She's just jealous. Beat it,
 10 Bertha.

BERTHA: Beat it yourself. Mira. You got no hold on me,
 cabrón. Not any more. I'm as free as a bird.

SMILEY *(coming up)*: Ese, Hank, that's the Downey Gang
 in the corner. You think they're looking for trouble?
 15

HENRY: There's only a couple of them.

BERTHA: That's all we need.

SMILEY: Want me to alert the batos?

HENRY: Nel, be cool.

BERTHA: Be cool? Huy, yu, yui. Forget it, Smiley. Since
 20 he joined the Navy, this bato forgot the difference
 between being cool and being cool-O.

*(She laughs and turns but Henry grabs her angrily by the
 arm. Bertha pulls free and walks away cool and tough.
 The music changes and the beat picks up. El Pachuco
 sings as the Couples dance.)*

PACHUCO: CUANDO VOY AL VACILÓN
 Y ME METO YO A UN SALÓN

192. pedo: Nonsense. 1, 7. 1-4. CUANDO... EL SWING!:
 When I go out dancing / I get dressed up very stylishly / The
 girls all yell, Daddy / We're going to dance that swing! 5. Ese,
 ¡surote!: Hey dude, two-timer! 6. No te hagas gacho: Don't
 become a bad man.

25 LAS CHAVALAS GRITAN, PAPI VENDE
VAMOS A BAILAR DANSÓN!^o

(The dance turns Latin. The music comes to another natural break and holds. Lupe approaches Henry on the dance floor.)

LUPE: Hank. Rudy's at it again. He's been drinking since we got here.

20 HENRY (glancing over at Rudy): He's okay, sis, let the carnal enjoy himself.

30 RUDY (staggering over): ¡Ese, carnal!

HENRY: What you say, brother?

RUDY: I'm flying high, Jackson. Feeling good.

LUPE: Rudy, if you go home drunk again, mi 'apá's going to use you for a punching bag.

35 (Rudy kisses her on the cheek and moves on.)

DELLA: How are you feeling?

HENRY: Okay.

DELLA: Still thinking about Bertha?

40 HENRY: Chale, ¿qué traes?^o Listen, you want to go out to the Sleepy Lagoon? I've got something to tell you.

DELLA: What?

HENRY: Later, later.

LUPE: You better tell Rudy to stop drinking.

45 HENRY: Relax, sis. If he gets too drunk, I'll carry him home. (Music picks up again. El Pachuco sings a third verse.)

PACHUCO: TOCAN MAMBO SABROSÓN
SE ALBOROTA EL CORAZÓN
Y CON UNA CHAVALONA VAMOS
VAMOS A BAILAR EL MAMBO^o

(The Couples do the mambo. In the background, Rudy gets into an argument with Rafas, the leader of the Downey Gang. A fight breaks out as the music comes to a natural break. Rafas pushes Rudy, half drunk, onto the floor.)

50 RAFAS: ¡Y a ti qué te importa, puto!

RUDY (he falls): ¡Cabrón!

HENRY (reacting immediately): Hey!

(The whole dance crowd tenses up immediately, splitting into separate camps. Batos from 38th clearly outnumber the Guys from Downey.)

RAFAS: He started it, ese. El comenzó a chingar conmigo.^o

55 RUDY: You chicken shit, ese! Tú me haces la puñeta, ¡pirujol!

RAFAS: Come over here and say that, puto!

HENRY (pulling Rudy behind him): ¡Agüítala, carnal!^o
(Faces Rafas.) You're a little out of your territory, ¿que no Rafas?

RAFAS: It's a barrio dance, ese. We're from the barrio. 60

HENRY: You're from Downey.

RAFAS: Vale madre.^o ¡Downey Rifa!

DOWNEY GANG: ¡SIMÓN!

RAFAS: What are you going to do about it?

HENRY: I'm going to kick your ass. 65

(The Two Sides start to attack each other.)

¡Cálmenla!

(All stop.)

RAFAS (pulls out a switchblade): You and how many batos?

HENRY: Just me and you, cabrón. That's my carnalillo you started pushing around, see? And nobody chinga 70 con mi familia^o without answering to me, ese! Hank Reyna! (He pulls out another switchblade.)

BERTHA: ALL-RIGHT!

HENRY: Let's see if you can push me around like you did my little brother, ese. Come on . . . COME ON! 75

(They knife fight. Henry moves in fast. Recoiling, Rafas falls to the floor. Henry's blade is at his throat. El Pachuco snaps his fingers. Everyone freezes.)

Pachuco: Qué mamada,^o Hank. That's exactly what the play needs right now. Two more Mexicans killing each other. Watcha . . . Everybody's looking at you.

HENRY (looks out at the audience): Don't give me that bullshit. Either I kill him or he kills me. 80

PACHUCO: That's exactly what they paid to see. Think about it.

(El Pachuco snaps again. Everybody unfreezes.)

HENRY (kicks Rafas): Get out of here. ¡Pintate!

BERTHA: What?

GÜERA (Rafas's girlfriend runs forward): Rafas. ¡Vámonos!^o (She is stopped by other Downey batos.) 85

RAFAS: Está suave.^o I'll see you later.

HENRY: Whenever you want, cabrón.

(The Downey Gang retreats, as the 38th razzes them all the way out. Insults are exchanged. Bertha shouts "¡Chinga tu madre!" and they are gone. The 38th whoops in victory.)

SMILEY: Órale, you did it, ese! ¡Se escamaron todos!

TOMMY: We sure chased those jotos out of here. 90

BERTHA: I could have beat the shit out of those two rucas.^o

57. ¡Agüítala, carnal!: Calm down, brother! 62. Vale madre: That doesn't mean anything. 70-71. chinga con mi familia: (Vulgar term) with my family. 76. Qué mamada: What stupidity. 83. ¡Pintate!: Scram! 85-86. ¡Vámonos!: Let's go! 87. Está suave: That's cool. 89. ¡Se escamaron todos!: They all got scared! 92. rucas: Homegirls.

23-26. CUANDO . . . DANSÓN!: When I go to the fiesta / And I get to the dancehall / The girls yell, Daddy come / We are going to dance the dansón! 39. Chale, ¿qué traes?: No, what's bothering you? 46-49. TOCAN . . . MAMBO: They play mambo deliciously / The heart falls in love (gets excited) / With a sweetheart we go / We go to dance the mambo. 50. ¡Y . . . puto!: And what does it matter to you, male prostitute? 53. El comenzó . . . conmigo: He started to fight with me. 54-55. Tú me . . . ¡pirujol!: I'm better than you are, homosexual (derogatory)!

JOEY: That pinche° Rafas is yellow without his gang, ese.

95 LUPE: So why didn't you jump out there?

JOEY: Chale, Rudy ain't my baby brother.

RUDY (*drunk*): Who you calling a baby, pendejo? I'll show you who's a baby!

JOEY: Be cool, ese.

100 TOMMY: Man, you're lucky your brother was here.

BERTHA: Why? He didn't do nothing. The old Hank would have slit Rafas' belly like a fat pig.

HENRY: Shut your mouth, Bertha!

105 RUDY: ¿Por qué, carnal?° You backed down, ese. I could have taken that sucker on by myself.

HENRY: That's enough, Rudy. You're drunk.

DELLA: Hank, what if Rafas comes back with all his gang?

110 HENRY (*reclaiming his leadership*): We'll kill the sons of bitches.

JOEY: ¡Órale! ¡La 38th rifa!°

(*Music. Everybody gets back with furious energy. El Pachuco sings.*)

PACHUCO: DE LOS BAILES QUE MENTÉ

Y EL BOLERO Y EL BEGUÍN

115 DE TODOS LOS BAILES JUNTOS
ME GUSTA BAILAR EL SWING! HEY!°

(*The dance ends with a group exclamation: HEY!*)

Scene 8. *El Día de la Raza*

(*The Press enters upstage level, pushing a small hand truck piled high with newspaper bundles. The batos and rucas on the dance floor freeze in their final dance positions. El Pachuco is the only one who relaxes and moves.*)

PRESS: October 12, 1942: Columbus Day. Four Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Discovery of America. Headlines!

(*In their places, the Couples now stand straight and recite a headline before exiting. As they do so, the Press moves the bundles of newspapers on the floor to outline the four corners of a jail cell.*)

5 SMILEY/ELENA: President Roosevelt Salutes Good Neighbors In Latin America.

(*Smiley and Elena exit.*)

TOMMY/LUPE: British Begin Drive to Oust Rommel From North Africa.

93. pinche: Damned. 104. ¿Por qué, carnal?: Why, brother? 111. ¡Órale! ¡La 38th rifa!: Right on! The 38th (street gang) rules! 112-15. DE LOS . . . HEY!: Of the dances that I mentioned / And the bolero and the beguine / Of all the dances joined together / I like to dance swing! Hey!

(*Tommy and Lupe exit.*)

RUDY/CHOLO: Japs In Death Grip On Pacific Isles.

(*Rudy and Cholo exit. Press tosses another bundle.*)

ZOOTER/LITTLE BLUE: Web Of Zoot Crime Spreads.

(*Zooter and Little Blue exit.*)

10 MANCHUKA/SWABBIE: U.S. Marines Land Bridgehead On Guadalcanal.

(*Manchuka and Swabbie exit.*)

JOEY/BERTHA: First Mexican Braceros Arrive in U.S.A.

(*Joey and Bertha exit.*)

DELLA: Sleepy Lagoon Murder Trial Opens Tomorrow.

(*Della and the Press exit. As they exit, George and Alice enter upstage left. Henry is center, in a "cell" outlined by four newspaper bundles left by the Press.*)

15 GEORGE: Henry? How you doing, son? Listen, I've brought somebody with me that wants very much to meet you. I thought you wouldn't mind.

(*Alice crosses to Henry.*)

ALICE: Hello! My name is Alice Bloomfield and I'm a reporter from the *Daily People's World*.

20 GEORGE: And . . . And I might add, a red hot member of the ad hoc committee that's fighting for you guys.

ALICE: Oh, George! I'd hardly call it fighting, for Pete's sake. This struggle has just barely begun. But we're sure going to win it, aren't we, Henry?

HENRY: I doubt it.

25 GEORGE: Oh come on, Henry. How about it, son? You all set for tomorrow? Anything you need, anything I can get for you?

HENRY: Yeah. What about the clean clothes you promised me? I can't go to court looking like this.

30 GEORGE: You mean they didn't give them to you?

HENRY: What?

GEORGE: Your mother dropped them off two days ago. Clean pants, shirt, socks, underwear, the works. I cleared it with the Sheriff last week.

HENRY: They haven't given me nothing.

35 GEORGE: I'm beginning to smell something around here.

HENRY: Look, George, I don't like being like this. I ain't dirty. Go do something, man!

40 GEORGE: Calm down. Take it easy, son. I'll check on it right now. Oh! Uh, Alice?

ALICE: I'll be okay, George.

GEORGE: I'll be right back. (*He exits.*)

ALICE (*pulling out a pad and pencil*): Now that I have you all to myself, mind if I ask you a couple of questions?

45 HENRY: I got nothing to say.

ALICE: How do you know? I haven't asked you anything yet. Relax. I'm from the progressive press. Okay?

(*Henry stares at her, not knowing quite how to react. Alice sits on a bundle and crosses her goodlooking legs. Henry concentrates on that.*)

Now. The regular press is saying the Pachuco Crime Wave is fascist inspired — any thoughts about that?

HENRY (*bluntly*): No.

ALICE: What about the American Japanese? Is it true they are directing the subversive activities of the pachucos from inside the relocation camps?

(*Henry turns to The Pachuco with a questioning look.*)

PACHUCO: This one's all yours, ese.

HENRY: Look, lady, I don't know what the hell you're talking about.

ALICE: I'm talking about you, Henry Reyna. And what the regular press has been saying. Are you aware you're in here just because some bigshot up in San Simeon wants to sell more papers? It's true.

HENRY: So?

ALICE: So, he's the man who started this Mexican Crime Wave stuff. Then the police got into the act. Get the picture? Somebody is using you as a patsy.

HENRY (*his machismo insulted*): Who you calling a patsy?

