

PILAR'S BROTHER

A full-length play

by

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Cast of Characters

JULIAN:

21 years old, male. Older brother of PILAR. Attends college and works at a mundane job. Private, keeps worlds separate and his personal needs and ambitions secret. Very protective of his sister. Immigrated to the United States from Chile when he was 10 years old. Is a US citizen.

PILAR:

17 years old, female. Has a mental illness that is controlled by medicine, when it is taken. When it is not taken, PILAR is wild and uncontrollable, saying things that are unrelated to one another. Loves her brother more than anyone. Is mischievous and harbors anger. Immigrated to the United States from Chile when she was 5 years old. Is a US citizen.

RAMONA:

41 years old, female. Aunt to JULIAN and PILAR. She sews for a living. Religious, favors JULIAN over PILAR, angry at her sister, maternal. Her English is frequently not grammatically correct or broken. She immigrated to the United States from Chile ahead of the family when she was 25 years old. Is a US citizen.

ADAM:

Early 20's, male. Boyfriend of JULIAN. A model. He has an affected way of speaking and acting. Flamboyant in attitude but not dress, outgoing, excitable, sexual, adventurous, high school level education, social, ambitious, generally unemployed and poor. Likes to do things for JULIAN.

Setting:

Brooklyn Apartment

Time:

1968

Playwright notes: RAMONA, JULIAN and PILAR pronounce all Spanish names with the correct Spanish accents. ADAM pronounces JULIAN's name with an American accent, using the "J" sound. RAMONA frequently confuses pronouns. Where there is the stage direction "thumping", it is an off-stage noise to indicate thumping from an upstairs neighbor.

Act IScene 1

SETTING: A kitchen. There is a front door and an exit to a hall where the bedrooms and bathroom are.

AT RISE: RAMONA is setting the table with three plates and forks. She is dressed nicely. A dress with a sewing kit is on a side table.

JULIAN VOICEOVER

December 1, 1968. Dear *Mamá*. You have been gone for thirty three days. Today's schedule: got up, had breakfast, went to mass with Pilar and *Tía* Ramona, had lunch at the church, helped put together a church mailing and came home. I hope that the weather is nicer in Chile. It is very cold here. Are there any improvements in *Abuela's* health?

(RAMONA brings out a flan from the refrigerator and puts it on the table)

I have been very good about making sure to keep clean and healthy while you are gone. I always look neat at work and at the university. They say we will not receive our semester-end marks until January 6th, since there is the Christmas and New Year's holiday. So you'll be able to be here when I get them. Write soon. Love, Julian.

RAMONA

(calling to OS hallway)

Julian! Pilar! Is time for flan!

(PILAR runs in. SHE stops short at the table)

PILAR

Flan!

(SHE puts her finger in the side of it)

RAMONA

Pilar!

(slaps her hand away)

We not cut it yet. We wait for Julian. Is his flan.

PILAR

(yelling)

Julian!! It's time for flan!! JULIAN! *Tía* says I have to WAIT for you!!

RAMONA

Mi cachorrita! You know Mr. Berger not like it when you scream like that.

(RAMONA indicates the ceiling. Enter JULIAN)

JULIAN

You don't need to yell at me, Pilar. I can't change out of my church clothes any faster if you yell.

PILAR

I want that piece!

RAMONA

Julian cuts. Is her birthday.

(JULIAN cuts the piece for PILAR)

JULIAN

Here you go. *Tía* will give you a fork.

(HE cuts two more pieces. He tries to hand one to RAMONA)

RAMONA

I have later. I keep work on Pilar dress. She need something wear to mass tomorrow.

(SHE picks up the dress and sewing box)

JULIAN

She needs to come home after the day hospital, not go to mass.

RAMONA

I am the *Tía*! You not tell me what do! She must repent!

JULIAN

(Lowering his voice)

She doesn't need to repent!

RAMONA

We not want *el Diablo* to come take soul. Saint Amabilis protect her but only if we go pray, Julian! So I take her many days.

PILAR

Tía says I could fall into the fire if I don't go to mass.

JULIAN

(visibly annoyed)

The flan's good. Isn't it, Pilar?

PILAR

Yes. I like flan.

JULIAN

Did you make it, *Tía*?

RAMONA

Of course I make! You think I buy flan for *mi cachorrito*? No! They not know how to make flan in America. Not how we make. We make it right. Your mama and I used to make every year for our birthdays. Every year. Is your mama's dessert favorite. How do you say I buy flan?

PILAR

When do I get flan for my birthday?

JULIAN

Your birthday is in April. That's in the spring.

RAMONA

I see woman Russian at mass today. You see her, Julian?

JULIAN

(joking)

She didn't ask you for another tablecloth, did she?

RAMONA

Yes, she did!

PILAR

More tablecloths! More tablecloths!

RAMONA

Every month! I wonder...what does she do with so much tablecloth? She give so many party she need blue tablecloth and yellow tablecloth with flowers and now she want