ALICE: I'm sorry, but it's true.

HENRY (*backing her up*): What makes you so god-damned smart?

ALICE (*starting to get scared and trying not to show it*): I'm a reporter. It's my business to know.

PACHUCO: Puro pedo. She's just a dumb broad only good for you know what.

HENRY: Look, Miss Bloomfield, just leave me alone, all right?

(*Henry moves away. Alice takes a deep breath.*)

ALICE: Look, let's back up and start all over, okay? Hello. My name is Alice Bloomfield, and I'm not a reporter. I'm just somebody that wants very much to be your friend. (*Pause. With sincere feeling.*) Can you believe that?

HENRY: Why should I?

ALICE: Because I'm with you.

HENRY: Oh, yeah? Then how come you ain't in jail with me?

ALICE (*holding her head up*): We are all in jail, Henry. Some of us just don't know it.

PACHUCO: Mmm, pues. No comment.

(*Pause. Henry stares at her, trying to figure her out. Alice tries a softer approach.*)

ALICE: Believe it or not, I was born in Los Angeles just like you. But for some strange reason I grew up here, not knowing very much about Mexicans at all. I'm just trying to learn.

HENRY (*intrigued, but cynical*): What?

ALICE: Little details. Like that tattooed cross on your hand. Is that the sign of the pachuco?

(*Henry covers his right hand with an automatic reflex, then he realizes what he has done.*)

HENRY (*smiles to himself, embarrassed*): Órale.

ALICE: Did I embarrass you? I'm sorry. Your mother happened to mention it.

HENRY (*surprised*): My mother? You talked to my jefita?

ALICE (*with enthusiasm*): Yes! And your father and Lupe and Rudy. The whole family gave me a helluva interview. But your mother was sensational. I especially liked her story about the midnight raid. How the police rushed into your house with drawn guns, looking for you on some trumped up charge, and how your father told them you were already in jail . . . God, I would have paid to have seen the cops' faces. 100

HENRY (*hiding his sentiment*): Don't believe anything my jefa tells you. (*Then quickly.*) There's a lot she doesn't know. I'm no angel.

ALICE: I'll just bet you're not. But you have been taken in for suspicion a dozen times, kept in jail for a few days, then released for lack of evidence. And it's all stayed on your juvenile record. 105

HENRY: Yeah, well I ain't no punk, see.

ALICE: I know. You're an excellent mechanic. And you fix all the guys' cars. Well, at least you're not one of the lumpen proletariat. 110

HENRY: The lumpen what?

ALICE: Skip it. Let's just say you're a classic social victim.

HENRY: Bullshit. 115

ALICE (*pause. A serious question*): Are you saying you're guilty?

HENRY: Of what?

ALICE: The Sleepy Lagoon Murder.

HENRY: What if I am? 120

ALICE: Are you?

HENRY (*pause, a serious answer*): Chale. I've pulled a lot of shit in my time, but I didn't do that.

(*George re-enters flushed and angry, trying to conceal his frustration.*)

GEORGE: Henry, I'm sorry, but dammit, something's coming off here, and the clothes have been withheld. I'll have to bring it up in court. 130

HENRY: In court?

GEORGE: They've left me no choice.

ALICE: What's going on?

HENRY: It's a set up, George. Another lousy set up! 135

GEORGE: It's just the beginning, son. Nobody said this was going to be a fair fight. Well, if they're going to fight dirty, so am I. Legally, but dirty. Trust me.

ALICE (*passionately*): Henry, no matter what happens in the trial, I want you to know I believe you're innocent. Remember that when you look out, and it looks like some sort of lynch mob. Some of us . . . a lot of us . . . are right there with you. 140

GEORGE: Okay, Alice, let's scram. I've got a million things to do. Henry, see you tomorrow under the big top, son. Good luck, son. 145

ALICE: Thumbs up, Henry, we're going to beat this rap!

(*Alice and George exit. El Pachuco watches them go, then turns to Henry.*)

PACHUCO: "Thumbs up, Henry, we're going to beat this rap." You really think you're going to beat this one, ese? 150

HENRY: I don't want to think about it.

PACHUCO: You've got to think about it, Hank. Everybody's playing you for a sucker. Wake up, carnal!

155 HENRY: Look, bato, what the hell do you expect me to do?

PACHUCO: Hang tough. (*Grabs his scrotum.*) Stop going soft.

HENRY: Who's going soft?

160 PACHUCO (*incisively*): You're hoping for something that isn't going to happen, ese. These paddies are leading you by the nose. Do you really believe you stand a chance?

HENRY (*stubborn all the more*): Yeah. I think I got a chance.

165 PACHUCO: Just because that white broad says so?

HENRY: Nel, ese, just because Hank Reyna says so.

PACHUCO: The classic social victim, eh?

170 HENRY (*furious but keeping his cool*): Mira, ese. Hank Reyna's no loser. I'm coming out of this on top. ¿Me entiendes,° Mendez? (*He walks away with a pachuco gait.*)

PACHUCO (*forcefully*): Don't try to out-pachuco ME, ese! We'll see who comes out on top. (*He picks up a bundle of newspapers and throws it upstage center. It lands with a thud.*) Let's go to court!

Scene 9. Opening of the Trial

(*Music. The Judge's bench, made up of more newspaper bundles piled squarely on a four-wheeled hand truck is pushed in by the batos. The Press rides it in, holding the State and Federal Flags. A Bailiff puts in place a hand cart: the Judge's throne. From the sides, spectators enter, including Henry's family and friends: Alice, Della, Bertha, Elena.*)

5 PRESS: The largest mass trial in the history of Los Angeles County opens this morning in the Superior Court at ten A.M. The infamous Sleepy Lagoon Murder case involves sixty-six charges against twenty-two defendants with seven lawyers pleading for the defense, two for the prosecution. The District Attorney estimates that over a hundred witnesses will be called and has sworn — I quote — "to put an end to Mexican baby gangsterism." End quote.

10 BAILIFF (*bangs a gavel on the bench*): The Superior Court of the State of California. In and For the County of Los Angeles. Department forty-three. The honorable F. W. Charles, presiding. All rise!

(*Judge Charles enters. All rise. El Pachuco squats. The Judge is played by the same actor that portrays Edwards.*)

JUDGE: Please be seated.

169-170. ¿Me entiendes: You understand me?

(*All sit. Pachuco stands.*)

Call this case, Bailiff.

15 BAILIFF (*reading from a sheet*): The people of the State of California Versus Henry Reyna, Ismael Torres, Thomas Roberts, Jose Castro and eighteen other . . . (*slight hesitation*) . . . pa-coo-cos.

JUDGE: Is Counsel for the Defense present?

20 GEORGE (*rises*): Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE: Please proceed. (*Signals the Press.*)

PRESS: Your Honor . . .

25 GEORGE (*moving in immediately*): If the Court please, it was reported to me on Friday that the District Attorney has absolutely forbidden the Sheriff's Office to permit these boys to have clean clothes or haircuts. Now, it's been three months since the boys were arrested . . .

30 PRESS (*jumping in*): Your Honor, there is testimony we expect to develop that the 38th Street Gang are characterized by their style of haircuts . . .

GEORGE: Three months, Your Honor.

35 PRESS: . . . the thick heavy heads of hair, the ducktail comb, the pachuco pants . . .

GEORGE: Your Honor, I can only infer that the Prosecution . . . is trying to make these boys look disreputable, like mobsters.

PRESS: Their appearance is distinctive, Your Honor. Essential to the case.

40 GEORGE: You are trying to exploit the fact that these boys look foreign in appearance! Yet clothes like these are being worn by kids all over America.

PRESS: Your Honor . . .

45 JUDGE (*bangs the gavel*): I don't believe we will have any difficulty if their clothing becomes dirty.

GEORGE: What about the haircuts, Your Honor?

50 JUDGE (*ruling*): The zoot haircuts will be retained throughout the trial for purposes of identification of defendants by witnesses.

PACHUCO: You hear that one, ese? Listen to it again.

(*Snaps. Judge repeats automatically.*)

JUDGE: The zoot haircuts will be retained throughout the trial for purposes of identification of defendants by witnesses.

55 PACHUCO: He wants to be sure we know who you are.

JUDGE: It has been brought to my attention the Jury is having trouble telling one boy from another, so I am going to rule the defendants stand each time their names are mentioned.

60 GEORGE: I object. If the Prosecution makes an accusation, it will mean self-incrimination.

JUDGE (*pause*): Not necessarily. (*To Press.*) Please proceed.

65 GEORGE (*still trying to set the stage*): Then if the Court please, might I request that my clients be allowed to sit with me during the trial so that I might consult with them?

JUDGE: Request denied.

70 GEORGE: May I inquire of Your Honor, if the defendant Thomas Robert might rise from his seat and walk over to counsel table so as to consult with me during the trial?

JUDGE: I certainly will not permit it.

GEORGE: You will not?

75 JUDGE: No. This is a small courtroom, Mr. Shearer. We can't have twenty-two defendants all over the place.

GEORGE: Then I object. On the grounds that that is a denial of the rights guaranteed all defendants by both the federal and state constitutions.

80 JUDGE: Well, that is your opinion. (*Gavel.*) Call your first witness.

PRESS: The prosecution calls Lieutenant Sam Edwards of the Los Angeles Police Department.

85 PACHUCO (*snaps, does double take on Judge*): You know what. We've already heard from that bato. Let's get on with the defense.

(*Snaps. Press sits. George stands.*)

GEORGE: The defense calls Adela Barrios.

BAILIFF (*calling out*): Adeela Barreos to the stand.

(*Della Barrios comes forth out of the spectators. Bertha leans forward.*)

BERTHA (*among the spectators*): Don't tell 'em nothing.

(*The Bailiff swears in Della silently.*)

90 PACHUCO: Look at your gang. They do look like mobsters. Se watchan bien gachos.¹

(*Henry looks at the batos, who are sprawled out in their places.*)

HENRY (*under his breath*): Come on, Batos, sit up.

SMILEY: We're tired, Hank.

JOEY: My butt is sore.

95 TOMMY: Yeah, look at the soft chairs the jury's got.

HENRY: What did you expect? They're trying to make us look bad. Come on! Straighten up.

SMILEY: Simón, batos, Hank is right.

JOEY: ¡Más alba nalga!²

100 TOMMY: Put some class on your ass.

HENRY: Sit up! (*They all sit up.*)

GEORGE: State your name please.

DELLA: Adela Barrios. (*She sits.*)

GEORGE: Miss Barrios, were you with Henry Reyna on the night of August 1, 1942?

DELLA: Yes.

JUDGE (*to Henry*): Please stand.

(*Henry stands.*)

GEORGE: Please tell the court what transpired that night.

DELLA (*pause, takes a breath*): Well, after the dance that Saturday night, Henry and I drove out to the Sleepy Lagoon about eleven-thirty.

Scene 10. Sleepy Lagoon

(*Music: THE HARRY JAMES THEME. El Pachuco creates the scene. The light changes. We see a shimmering pattern of light on the floor growing to the music. It becomes the image of the Lagoon. As the music soars to a trumpet solo, Henry reaches out to Della, and she glides to her feet.*)

DELLA: There was a full moon that night, and as we drove up to the Lagoon we noticed right away the place was empty . . .

(*A pair of headlights silently pulls in from the black background upstage center.*)

Henry parked the car on the bank of the reservoir and we relaxed. 5

(*Headlights go off.*)

It was such a warm, beautiful night, and the sky was so full of stars, we couldn't just sit in the car. So we got out, and Henry took my hand . . .

(*Henry stands and takes Della's hand.*)

We went for a walk around the Lagoon. Neither of us said anything at first, so the only sounds we could hear were the crickets and the frogs . . . 10

(*Sounds of crickets and frogs, then music faintly in the background.*)

When we got to the other side of the reservoir, we began to hear music, so I asked Henry, what's that?

HENRY: Sounds like they're having a party.

DELLA: Where? 15

HENRY: Over at the Williams' Ranch. See the house lights.

DELLA: Who lives there?

HENRY: A couple of families. Mexicanos. I think they work on the ranch. You know, their name used to be 20 Gonzales, but they changed it to Williams.

DELLA: Why?

HENRY: I don't know. Maybe they think it gives 'em more class.

(*We hear Mexican music.*)

Ay, jijo.³ They're probably celebrating a wedding or something. 25

DELLA: As soon as he said wedding, he stopped talking and we both knew why. He had something on his mind, something he was trying to tell me without sounding like a square. 30

HENRY: Della . . . what are you going to do if I don't come back from the war?

DELLA: That wasn't the question I was expecting, so I answered something dumb, like I don't know, what's going to keep you from coming back? 35

1, 9. 91. Se watchan bien gachos: They look like real bad guys.

99. ¡Más alba nalga!: Sit up (literally, more alert rump)!

1, 10. 25. Ay, jijo: Heavens.

HENRY: Maybe wanting too much out of life, see? Ever since I was a kid, I've had this feeling like there's a big party going on someplace, and I'm invited, but I don't know how to get there. And I want to get there so bad, I'll even risk my life to make it. Sounds crazy, huh?

(Della and Henry kiss. They embrace and then Henry speaks haltingly.)

If I get back from the war . . . will you marry me?

DELLA: Yes! *(She embraces him and almost causes them to topple over.)*

HENRY: ¡Órale! You'll knock us into the Lagoon. Listen, what about your old man? He ain't going to like you marrying me.

DELLA: I know. But I don't care. I'll go to hell with you if you want me to.

HENRY: ¿Sabes qué?° I'm going to give you the biggest pachuco wedding L.A. has ever seen.

(Another pair of headlights comes in from the left. Della goes back to her narration.)

DELLA: Just then another car pulled up to the Lagoon. It was Rafas and some drunk guys in a gang from Downey. They got out and started to bust the windows on Henry's car. Henry yelled at them, and they started cussing at us. I told Henry not to say anything, but he cussed them back!

HENRY: You stay here, Della.

DELLA: Henry, no! Don't go down there! Please don't go down there!

HENRY: Can't you hear what they're doing to my car?

DELLA: There's too many of them. They'll kill you!

HENRY: ¡Chale!

(Henry turns and runs upstage, where he stops in a freeze.)

DELLA: Henry! Henry ran down the back of the Lagoon and attacked the gang by himself. Rafas had about ten guys with him and they jumped on Henry like a pack of dogs. He fought them off as long as he could, then they threw him on the ground hard and kicked him until he passed out . . .

(Headlights pull off.)

After they left, I ran down to Henry and held him in my arms until he came to. And I could tell he was hurt, but the first thing he said was . . .

PACHUCO: Let's go into town and get the guys.

(Music: Glen Miller's "In the Mood." Henry turns to the batos and they stand. Smiley, Joey, and Tommy are joined by Rudy, Bertha, Lupe, and Elena, who enter from the side. They turn downstage in a body and freeze.)

49. ¿Sabes qué?: You know what?

DELLA: It took us about an hour to go into town and come back. We got to the Lagoon with about eight cars, but the Downey gang wasn't there.

JOEY: Órale, ¿pos qué pasó?° Nobody here.

SMILEY: Then let's go to Downey.

THE BOYS *(ad lib)*: Let's go!

HENRY: ¡Chale! ¡Chale!

(Pause. They all stop.)

Ya estuvo.° Everybody go home.

(A collective groan from The Boys.)

Go home!

DELLA: That's when we heard music coming from the Williams' Ranch again. We didn't know Rafas and his gang had been there too, causing trouble. So when Joey said . . .

JOEY: Hey, there's a party! Bertha, let's crash it.

DELLA: We all went there yelling and laughing.

(The group of batos turns upstage in a mimetic freeze.)

At the Williams' Ranch they saw us coming and thought we were the Downey Gang coming back again . . . They attacked us.

(The group now mimes a series of tableaux showing the fight.)

An old man ran out of the house with a kitchen knife and Henry had to hit him. Then a girl grabbed me by the hair and in a second everybody was fighting! People were grabbing sticks from the fence, bottles, anything! It all happened so fast, we didn't know what hit us, but Henry said let's go!

HENRY: ¡Vámonos!° Let's get out of here.

DELLA: And we started to back off . . . Before we got to the cars, I saw something out of the corner of my eye . . . It was a guy. He was hitting a man on the ground with a big stick.

(El Pachuco mimes this action.)

Henry called to him, but he wouldn't stop. He wouldn't stop . . . He wouldn't stop . . . He wouldn't stop . . .

(Della in tears, holds Henry in her arms. The batos and rucas start moving back to their places, quietly.)

Driving back in the car, everybody was quiet, like nothing had happened. We didn't know José Williams had died at the party that night and that the guys would be arrested the next day for murder.

(Henry separates from her and goes back to stand in his place. Della resumes the witness stand.)

76. Órale, ¿pos qué pasó?: Hey man, well what happened?
80. Ya estuvo: That's enough. 97. ¡Vámonos!: Let's go!

Scene 11. *The Conclusion of the Trial*

(Lights change back to courtroom, as Judge Charles bangs his gavel. Everyone is seated back in place.)

GEORGE: Your witness.

PRESS (springing to the attack): You say Henry Reyna hit the man with his fist. (Indicates Henry standing.) Is this the Henry Reyna?

DELLA: Yes. I mean, no. He's Henry, but he didn't . . .

PRESS: Please be seated.

(Henry sits.)

Now, after Henry Reyna hit the old man with his closed fist, is that when he pulled the knife?

DELLA: The old man had the knife.

PRESS: So Henry pulled one out, too?

GEORGE (rises): Your Honor, I object to counsel leading the witness.

PRESS: I am not leading the witness.

GEORGE: You are.

PRESS: I certainly am not.

GEORGE: Yes, you are.

JUDGE: I would suggest, Mr. Shearer, that you look up during the noon hour just what a leading question is.

GEORGE: If the Court please, I am going to assign that remark of Your Honor as misconduct.

JUDGE (to Press): Proceed.

(George crosses back to his chair.)

PRESS: Where was Smiley Torres during all this? Is it not true that Smiley Torres grabbed a woman by the hair and kicked her to the ground? Will Smiley Torres please stand? (Smiley stands.) Is this the man?

DELLA: Yes, it's Smiley, but he . . .

PRESS: Please be seated.

(Smiley sits. Press picks up a two-by-four.)

Wasn't José Castro carrying a club of some kind?

GEORGE (on his feet again): Your Honor, I object! No such club was ever found. The Prosecution is implying that this two-by-four is associated with my client in some way.

PRESS: I'm not implying anything, Your Honor, I'm merely using this stick as an illustration.

JUDGE: Objection overruled.

PRESS: Will José Castro please stand?

(Joey stands.)

Is this the man who was carrying a club?

(Della refuses to answer.)

Answer the question please.

DELLA: I refuse.

PRESS: You are under oath. You can't refuse.

JUDGE: Answer the question, young lady.

DELLA: I refuse.

PRESS: Is this the man you saw hitting another man with a two-by-four? Your Honor . . .

JUDGE: I order you to answer the question. 45

GEORGE: Your Honor, I object. The witness is obviously afraid her testimony will be manipulated by the Prosecution.

PRESS: May I remind the court that we have a signed confession from one José Castro taken while in jail . . . 50

GEORGE: I object. Those were not confessions! Those are statements. They are false and untrue, Your Honor, obtained through beatings and coercion of the defendants by the police!

JUDGE: I believe the technical term is admissions, Mr. Prosecutor. Objection sustained. 55

(Applause from spectators.)

At the next outburst, I will clear this courtroom. Go on, Mr. Prosecutor.

PRESS: Sit down please.

(Joey sits. George goes back to his seat.)

Is Henry Reyna the leader of the 38th Street Gang? 60

(Henry stands.)

DELLA: Not in the sense that you mean.

PRESS: Did Henry Reyna, pachuco ringleader of the 38th Street Gang, willfully murder José Williams?

DELLA: No. They attacked us first.

PRESS: I didn't ask for your comment. 65

DELLA: But they did, they thought we were the Downey gang.

PRESS: Just answer my questions.

DELLA: We were just defending ourselves so we could get out of there. 70

PRESS: Your Honor, will you instruct the witness to be cooperative.

JUDGE: I must caution you, young lady, answer the questions or I'll hold you in contempt.

PRESS: Was this the Henry Reyna who was carrying a three-foot lead pipe? 75

GEORGE: I object!

JUDGE: Overruled.

DELLA: No.

PRESS: Was it a two-foot lead pipe? 80

GEORGE: Objection!

JUDGE: Overruled.

DELLA: No!

PRESS: Did he kick a woman to the ground?

DELLA: No, he was hurt from the beating. 85

PRESS: Sit down.

(Henry sits.)

Did Tommy Roberts rip stakes from a fence and hit a man on the ground?

GEORGE: Objection!

JUDGE: Overruled. 90

DELLA: I never saw him do anything.

PRESS: Did Joey Castro have a gun?

GEORGE: Objection!

JUDGE: Overruled.

(Joey stands.)

95 PRESS: Sit down.

(Joey sits.)

Did Henry Reyna have a blackjack in his hand?

(Henry stands.)

DELLA: No.

PRESS: A switchblade knife?

DELLA: No.

100 PRESS: A two-by-four?

DELLA: No.

PRESS: Did he run over to José Williams, hit him on the head, and kill him?

DELLA: He could barely walk, how could he run to any place?

105 PRESS (moving in for the kill): Did Smiley Torres?

(The batos stand and sit as their names are mentioned.)

Did Joey Castro? Did Tommy Roberts? Did Henry Reyna? Did Smiley Torres? Did Henry Reyna? Did Henry Reyna? Did Henry Reyna kill José Williams?!

110 DELLA: No, no, no!

GEORGE (on his feet again): Your Honor, I object! The Prosecution is pulling out objects from all over the place, none of which were found at Sleepy Lagoon, and none of which have been proven to be associated with my clients in any way.

115 JUDGE: Overruled.

GEORGE: If Your Honor please, I wish to make an assignment of misconduct!

120 JUDGE: We have only had one this morning. We might as well have another now.

GEORGE: You have it, Your Honor.

JUDGE: One more remark like that and I'll hold you in contempt. Quite frankly, Mr. Shearer, I am getting rather tired of your repeated useless objections.

125 GEORGE: I have not made useless objections.

JUDGE: I am sorry. Somebody is using ventriloquism. We have a Charlie McCarthy using Mr. Shearer's voice.

GEORGE: I am going to assign that remark of Your Honor as misconduct.

130 JUDGE: Fine. I would feel rather bad if you did not make an assignment of misconduct at least three times every session. (Gavel.) Witness is excused.

(Della stands.)

However, I am going to remand her to the custody of the Ventura State School for Girls for a period of one year . . .

135 HENRY: What?

JUDGE: . . . to be held there as a juvenile ward of the State. Bailiff?

GEORGE: If the court please . . . If the court please . . .

(Bailiff crosses to Della and takes her off left.)

140 JUDGE: Court is in recess until tomorrow morning.

(Judge retires. Press exits. Henry meets George halfway across center stage. The rest of the batos stand and stretch in the background.)

GEORGE: Now, Henry, I want you to listen to me, please. You've got to remember he's the judge, Hank. And this is his courtroom.

HENRY: But he's making jokes, George, and we're getting screwed!

GEORGE: I know. I can't blame you for being bitter, but believe me, we'll get him.

HENRY: I thought you said we had a chance.

GEORGE (passionately): We do! This case is going to be won on appeal.

HENRY: Appeal? You mean you already know we're going to lose?

PACHUCO: So what's new?

GEORGE: Don't you see, Henry, Judge Charles is hanging himself as we go. I've cited over a hundred separate cases of misconduct by the bench, and it's all gone into the record. Prejudicial error, denial of due process, inadmissible evidence, hearsay . . .

HENRY: ¿Sabes qué, George? Don't tell me any more.

(Henry turns. Alice and Enrique approach him.)

ALICE: Henry . . . ?

HENRY (turns furiously): I don't want to hear it, Alice!

(Henry sees Enrique, but neither father nor son can think of anything to say. Henry goes back upstage.)

ALICE: George, is there anything we can do?

GEORGE: No. He's bitter, and he has a right to be.

(Judge Charles pounds his gavel. All go back to their places and sit.)

JUDGE: We'll now hear the Prosecution's concluding statement.

PRESS: Your Honor, ladies and gentlemen of the jury. What you have before you is a dilemma of our times. The City of Los Angeles is caught in the midst of the biggest, most terrifying crime wave in its history. A crime wave that threatens to engulf the very foundations of our civic well-being. We are not only dealing with the violent death of one José Williams in a drunken barrio brawl. We are dealing with a threat and danger to our children, our families, our homes. Set these pachucos free, and you shall unleash the forces of anarchy and destruction in our society. Set these pachucos free and you will turn them into heroes. Others just like them must be watching us at this very moment. What nefarious schemes can they be hatching in their twisted minds? Rape, drugs, assault, more violence? Who shall be their next innocent victim in some dark alley way, on some lonely street? You? You? Your loved ones? No! Henry Reyna and his Latin juvenile cohorts are not heroes. They are criminals, and they must be stopped. The specific details of this murder are irrelevant before the overwhelming danger of the pachuco in our

midst. I ask you to find these zoot-suited gangsters guilty of murder and to put them in the gas chamber where they belong.

(*The Press sits down. George rises and takes center stage.*)

GEORGE: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have heard me object to the conduct of this trial. I have tried my best to defend what is most precious in our American society — a society now at war against the forces of racial intolerance and totalitarian injustice. The prosecution has not provided one witness that actually saw, with his own eyes, who actually murdered José Williams. These boys are not the Downey gang, yet the evidence suggests that they were attacked because the people at the ranch thought they were. Henry Reyna and Della Barrios were victims of the same bunch. Yes, they might have been spoiling for a revenge — who wouldn't under the circumstances — but not with the intent to conspire to commit murder. So how did José Williams die? Was it an accident? Was it manslaughter? Was it murder? Perhaps we may never know. All the prosecution has been able to prove is that these boys wear long hair and zoot suits. And all the rest has been circumstantial evidence, hearsay, and war hysteria. The prosecution has tried to lead you to believe that they are some kind of inhuman gangsters. Yet they are Americans. Find them guilty of anything more serious than a juvenile bout of fisticuffs, and you will condemn all American youth. Find them guilty of murder, and you will murder the spirit of racial justice in America. (*George sits down.*)

JUDGE: The jury will retire to consider its verdict.

(*The Press stands and starts to exit with the Bailiff. El Pachuco snaps. All freeze.*)

PACHUCO: Chale. Let's have it.

(*Snaps again. The Press turns and comes back again.*)

JUDGE: Has the jury reached a verdict?

PRESS: We have, Your Honor.

JUDGE: How say you?

PRESS: We find the defendants guilty of murder in the first and second degrees.

JUDGE: The defendants will rise.

(*The batos come to their feet.*)

Henry Reyna, José Castro, Thomas Roberts, Ismael Torres, and so forth. You have been tried by a jury of your peers and found guilty of murder in the first and second degrees. The Law prescribes the capital punishment for this offense. However, in view of your youth and in consideration of your families, it is hereby the judgment of this court that you be sentenced to life imprisonment . . .

RUDY: No!

JUDGE: . . . and sent to the State Penitentiary at San Quentin. Court adjourned.

(*Gavel. Judge exits. Dolores, Enrique, and family go to Henry. Bertha crosses to Joey; Lupe goes to Tommy. Elena crosses to Smiley. George and Alice talk.*)

DOLORES: ¡Hijo mío! ¡Hijo de mi alma!°

(*Bailiff comes down with a pair of handcuffs.*)

BAILIFF: Okay, boys.

(*He puts the cuffs on Henry. Rudy comes up.*)

RUDY: ¿Carnal?

(*Henry looks at the Bailiff, who gives him a nod of permission to spend a moment with Rudy. Henry embraces him with the cuffs on. George and Alice approach.*)

GEORGE: Henry? I can't pretend to know how you feel, son. I just want you to know that our fight has just begun. 240

ALICE: We may have lost this decision, but we're going to appeal immediately. We're going to stand behind you until your name is absolutely clear. I swear it! 245

PACHUCO: What the hell are they going to do, ese? They just sent you to prison for life. Once a Mexican goes in, he never comes out.

BAILIFF: Boys?

(*The Boys exit with the Bailiff. As they go Enrique calls after them.*)

ENRIQUE (*holding back tears*): Hijo. Be a man, hijo. 250
(*Then to his family.*) Vámonos . . . ¡Vámonos!

(*The family leaves and El Pachuco slowly walks to center stage.*)

Pachuco: We're going to take a short break right now, so you can all go out and take a leak, smoke a frajo. Ahí los watcho.

(*He exits up center and the newspaper backdrop comes down.*)

ACT 2 • Prologue

(*Lights up and El Pachuco emerges from the shadows. The newspaper drop is still down. Music.*)

PACHUCO: Watchamos pachucos

los batos°

the dudes

street-corner warriors who fought and moved

like unknown soldiers in wars of their own

El Pueblo de Los was the battle zone

from Sleepy Lagoon to the Zoot Suit wars

when Marines and Sailors made their scores

stomping like Nazis on East L.A. . . .

237. ¡Hijo mío! ¡Hijo de mi alma! My son! Son of my soul!
2, Prologue. 1-2. Watchamos . . . batos: We are watching pachucos, the dudes.

- 10 pero ¿saben qué?
That's later in the play. Let's pick it up in prison.
We'll begin this scene
inside the walls of San Quintín.

Scene 1. San Quentin

(A bell rings as the drop rises. Henry, Joey, Smiley, and Tommy enter accompanied by a Guard.)

GUARD: All right, people, lock up.

(Boys move downstage in four directions. They step into "cells" simply marked by shadows of bars on the floor in their separate places. Newspaper handcars rest on the floor as cots. Sound of cell doors closing. The Guard paces back and forth upstage level.)

HENRY: San Quentin, California
March 3, 1943

Dear Family:

- 5 Coming in from the yard in the evening, we are quickly locked up in our cells. Then the clank and locking of the doors leaves one with a rather empty feeling. You are standing up to the iron door, waiting for the guard to come along and take the count, listening as his footsteps fade away in the distance.
10 By this time there is a tense stillness that seems to crawl over the cellblock. You realize you are alone, so all alone.

PACHUCO: This all sounds rather tragic, doesn't it?

- 15 HENRY: But here comes the guard again, and he calls out your number in a loud voice . . .

GUARD *(calls numbers; Boys call name)*: 24-545

HENRY: Reyna!

GUARD: 24-546

- 20 JOEY: Castro!

GUARD: 24-547

TOMMY: Roberts!

GUARD: 24-548

SMILEY: Torres!

(Guard passes through dropping letters and exits up left.)

- 25 HENRY: You jump to your feet, stooping to pick up the letter . . .

JOEY *(excited)*: Or perhaps several letters . . .

TOMMY: You are really excited as you take the letters from the envelope.

- 30 SMILEY: The censor has already broken the seal when he reads it.

HENRY: You make a mental observation to see if you recognize the handwriting on the envelope.

SMILEY *(anxious)*: It's always nice to hear from home . . .

- 35 JOEY: Or a close comrade . . .

TOMMY: Friends that you know on the outside . . .

HENRY: Or perhaps it's from a stranger.

2, Prologue. 10. pero ¿saben qué?: But what did they know?

(Pause. Spotlight at upstage center. Alice walks in with casual clothes on. Her hair is in pigtails, and she wears a pair of drapes. She is cheerful.)

Scene 2. The Letters

Dear Boys,

Announcing the publication (mimeograph) of the Appeal News, your very own newsletter, to be sent to you twice a month for the purpose of keeping you reliably informed of everything — the progress of the Sleeping Lagoon Defense Committee (we have a name now) and, of course, the matter of your appeal.

Signed,

Your editor

Alice Bloomfield.

(Music. "Perdido" by Duke Ellington. Alice steps down and sits on the lip of the upstage level. The Boys start swinging the bat, dribbling the basketball, shadow-boxing, and exercising. Alice mimes typing movements and we hear the sounds of a typewriter. Music fades. Alice rises.)

ALICE: The Appeal News Volume I, Number I, April 7, 1943.

Boys,

You can, you must, and you will help us on the outside by what you do on the inside. Don't forget, what you do affects others. You have no control over that. When the time comes, let us be proud to show the record.

Signed,

Your editor.

(Music up again. The Boys go through their activities. Alice moves downstage center and the music fades.)

SMILEY *(stepping toward her)*: April 10, 1943

Dear Miss Bloomfield,

I have discovered from my wife that you are conducting door-to-door fund-raising campaigns in Los Angeles. She doesn't want to tell you, but she feels bad about doing such a thing. It's not our custom to go around the neighborhoods asking for money.

ALICE *(turning toward Smiley)*: Dear Smiley,

Of course, I understand your feelings . . .

SMILEY *(adamant)*: I don't want my wife going around begging.

ALICE: It isn't begging — it's fund-raising.

SMILEY: I don't care what you call it. If that's what it's going to take, count me out.

ALICE: All right. I won't bother your wife if she really doesn't want me to. Okay?

(Smiley looks at her and turns back to his upstage position. Music. The batos move again. Tommy crosses to Alice. Another fade.)

TOMMY: April 18, 1943

Dear Alice,

Trying to find the words and expression to thank you for your efforts in behalf of myself and the rest of the batos makes me realize what a meager vocabulary I possess . . .

ALICE: Dear Tommy,

Your vocabulary is just fine. Better than most.

TOMMY: Most what?

ALICE: People.

TOMMY (*glances at Henry*): Uh, listen, Alice. I don't want to be treated any different than the rest of the batos, see? And don't expect me to talk to you like some square Anglo, some pinche gabacho.² You just better find out what it means to be Chicano, and it better be pretty damn quick.

ALICE: Look, Tommy, I didn't . . .

TOMMY: I know what you're trying to do for us and that's reet, see? Shit. Most paddies would probably like to see us locked up for good. I been in jail a couple of times before, but never nothing this deep. Strange, ain't it, the trial in Los? I don't really know what happened or why. I don't give a shit what the papers said. We didn't do half the things I read about. I also know that I'm in here just because I hung around with Mexicans . . . or pachucos. Well, just remember this, Alicia . . . I grew up right alongside most of these batos, and I'm pachuco too. Simón, esa, you better believe it!

(*Music up. Movement. Tommy returns to his position. Henry stands. Alice turns toward him, but he walks over to The Pachuco, giving her his back.*)

JOEY (*stepping forward anxiously*): May 1, 1943

Dear Alice . . . Darling!

I can't help but spend my time thinking about you. How about sending us your reetra — that is, your photograph? Even though Tommy would like one of Rita Hayworth — he's always chasing Mexican skirts (Ha! Ha!) — I'd prefer to see your sweet face any day.

ALICE (*directly to him*): Dear Joey,

Thank you so much. I really appreciated receiving your letter.

JOEY: That's all reet, Grandma! You mind if I call you Grandma?

ALICE: Oh, no.

JOEY: Eres una ruca de aquellas.³

ALICE: I'm a what?

JOEY: Ruca. A fine chick.

ALICE (*pronounces the word*): Ruca?

JOEY: De aquellas. (*Makes a cool gesture, palms out at hip level.*)

ALICE (*imitating him*): De aquellas.

JOEY: All reet! You got it. (*Pause.*) P.S. Did you forget the photograph?

ALICE (*she hands it to him*): Dearest Joey,

Of course not. Here it is, attached to a copy of the Appeal News. I'm afraid it's not exactly a pin-up. 90

JOEY (*kissing the photo*): Alice, honey, you're a doll!

(*Joey shows the photo to Tommy, then Smiley, who is curious enough to come into the circle. Alice looks at Henry, but he continues to ignore her.*)

ALICE (*back at center*): The Appeal News, Volume I, Number 3, May 5, 1943.

Dear Boys,

Feeling that el Cinco de Mayo is a very appropriate day — the CIO radio program, "Our Daily Bread," is devoting the entire time this evening to a discussion of discrimination against Mexicans in general and against you guys in particular. 95

(*Music up. The repartee between Alice and the batos is now friendly and warm. Even Smiley is smiling with Alice. They check out her "drapes."*)

Scene 3. *The Incurable Pachuco*

(*Henry stands at downstage left, looks at the group, then decides to speak.*)

HENRY: May 17, 1943

Dear Miss Bloomfield,

I understand you're coming up to Q this weekend, and I would like to talk to you — in private. Can you arrange it? 5

(*The batos turn away, taking a hint.*)

ALICE (*eagerly*): Yes, yes, I can. What can I do for you, Henry?

(*Henry and Alice step forward toward each other. El Pachuco moves in.*)

HENRY: For me? ¡Ni madre!⁴

ALICE (*puzzled*): I don't understand.

HENRY: I wanted you to be the first to know, Alice. I'm dropping out of the appeal. 10

ALICE (*unbelieving*): You're what?

HENRY: I'm bailing out, esa. Dropping out of the case, see?

ALICE: Henry, you can't! 15

HENRY: Why can't I?

ALICE: Because you'll destroy our whole case! If we don't present a united front, how can we ask the public to support us?

HENRY: That's your problem. I never asked for their support. Just count me out. 20

ALICE (*getting nervous, anxious*): Henry, please, think about what you're saying. If you drop out, the rest of the boys will probably go with you. How can you even think of dropping out of the appeal? What about George and all the people that have contributed their 25

2, 2. 50. pinche gabacho: Damned Anglo (derogatory).
80. Eres . . . aquellas: You are a fine chick.

2, 3. 8. ¡Ni madre!: It doesn't matter, or, it's not worth a damn.

time and money in the past few months? You just can't quit on them!

HENRY: Oh no? Just watch me.

30 ALICE: If you felt this way, why didn't you tell me before?

HENRY: Why didn't you ask me? You think you can just move in and defend anybody you feel like? When did I ever ask you to start a defense committee for me? Or a newspaper? Or a fund-raising drive and all that other shit? I don't need defending, esa. I can take care

35 of myself.
ALICE: But what about the trial, the sentence. They gave you life imprisonment?

HENRY: It's my life!

40 ALICE: Henry, honestly — are you kidding me?

HENRY: You think so?

ALICE: But you've seen me coming and going. Writing to you, speaking for you, traveling up and down the state. You must have known I was doing it for you.

45 Nothing has come before my involvement, my attachment, my passion for this case. My boys have been everything to me.

HENRY: My boys? My boys! What the hell are we —

50 your personal property? Well, let me set you straight, lady, I ain't your boy.

ALICE: You know I never meant it that way.

HENRY: You think I haven't seen through your bullshit?

Always so concerned. Come on, boys. Speak out, boys. Stand up for your people. Well, you leave my

55 people out of this! Can't you understand that?
ALICE: No, I can't understand that.

HENRY: You're just using Mexicans to play politics.

ALICE: Henry, that's the worst thing anyone has ever said to me.

60 HENRY: Who are you going to help next — the Colored People?

ALICE: No, as a matter of fact, I've already helped the

65 Colored People. What are you going to do next — go to the gas chamber?

HENRY: What the hell do you care?

ALICE: I don't!

HENRY: Then get the hell out of here!

ALICE (*furiously*): You think you're the only one who doesn't want to be bothered? You ought to try work-

70 ing in the Sleepy Lagoon defense office for a few months. All the haggling, the petty arguments, the lack of cooperation. I've wanted to quit a thousand times. What the hell am I doing here? They're coming at me from all sides. You're too sentimental and emotional about this, Alice. You're too cold hearted,

75 Alice. You're collecting money and turning it over to the lawyers, while the families are going hungry. They're saying you can't be trusted because you're a Communist, because you're a Jew. Okay! If that's the

80 way they feel about me, then to hell with them! I hate them too. I hate their language, I hate their enchiladas, and I hate their goddamned mariachi music!

(*Pause. They look at each other. Henry smiles, then Alice — feeling foolish — and they both break out laughing.*)

HENRY: All right! Now you sound like you mean it.

ALICE: I do.

HENRY: Okay! Now we're talking straight.

ALICE: I guess I have been sounding like some square paddy chick. But, you haven't exactly been Mister Cool yourself . . . ese.

HENRY: So, let's say we're even Steven.

ALICE: Fair enough. What now?

HENRY: Why don't we bury the hatchet, you know what I mean?

ALICE: Can I tell George you'll go on with the appeal?

HENRY: Yeah. I know there's a lot of people out there who are willing and trying to help us. People who feel that our conviction was an injustice. People like George . . . and you. Well, the next time you see them, tell them Hank Reyna sends his thanks.

ALICE: Why don't you tell them?

HENRY: You getting wise with me again?

ALICE: If you write an article — and I know you can — we'll publish it in the *People's World*. What do you say?

PACHUCO: Article! Pos who told you, you could write, ese?

HENRY (*laughs*): Chale.

ALICE: I'm serious. Why don't you give it a try?

HENRY: I'll think about it. (*Pause.*) Listen, you think you and I could write each other . . . outside the news-

110 letter?

ALICE: Sure.

HENRY: Then it's a deal. (*They shake hands.*)

ALICE: I'm glad we're going to be communicating. I think we're going to be very good friends.

(*Alice lifts her hands to Henry's shoulder in a gesture of comradeship. Henry follows her hand, putting his on top of hers.*)

HENRY: You think so?

ALICE: I know so.

GUARD: Time, miss.

ALICE: I gotta go. Think about the article, okay? (*She turns to the Boys.*) I gotta go, boys.

JOEY: Goodbye, Grandma! Say hello to Bertha.

SMILEY: And to my wife!

TOMMY: Give my love to Lupe!

GUARD: Time!

ALICE: I've got to go. Goodbye, goodbye.

(*Alice exits, escorted by the Guard upstage left. As she goes, Joey calls after her.*)

JOEY: See you, Grandma.

TOMMY (*turning to Joey and Smiley*): She loves me.

PACHUCO: Have you forgotten what happened at the trial? You think the Appeals Court is any different?

Some paddy judge sitting in the same fat-ass judgment of your fate.

HENRY: Come on, ese, give me a break!

PACHUCO: One break, coming up!

(*He snaps his fingers. The Guard blows his whistle.*)

GUARD: Rec time!

(The batos move upstage to the upper level. Music. The Boys mime a game of handball against the backdrop. During the game, George enters at stage right and comes downstage carrying his briefcase. The Guard blows a whistle and stops the game.)

135 GUARD: Reyna, Castro, Roberts, Torres! — You got a visitor.

Scene 4. Major George

(The Boys turn and see George. They come down enthusiastically.)

JOEY: ¡Óra-leh! ¡Ese, Cheer!°

SMILEY: George!

GEORGE: Hi, guys!

(The Boys shake his hand, pat him on the back. Henry comes to him last.)

How are you all doing? You boys staying in shape?

5 JOEY: Ese, you're looking at the hero of the San Quentin athletic program. Right, batos? (He shadowboxes a little.)

TOMMY: Ten rounds with a busted ankle.

JOEY: ¡Simón! And I won the bout, too. I'm the terror of the flyweights, ese. The killer fly!

10 TOMMY: They got us doing everything, Cheer. Baseball, basketball.

SMILEY: Watch repairing.

GEORGE (impressed): Watch repairing?

15 SMILEY: I'm also learning to improve my English and arithmetic.

GEORGE: Warden Duffy has quite a program. I hear he's a good man?

JOEY: Simón, he's a good man. We've learned our lesson. . . . Well, anyway, I've learned my lesson, boy.

20 No more pachuquismo for me. Too many people depending on us to help out. The raza° here in Los. The whole Southwest. Mexico, South America! Like you and Grandma say, this is the people's world. If you get us out of here, I figure the only thing I could do is become a union organizer. Or go into major league baseball.

GEORGE: Baseball?

JOEY: Simón, ese. You're looking at the first Mexican Babe Ruth. Or maybe, "Babe Root." Root! You get it?

30 TOMMY: How about "Baby Zoot"?

JOEY: Solid, Jackson.

GEORGE: Babe Zooter!

JOEY: Solid tudee, that's all reet, ese.

35 GEORGE: What about you, Henry? What have you been doing?

HENRY: Time, George, I've been doing time.

TOMMY: Ain't it the truth?

SMILEY: Yeah, George! When you going to spring us out of here, ese?

HENRY: How's the appeal coming? 40

GEORGE (getting serious): Not bad. There's been a development I have to talk to you about. But other than that . . .

HENRY: Other than what?

SMILEY (pause): Bad news? 45

GEORGE (hedging): It all depends on how you look at it, Smiley. It really doesn't change anything. Work on the brief is going on practically day and night. The thing is, even with several lawyers on the case now, it'll still be several months before we file. I want to be honest about that. 50

HENRY (suspiciously): Is that the bad news?

GEORGE: Not exactly. Sit down, boys. (Pause. He laughs to himself.) I really don't mean to make such a big deal out of this thing. Fact is I'm still not quite used to the idea myself. (Pause.) You see . . . I've been drafted. 55

JOEY: Drafted?

TOMMY: Into the Army?

SMILEY: You? 60

GEORGE: That's right. I'm off to war.

JOEY: But . . . you're old, Cheer.

HENRY (a bitter edge): Why you, George? Why did they pick on you?

GEORGE: Well, Henry, I wouldn't say they "picked" on me. There's lots of men my age overseas. After all, it is war time and . . . 65

HENRY: And you're handling our appeal.

GEORGE (pause): We have other lawyers.

HENRY: But you're the one who knows the case! 70

GEORGE (pause): I knew you were going to take this hard. Believe me, Henry, my being drafted has nothing to do with your case. It's just a coincidence.

HENRY: Like our being in here for life is a coincidence?

GEORGE: No, that's another . . . 75

HENRY: Like our being hounded every goddam day of our life is a coincidence?

GEORGE: Henry . . .

(Henry turns away furiously. There is a pause.)

It's useless anger, son, believe me. Actually, I'm quite flattered by your concern, but I'm hardly indispensable. 80

HENRY (deeply disturbed): What the hell are you talking about, George?

GEORGE: I'm talking about all the people trying to get you out. Hundreds, perhaps thousands. Alice and I aren't the only ones. We've got a heck of a fine team of lawyers working on the brief. With or without me, the appeal will be won. I promise you that. 85

HENRY: It's no use, George.

GEORGE: I realize all that sounds pretty unconvincing under the circumstances, but it's true. 90

HENRY: Those bastard cops are never going to let us out of here. We're here for life and that's it.

GEORGE: You really believe that?

2, 4. 1. ¡Ese, Cheer!: Hey it's Cheer! (nickname for George).

21. raza: The race, the people, Chicanos.

95 HENRY: What do you expect me to believe?

GEORGE: I wish I could answer that, son, but that's really for you to say.

GUARD: Time, Counselor.

GEORGE: Coming. (*Turns to the other Boys.*) Listen, boys, I don't know where in the world I'll be the day your appeal is won — and it will be won — whether it's in the Pacific somewhere or in Europe or in a hole in the ground . . . Take care of yourselves.

TOMMY: See you around, George.

SMILEY: So long, George.

JOEY: 'Bye, Cheer.

GEORGE: Yeah. See you around. (*Pause.*) Goodbye, Henry. Good luck and God bless you.

HENRY: God bless you, too, George. Take care of yourself.

TOMMY: Say, George, when you come back from the war, we're going to take you outa town and blast some weed.

JOEY: We'll get you a pair of buns you can hold in your hands!

GEORGE: I may just take you up on that.

(*The Guard escorts George out, then turns back to the Boys.*)

GUARD: All right, new work assignments. Everybody report to the jute mill. Let's go.

(*Smiley, Joey, and Tommy start to exit. Henry hangs back.*)

What's the matter with you, Reyna? You got lead in your pants? I said let's go.

HENRY: We're supposed to work in the mess hall.

GUARD: You got a new assignment.

HENRY: Since when?

GUARD: Since right now. Get going!

HENRY (*hanging back*): The warden know about this?

GUARD: What the hell do you care? You think you're something special? Come on, greaseball. Move!

HENRY: Make me, you bastard!

GUARD: Oh yeah.

(*The Guard pushes Henry. Henry pushes back. The batos react, as the Guard traps Henry with his club around the chest. The Boys move to Henry's defense.*)

Back!

HENRY (*to the batos*): Back off! BACK OFF! Don't be stupid.

GUARD: Okay, Reyna, you got solitary! Bastard, huh? Into the hole!

(*He pushes Henry onto center stage. Lights down. A single spot.*)

135 Line, greaseballs. Move out!

(*As they march.*)

Quickly, quickly. You're too slow. Move, move, move.

(*The Boys exit with the Guard.*)

Scene 5. Solitary

(*A lone saxophone sets the mood.*)

PACHUCO: Too bad, ese. He set you up again.

HENRY (*long pause. He looks around*): Solitary, ese . . . they gave me solitary. (*He sits down on the floor, a forlorn figure.*)

PACHUCO: Better get used to it, carnal. That's what this stretch is going to be about, see? You're in here for life, bato. 5

HENRY: I can't accept it, ese.

PACHUCO: You've got to, Hank . . .

only this reality is real now,

only this place is real, 10

sitting in the lonely cell of your will . . .

HENRY: I can't see my hands.

PACHUCO: Then tell your eyes to forget the light, ese

Only the hard floor is there, carnal

Only the cold hard edge of this reality 15

and there is no time . . .

Each second is a raw drop of blood from your brain that you must swallow

drop by drop

and don't even start counting 20

or you'll lose your mind . . .

HENRY: I've got to know why I'm here, ese! I've got to have a reason for being here.

PACHUCO: You're here, Hank, because you chose to be — because you protected your brother and your family. And nobody knows the worth of that effort better than you, ese. 25

HENRY: I miss them, ese . . . my jefitos, my carnalillo, my sis . . . I miss Della.

PACHUCO (*a spot illuminates Henry's family standing upstage; El Pachuco snaps it off*): Forget them! 30

Forget them all.

Forget your family and the barrio beyond the wall.

HENRY: There's still a chance I'll get out.

PACHUCO: Fat chance. 35

HENRY: I'm talking about the appeal!

PACHUCO: And I'm talking about what's real! ¿Qué traes, Hank? Haven't you learned yet?

HENRY: Learned what?

PACHUCO: Not to expect justice when it isn't there. 40

No court in the land's going to set you free.

Learn to protect your loves by binding them

in hate, ese! Stop hanging on to false hopes.

The moment those hopes come crashing down,

you'll find yourself on the ground foaming at 45

the mouth. ¡Como loco!

HENRY (*turning on him furiously*): ¿Sabes qué? Don't tell me any more. I don't need you to tell me what to do. Fuck off! FUCK OFF!

2, 5. 37-38. ¿Qué traes, Hank?: What's wrong, Hank?
46. ¡Como loco!: Like a lunatic!

(Henry turns away from El Pachuco. Long pause. An anxious, intense moment. El Pachuco shifts gears and breaks the tension with a satirical twist. He throws his arms out and laughs.)

50 PACHUCO: ¡Órale pues!^o
Don't take the pinche play so seriously, Jesús!
Es puro vacilón!^o
Watcha.

(He snaps his fingers. Lights change. We hear the sounds of the city.)

55 This is Los, carnal.
You want to see some justice for pachucos?
Check out what's happening back home today.
The Navy has landed, ese —
on leave with full pay
and war's breaking out in the streets of L.A.!

Scene 6. Zoot Suit Riots

(We hear music: the bugle call from "Bugle Call Rag." Suddenly the stage is awash in colored lights. The city of Los Angeles appears in the background in a panoramic vista of lights tapering into the night horizon. Sailors and Girls jitterbug on the dance floor. It is the Avalon Ballroom. The music is hot, the dancing hotter. El Pachuco and Henry stand to the side.)

The scene is in dance and mostly pantomime. Occasionally words are heard over the music which is quite loud. On the floor are two Sailors [Swabbie is one] and a Marine dancing with the Girls. A Shore Patrolman speaks to the Cigarette Girl. A Pimp comes on and watches the action. Little Blue and Zooter are also on the floor. Rudy enters wearing Henry's zoot suit with Bertha and Lupe. Lupe takes their picture, then all three move up center to the rear of the ballroom. Cholo comes in down center, sees them and moves up stage. All four make an entrance onto the dance floor.

The Marine takes his girl aside after paying her. She passes the money to the Pimp. The Sailors try to pick up on Lupe and Bertha, and Cholo pushes one back. The Sailors complain to the Shore Patrol, who throws Cholo out the door down center. There is an argument that Rudy joins. The Sailors go back to Bertha and Lupe who resist. Cholo and Rudy go to their defense and a fight develops. Zooter and Little Blue split. Cholo takes the Girls out and Rudy pulls a knife. He is facing the three Sailors and the Marine, when The Pachuco freezes the action.)

PACHUCO (forcefully): Órale, that's enough!

(El Pachuco takes Rudy's knife and with a tap sends him off-stage. Rudy exits with the Girls. El Pachuco is now

50. ¡Órale pues!: Listen then! 52. Es puro vacilón!: It's pure fantasy!

facing the angry Servicemen. He snaps his fingers. The Press enters quickly to the beeping sound of a radio broadcast.)

PRESS: Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. North and South America and all the ships at sea. Let's go to press. FLASH. Los Angeles, California, June 3, 1943. Serious rioting broke out here today as flying squadrons of Marines and soldiers joined the Navy in a new assault on zooter-infested districts. A fleet of twenty taxicabs carrying some two hundred servicemen pulled out of the Naval Armory in Chavez Ravine tonight and assembled a task force that invaded the eastside barrio. 5 10

(Unfreeze. The following speeches happen simultaneously.)

MATE: You got any balls in them funny pants, boy?

SAILOR: He thinks he's tough . . .

SWABBIE: How about it, lardhead? You a tough guy or just a draft dodger? 15

PRESS: The Zoot Suiters, those gamin' dandies . . .

PACHUCO (cutting them off): Why don't you tell them what I really am, ese, or how you've been forbidden to use the very word . . .

PRESS: We are complying in the interest of the war. 20

PACHUCO: How have you complied?

PRESS: We're using other terms.

PACHUCO: Like *pachuco* and *zoot suiter*?

PRESS: What's wrong with that? The Zoot Suit Crime Wave is even beginning to push the war news off the front page. 25

PACHUCO: The Press distorted the very meaning of the word "zoot suit."

All it is for you guys is another way to say Mexican. But the ideal of the original chuco^o was to look like a diamond 30

to look sharp

hip

bonaroo^o

finding a style of urban survival in the rural skirts and outskirts of the brown metropolis of Los, cabrón. 35

PRESS: It's an affront to good taste.

PACHUCO: Like the Mexicans, Filipinos, and blacks who wear them.

PRESS: Yes! 40

PACHUCO: Even the white kids and the Wops and the Jews are putting on the drape shape.

PRESS: You are trying to outdo the white man in exaggerated white man's clothes!

PACHUCO: Because everybody knows that Mexicans, Filipinos, and blacks belong to the huarache^o the straw hat and the dirty overall. 45

2, 6, 29. chuco: Pachuco. 33. bonaroo: Wonderful. 47. huarache: Mexican sandal.

PRESS: You savages weren't even wearing clothes when the white man pulled you out of the jungle.

MARINE: My parents are going without collars and cuffs so you can wear that shit.

PRESS: That's going too far, too goddamned far, and it's got to be stopped!

PACHUCO: Why?

PRESS: Don't you know there's a war on? Don't you fucking well know you can't get away with that shit? What are we fighting for if not to annihilate the enemies of the American way of life?

MATE: Let's tear it off his back!

SAILORS/MARINE: Let's strip him! Get him! (Etc.)

PRESS: KILL THE PACHUCO BASTARD!!

(*Music: "American Patrol" by Glenn Miller. The Press gets a searchlight from upstage center while the Four Servicemen stalk El Pachuco.*)

SAILOR: Heh, zooter. Come on, zooter!

SWABBIE: You think you're more important than the war, zooter?

MATE: Let's see if you got any balls in them funny pants, boy.

SWABBIE: Watch out for the knife.

SAILOR: That's a real chango monkey suit he's got on.

MATE: I bet he's half monkey — just like the Filipinos and niggers that wear them.

SWABBIE: You trying to outdo the white man in them glad rags, Mex?

(*They fight now to the finish. El Pachuco is overpowered and stripped as Henry watches helplessly from his position. The Press and Servicemen exit with pieces of El Pachuco's zoot suit. El Pachuco stands. The only item of clothing on his body is a small loincloth. He turns and looks at Henry, with mystic intensity. He opens his arms as an Aztec conch blows, and he slowly exits backward with powerful calm into the shadows. Silence. Henry comes downstage. He absorbs the impact of what he has seen and falls to his knees at center stage, spent and exhausted. Lights down.*)

Scene 7. Alice

(*The Guard and Alice enter from opposite sides of the stage. The Guard carries a handful of letters and is reading one of them.*)

GUARD: July 2, 1943.

ALICE: Dear Henry,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and good spirits — but I have to assume you've heard about the riots in Los Angeles. It was a nightmare, and it lasted for a week. The city is still in a state of shock.

GUARD (*folds letter back into envelope, then opens another*): August 5, 1943.

ALICE: Dear Henry,

The riots here in L.A. have touched off race riots all over the country — Chicago, Detroit, even little

Beaumont, Texas, for Christ's sake. But the one in Harlem was the worst. Millions of dollars worth of property damage. 500 people were hospitalized, and five Negroes were killed.

GUARD: Things are rough all over.

ALICE: Please write to me and tell me how you feel.

GUARD (*the Guard folds up the second letter, stuffs it back into its envelope and opens a third*): August 20, 1943.

ALICE: Dear Henry,

Although I am disappointed not to have heard from you, I thought I would send you some good news for a change. Did you know we had a gala fund-raiser at the Mocambo?

GUARD: The Mocambo . . . Hotcha!°

ALICE: . . . and Rita Hayworth lent your sister Lupe a ball gown for the occasion. She got dressed at Cecil B. DeMille's house, and she looked terrific. Her escort was Anthony Quinn, and Orson Welles said . . .

GUARD: Orson Welles! Well! Sounds like Louella Parsons. (*He folds up the letter.*) September 1, 1943.

ALICE: Henry, why aren't you answering my letters?

GUARD: He's busy. (*He continues to stuff the envelope.*)

ALICE: Henry, if there's something I've said or done . . . ?

(*The Guard shuffles the envelopes.*)

Henry . . .

(*Lights change. Guard crosses to center stage, where Henry is still doubled up on the floor.*)

GUARD: Welcome back to the living, Reyna. It's been a long hot summer. Here's your mail.

(*The Guard tosses the letters to the floor directly in front of Henry's head. Henry looks up slowly and grabs one of the letters. He opens it, trying to focus. The Guard exits.*)

ALICE: Henry, I just found out you did ninety days in solitary. I'm furious at the rest of the guys for keeping it from me. I talked to Warden Duffy, and he said you struck a guard. Did something happen I should know about? I wouldn't ask if it wasn't so important, but a clean record . . .

(*Henry rips up the letter he has been reading and scatters the others. Alarmed.*)

Henry?

(*Henry pauses, his instant fury spent and under control. He sounds almost weary, but the anger is still there.*)

HENRY: You still don't understand, Alice.

ALICE (*softly, compassionate*): But I do! I'm not accusing you of anything. I don't care what happened or why they sent you there. I'm sure you had your reasons. But you know the public is watching you.

HENRY (*frustrated, a deep question*): Why do you do this, Alice?

2, 7, 24. Hotcha!: Expression used as a song lyric or title.

ALICE: What?

HENRY: The appeal, the case, all the shit you do. You think the public gives a goddamn?

ALICE (*with conviction*): Yes! We are going to get you out of here, Henry Reyna. We are going to win!

HENRY (*probing*): What if we lose?

ALICE (*surprised but moving on*): We're not going to lose.

HENRY (*forcefully, insistent, meaning more than he is saying*): What if we do? What if we get another crooked judge, and he nixes the appeal?

ALICE: Then we'll appeal again. We'll take it to the Supreme Court. (*A forced laugh.*) Hell, we'll take it all the way to President Roosevelt!

HENRY (*backing her up — emotionally*): What if we still lose?

ALICE (*bracing herself against his aggression*): We can't.

HENRY: Why can't we?

ALICE (*giving a political response in spite of herself*): Because we've got too much support. You should see the kinds of people responding to us. Unions, Mexicans, Negroes, Oakies. It's fantastic.

HENRY (*driving harder*): Why can't we lose, Alice?

ALICE: I'm telling you.

HENRY: No, you're not.

ALICE (*starting to feel vulnerable*): I don't know what to tell you.

HENRY: Yes, you do!

ALICE (*frightened*): Henry . . . ?

HENRY: Tell me why we can't lose, Alice!

ALICE (*forced to fight back, with characteristic passion*): Stop it, Henry! Please stop it! I won't have you treat me this way. I never have been able to accept one person pushing another around . . . pushing me around! Can't you see that's why I'm here? Because I can't stand it happening to you. Because I'm a Jew, goddammit! I have been there . . . I have been there! If you lose, I lose.

(*Pause. The emotional tension is immense. Alice fights to hold back tears. She turns away.*)

HENRY: I'm sorry . . .

ALICE (*pause*): It's stupid for us to fight like this. I look forward to coming here for weeks. Just to talk to you, to be with you, to see your eyes.

HENRY (*pause*): I thought a lot about you when I was in the hole. Sometimes . . . sometimes I'd even see you walk in, in the dark, and talk to me. Just like you are right now. Same look, same smile, same perfume . . . (*He pauses.*) Only the other one never gave me so much lip. She just listened. She did say one thing. She said . . .

ALICE (*trying to make light of it, then more gently*): I can't say that to you, Henry. Not the way you want it.

HENRY: Why not?

ALICE (*she means it*): Because I can't allow myself to be used to fill in for all the love you've always felt and always received from all your women.

HENRY (*with no self-pity*): Give it a chance, Alice.

ALICE (*beside herself*): Give it a chance? You crazy idiot. If I thought making love to you would solve all your problems, I'd do it in a second. Don't you know that? But it won't. It'll only complicate things. I'm trying to help you, goddammit. And to do that, I have to be your friend, not your white woman.

HENRY (*getting angry*): What makes you think I want to go to bed with you. Because you're white? I've had more white pieces of ass than you can count, ¿sabes? Who do you think you are? God's gift to us brown animals.

ALICE (*slaps him and stops, horrified, a whirlpool of emotions*): Oh, Hank. All the love and hate it's taken to get us together in this lousy prison room. Do you realize only Hitler and the Second World War could have accomplished that? I don't know whether to laugh or cry.

(*Alice folds into her emotional spin, her body shaking. Suddenly she turns, whipping herself out of it with a cry, both laughing and weeping. They come to each other and embrace. Then they kiss — passionately. The Guard enters. He frowns.*)

GUARD: Time, Miss.

ALICE (*turning*): Already? Oh, my God, Henry, there's so many messages I was going to give you. Your mother and father send their love, of course. And Lupe and . . . Della. And . . . oh, yes. They want you to know Rudy's in the Marines.

HENRY: The Marines?

ALICE: I'll write you all about it. Will you write me?

HENRY (*a glance at the Guard*): Yes.

GUARD (*his tone getting harsher*): Let's go, lady.

HENRY: Goodbye, Licha.

ALICE: I'll see you on the outside . . . Hank.

(*Alice gives Henry a thumb up gesture, and the Guard escorts her out. Henry turns downstage, full of thoughts. He addresses El Pachuco, who is nowhere to be seen.*)

HENRY: You were wrong, ese . . . There is something to hope for. I know now we're going to win the appeal. Do you hear me, ese? Ese! (*Pause.*) Are you even there any more?

(*The Guard re-enters at a clip.*)

GUARD: Okay, Reyna, come on.

HENRY: Where to?

GUARD: We're letting you go . . .

(*Henry looks at him incredulously. The Guard smiles.*)

. . . to Folsom Prison with all the rest of the hardcore cons. You really didn't expect to walk out of here a free man, did you? Listen, kid, your appeal stands about as much chance as the Japs and Krauts of winning the war. Personally, I don't see what that broad sees in you. I wouldn't give you the sweat off my balls. Come on!

(Henry and the Guard turn upstage to leave. Lights change. El Pachuco appears halfway up the backdrop, fully dressed again and clearly visible. Henry stops with a jolt as he sees him. El Pachuco lifts his arms. Lights go down as we hear the high sound of a bomb falling to earth.)

Scene 8. The Winning of the War

(The aerial bomb explodes with a reverberating sound and a white flash that illuminates the form of pachuco images in the black backdrop. Other bombs fall and all hell breaks loose. Red flashes, artillery, gunfire, ack-ack. Henry and the Guard exit. The Four Servicemen enter as an honor guard. Music: Glen Miller's "Saint Louis Blues March." As the Servicemen march on we see Rudy down left in his marine uniform, belt undone. Enrique, Dolores, and Lupe join him. Dolores has his hat, Lupe her camera. Enrique fastens two buttons on the uniform as Rudy does up his belt. Dolores inspects his collar and gives him his hat. Rudy puts on his hat and all pose for Lupe. She snaps the picture and Rudy kisses them all and is off. He picks up the giant switchblade from behind a newspaper bundle and joins the Servicemen as they march down in drill formation. The family marches off, looking back sadly. The drill ends and Rudy and the Shore Patrol move to one side. As Rudy's interrogation goes on, People in the barrio come on with newspapers to mime daily tasks. The Press enters.)

PRESS: The *Los Angeles Examiner*, July 1, 1943. Headline: WORLD WAR II REACHES TURNING POINT. If the late summer of 1942 was the low point, a year later the war for the Allies is pounding its way to certain victory.

SHORE PATROL: July 10!

RUDY: U.S., British, and Canadian troops invade Sicily, Sir!

SHORE PATROL: August 6!

RUDY: U.S. troops occupy Solomon Island, Sir!

SHORE PATROL: September 5!

RUDY: MacArthur's forces land on New Guinea, Sir!

SHORE PATROL: October 1!

RUDY: U.S. Fifth Army enters Naples, Sir!

PRESS: On and on it goes. From Corsica to Kiev, from Tarawa to Anzio. The relentless advance of the Allied armies cannot be checked.

(One by one, Henry's family and friends enter, carrying newspapers. They tear the papers into small pieces.)

The *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 1944. Headline: Allied forces under General Eisenhower land in Normandy.

SHORE PATROL: August 19!

RUDY: American First Army reaches Germany, Sir!

SHORE PATROL: October 17!

RUDY: MacArthur returns to the Philippines, Sir!

PRESS: On the homefront, Americans go on with their

daily lives with growing confidence and relief, as the war pushes on toward inevitable triumph. (Pause.) The *Los Angeles Daily News*, Wednesday, November 8, 1944. Headline: District Court of Appeals decides in Sleepy Lagoon murder case . . . boys in pachuco murder given . . .

PEOPLE: FREEDOM!!!

(Music bursts forth as the joyous crowd tosses the shredded newspaper into the air like confetti. The Boys enter upstage center, and the crowd rushes to them, weeping and cheering. There are kisses and hugs and tears of joy. Henry is swept forward by the triumphal procession.)

Scene 9. Return to the Barrio

(The music builds and people start dancing. Others just embrace. The tune is "Soldado Razo" played to a lively corrido beat. It ends with joyous applause, laughter, and tears.)

RUDY: ¡Ese carnal!

HENRY: Rudy!!

DOLORES: ¡Bendito sea Dios! Who would believe this day would ever come? Look at you — you're all home!

LUPE: I still can't believe it. We won! We won the appeal!

(Cheers.)

ENRIQUE: I haven't felt like this since Villa took Zacatecas. (Laughter, cheers.) ¡Pero mira!° Look who's here. Mis hijos. (Puts his arm around Henry and Rudy.) It isn't every day a man has two grown sons come home from so far away — one from the war, the other from . . . bueno, who cares? The Sleepy Lagoon is history, hombre. For a change, los Mexicanos have won!

(Cheers.)

GEORGE: Well, Henry. I don't want to say I told you so, but we sure taught Judge Charles a lesson in misconduct, didn't we? (More cheers.) Do you realize this is the greatest victory the Mexican-American community has ever had in the history of this whole blasted country?

DOLORES: Yes, but if it wasn't for the unselfish thoughtfulness of people like you and this beautiful lady — and all the people who helped out, Mexicanos, Negros, all Americanos — our boys would not be home today.

GEORGE: I only hope you boys realize how important you are now.

JOEY: Pos, I realize it, ese.

(Laughter.)

2, 9, 9. ¡Pero mira!: But look!

30 RUDY: I came all the way from Hawaii just to get here, carnal. I only got a few days, but I'm going to get you drunk.

HENRY: Pos, we'll see who gets who drunk, ese.

(Laughter and hoots. Henry spots El Pachuco entering from stage right.)

35 DOLORES: Jorge, Licha, todos.° Let's go into the house, eh? I've made a big pot of menudo, and it's for everybody.

ENRIQUE: There's ice-cold beer too. Vénganse, vamos todos.°

40 GEORGE *(to Alice)*: Alice . . . Menudo, that's Mexican chicken soup?

(Everybody exits, leaving Henry behind with El Pachuco.)

HENRY: It's good to see you again, ese. I thought I'd lost you.

PACHUCO: H'm pues, it'd take more than the U.S. Navy to wipe me out.

45 HENRY: Where you been?

PACHUCO: Pos, here in the barrio. Welcome back.

HENRY: It's good to be home.

PACHUCO: No hard feelings?

HENRY: Chale — we won, didn't we?

50 PACHUCO: Simón.

HENRY: Me and the batos have been in a lot of fights together, ese. But we won this one, because we learned to fight in a new way.

55 PACHUCO: And that's the perfect way to end this play — happy ending y todo. *(Pachuco makes a sweeping gesture. Lights come down. He looks up at the lights, realizing something is wrong. He flicks his wrist, and the lights go back up again.)*

But life ain't that way, Hank.

The barrio's still out there, waiting and wanting.

The cops are still tracking us down like dogs.

The gangs are still killing each other,

60 Families are barely surviving,

And there in your own backyard . . . life goes on.

(Soft music. Della enters.)

DELLA: Hank?

(Henry goes to her and they embrace.)

HENRY: Where were you? Why didn't you come to the Hall of Justice to see us get out?

65 DELLA: I guess I was a little afraid things had changed. So much has happened to both of us.

PACHUCO: Simón. She's living in your house.

DELLA: After I got back from Ventura, my parents gave me a choice. Forget about you or get out.

70 HENRY: Why didn't you write to me?

34. Jorge, Licha, todos: George, Alice, everyone. 37-38. Vénganse, vamos todos: Come back, let's go everyone.

DELLA: You had your own problems. Your jefitos took care of me. Hey, you know what, Hank, I think they expect us to get married.

PACHUCO: How about it, ese? You still going to give her that big pachuco wedding you promised? 75

HENRY: I have to think about it.

ALICE *(off-stage)*: Henry?

PACHUCO *(snaps fingers)*: Wish you had the time. But here comes Licha.

ALICE *(entering)*: Henry, I've just come to say good night. 80

(Della freezes and Henry turns to Alice.)

HENRY: Good night? Why are you leaving so soon?

ALICE: Soon? I've been here all afternoon. There'll be other times, Henry. You're home now, with your family, that's what matters.

HENRY: Don't patronize me, Alice. 85

ALICE *(surprised)*: Patronize you?

HENRY: Yeah. I learned a few words in the joint.

ALICE: Yo también,° Hank. Te quiero.°

(Pachuco snaps. Alice freezes, and Rudy enters.)

RUDY: Ese, carnal, congratulations, the jefita just told me about you and Della. That's great, ese. But if you want me to be best man, you better do it in the next three days. 90

HENRY: Wait a minute, Rudy, don't push me.

RUDY: Qué pues,° getting cold feet already?

(Henry is beginning to be surrounded by separate conversations.)

DELLA: If you don't want me here, I can move out. 95

RUDY: Watcha. I'll let you and Della have our room tonight, bato. I'll sleep on the couch.

ALICE: You aren't expecting me to sleep here, are you?

HENRY: I'm not asking you to.

PACHUCO/ALICE/RUDY/DELLA: Why not? 100

RUDY: The jefitos will never know, ese.

ALICE: Be honest, Henry.

DELLA: What do you want me to do?

HENRY: Give me a chance to think about it. Give me a second! 105

PACHUCO: One second!

(Pachuco snaps. Enrique enters.)

ENRIQUE: Bueno, bueno, pues,° what are you doing out here, hijo? Aren't you coming in for menudo?

HENRY: I'm just thinking, jefito.

ENRIQUE: ¿De qué, hombre?° Didn't you do enough of that in prison? Andale, this is your house. Come in and live again. 110

HENRY: 'Apá, did you tell Della I was going to marry her?

ENRIQUE: Yes, but only after you did.

88. Yo también: Me too. Te quiero: I love you. 94. Qué pues: Well what. 107. Bueno, bueno, pues: Good, good, certainly. 110. ¿De qué, hombre?: About what, man?

15 RUDY: ¿Qué traes, carnal?° Don't you care about Della anymore?

ALICE: If it was just me and you, Henry, it might be different. But you have to think of your family.

HENRY: I don't need you to tell me my responsibilities.

20 ALICE: I'm sorry.

RUDY: Sorry, carnal.

DELLA: I don't need anybody to feel sorry for me. I did what I did because I wanted to. All I want to know is what's going to happen now. If you still want me, órale, suave. If you don't, that's okay, too. But I'm not going to hang around like a pendeja all my life.

25 RUDY: Your huisa's looking finer than ever, carnal.

ALICE: You're acting as if nothing has happened.

ENRIQUE: You have your whole life ahead of you.

30 ALICE: You belong here, Henry. I'm the one that's out of place.

RUDY: If you don't pick up on her, I'm going to have to step in.

HENRY: That's bullshit. What about what we shared in prison? I've never been that close to anybody.

ALICE: That was in prison.

HENRY: What the hell do you think the barrio is?

RUDY: It's not bullshit!

HENRY: Shut up, carnalillo!

40 RUDY: Carnalillo? How can you still call me that? I'm not your pinche little brother no more.

GEORGE (*entering*): You guys have got to stop fighting, Henry, or the barrio will never change. Don't you realize you men represent the hope of your people?

5 ALICE: Della was in prison too. You know you had thousands of people clamoring for your release, but you were Della's only hope.

HENRY: Look, esa, I know you did a year in Ventura. I know you stood up for me when it counted. I wish I could make it up to you.

0 DELLA: Don't give me your bullshit, Henry. Give it to Alice.

ALICE: I think it's time for Alice Bloomfield to go home.

HENRY: Don't be jealous, esa.

5 DELLA: Jealous? Mira, cabrón, I know I'm not the only one you ever took to the Sleepy Lagoon.

RUDY: The Sleepy Lagoon ain't shit. I saw real lagoons in those islands, ese — killing Japs! I saw some pachucos go out there that are never coming back.

10 DELLA: But I was always there when you came back, wasn't I?

DOLORES (*entering*): Henry? Come back inside, hijo. Everybody's waiting for you.

RUDY: Why didn't you tell them I was there, carnal? I was at the Sleepy Lagoon. Throwing chingazos with everybody!

HENRY: Don't you understand, Rudy? I was trying to keep you from getting a record. Those bastard cops are never going to leave us alone.

115. ¿Qué traes, carnal?: What's wrong, brother?

GEORGE: You've got to forget what happened, Henry. 170

HENRY: What can I give you, Della? I'm an ex-con.

DELLA: So am I!

SMILEY (*entering*): Let's face it, Hank. There's no future for us in this town. I'm taking my wife and kid and moving to Arizona. 175

DOLORES (*simultaneously*): ENRIQUE: If there's one thing that will keep a man off the streets it's his own familia.

I know what you are feeling, hijo, it's home again. I know inside you are afraid that nothing has changed. That the police will never leave you in peace. Pero no le hace.° Everything is going to be fine now. Marry Della and fill this house with children. Just do one thing for me — forget the zoot suit clothes. 180

GEORGE: Don't let this thing eat your heart out for the rest of your . . .

ALICE: Sometimes the best thing you can do for someone you love is walk away. 185

DELLA: What do you want, Hank?

RUDY: It cost me more than it did you. 190

SMILEY: We started the 38th and I'll never forget you, carnal. But I got to think about my family. 195

HENRY: Wait a minute! I don't know if I'll be back in prison tomorrow or not! I have nothing to give you, Della. Not even a piece of myself.

DELLA: I have my life to live, too, Hank. I love you. I would even die for you. Pero me chingan la madre° if I'm going to throw away my life for nothing. 200

HENRY: But I love you . . .

(*Both Girls turn. Henry looks at Alice, then to the whole group upstage of him. Still turning, he looks at Della and goes to embrace her. The freeze ends and other people enter.*)

LUPE: ¡Órale, Hank! Watcha Joey. The crazy bato went all the way to his house and put on his drapes.

JOEY: ¡Esos, batoooooosss! ¡Esas, huisaaaaaaass!° 205

TOMMY: Look at this cat! He looks all reet.

LUPE: Yeah, like a parakeet!

HENRY: ¿Y tú, ese?° How come you put on your tache? Where's the party?

JOEY: Pos, ain't the party here? 210

RUDY: Yeah, ese, but this ain't the Avalon Ballroom. The zoot suit died under fire here in Los. Don't you know that, cabrón?

ENRIQUE: Rudolfo!

LUPE: And he was supposed to get Henry drunk. 215

RUDY: Shut up, esa!

ENRIQUE: ¡Ya pues!° Didn't you have any menudo?

184. Pero no le hace: But it doesn't happen. 200. Pero me chingan la madre: But I'll be damned. 205. ¡Esos . . . huisaaaaaaass!: Hey dudes! Hey girls! 208. ¿Y tú, ese?: And you man? 217. ¡Ya pues!: Enough already!

- Vieja,° fix him a great big bowl of menudo and put plenty of chile in it. We're going to sweat it out of him.
- 220 RUDY: I don't need no pinche menudo.
HENRY: Watch your language, carnal.
RUDY: And I don't need you! I'm a man. I can take care of myself!
- JOEY: Muy marine el bato° . . .
- 225 ENRIQUE: Rudy, hijo. Are you going to walk into the kitchen or do I have to drag you?
RUDY: Whatever you say, jefito.
GEORGE: Well, Alice. This looks like the place where we came in. I think it's about time we left.
- 230 ALICE: Say the word, George, just say the word.
DOLORES: No, no. You can't leave so soon.
JOEY: Chale, chale, chale. You can't take our Grandma. ¿Qué se trae, carnal? Póngase más abusado, ese. No se haga tan square.°
- 235 GEORGE: Okay, square I got. What was the rest of it?
JOEY: Pos, le estoy hablando en chicas patas, ese. Es puro chicano.°
RUDY: ¿Qué chicano? Ni que madre, cabrón.° Why don't you grow up?
- 240 JOEY: Grow up, ese?
RUDY: Try walking downtown looking like that. See if the sailors don't skin your ass alive.
JOEY: So what? It's no skin off your ass. Come on, Bertha.
- 245 RUDY: She's staying with me.
JOEY: She's mine.
RUDY: Prove it, punk.

(Rudy attacks Joey and they fight. The Batos and Rucas take out Joey. Henry pacifies Rudy, who bursts out crying. Enrique, Della, Dolores, Alice, Lupe, and George are the only ones left. Rudy in a flush of emotion.)

- Cabrones, se amontonaron.° They ganged up on me, carnal. You left me and they ganged up on me. You shouldn't have done it, carnal. Why didn't you take me with you. For the jefitos? The jefitos lost me anyway.
- 250 HENRY: Come on in the house, Rudy . . .
RUDY: No! I joined the Marines. I didn't have to join, but I went. ¿Sabes por qué? Because they got me, carnal. Me chingaron, ese.° *(Sobs.)* I went to the pinche show with Bertha, all chingón in your tacuche, ese. I was wearing your zoot suit, and they got me. Twenty sailors, Marines. We were up in the balcony. They came down from behind. They grabbed me by the
- 260

218. Vieja: Old woman (wife). 224. Muy marine el bato: The dude's acting like a marine. 233-234. ¿Qué . . . square: What's wrong, brother? Smarten up, man. That doesn't seem very square. 236-237. Pos . . . chicano: Anyhow, I was speaking in Chicano, man. It's pure Chicano. 238. ¿Qué . . . cabrón: What Chicano? Nothing that matters (vulgar term). 248. Cabrones, se amontonaron: (Vulgar term) they ganged up on me. 256. Me chingaron, ese: They (vulgar term) me up, man.

neck and dragged me down the stairs, kicking and punching and pulling my greña.° They dragged me out into the streets . . . and all the people watched while they stripped me. *(Sobs.)* They stripped me, carnal. Bertha saw them strip me. Hijos de la chingada,° they stripped me. 265

(Henry goes to Rudy and embraces him with fierce love and desperation. Pause. Tommy comes running in.)

TOMMY: ¡Órale! There's cops outside. They're trying to arrest Joey.

(George crosses to Tommy.)

GEORGE *(bursting out)*: Joey?

TOMMY: They got him up against your car. They're trying to say he stole it! 270

GEORGE: Oh, God. I'll take care of this.

ALICE: I'll go with you.

(George, Tommy, and Alice exit.)

HENRY: Those fucking bastards! *(He starts to exit.)*

DELLA: Henry, no! 275

HENRY: What the hell do you mean no? Don't you see what's going on outside?

DELLA: They'll get you again! That's what they want.

HENRY: Get out of my way! *(He pushes her out of the way, toward Dolores.)*

ENRIQUE *(stands up before Henry)*: ¡Hijo! 280

HENRY: Get out of my way, jefe!°

ENRIQUE: You will stay here!

HENRY: Get out of my way!

(Enrique powerfully pushes him back and throws Henry to the floor and holds.)

ENRIQUE: ¡TE DIGO QUE NO!

(Silent moment. Henry stands up and offers to strike Enrique. But something stops him. The realization that if he strikes back or even if he walks out the door, the family bond is irreparably broken. Henry tenses for a moment, then relaxes and embraces his father. Della goes to them and joins the embrace. Then Dolores, then Lupe, then Rudy. All embrace in a tight little group. Press enters right and comes down.)

PRESS: Henry Reyna went back to prison in 1947 for robbery and assault with a deadly weapon. While incarcerated, he killed another inmate and he wasn't released until 1955, when he got into hard drugs. He died of the trauma of his life in 1972. 285

PACHUCO: That's the way you see it, ese. But there's other ways to end this story. 290

RUDY: Henry Reyna went to Korea in 1950. He was

262. greña: Hair. 265-266. Hijos de la chingada: (Vulgar term). 281. jefe: Dad.

shipped across in a destroyer and defended the 38th Parallel until he was killed at Inchon in 1952, being posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

ALICE: Henry Reyna married Della in 1948 and they have five kids, three of them now going to the University, speaking calo and calling themselves Chicanos.

GEORGE: Henry Reyna, the born leader . . .

JUDGE: Henry Reyna, the social victim . . .

BERTHA: Henry Reyna, the street corner warrior . . .

SMILEY: Henry Reyna, el carnal de aquellas° . . .

JOEY: Henry Reyna, the zoot suiter . . . 305

TOMMY: Henry Reyna, my friend . . .

LUPE: Henry Reyna, my brother . . .

ENRIQUE: Henry Reyna . . .

DOLORES: Our son . . .

DELLA: Henry Reyna, my love . . . 310

PACHUCO: Henry Reyna . . . El Pachuco . . . The man . . .
the myth . . . still lives. (*Lights down and fade out.*)

304. el carnal de aquellas: The outstanding brother.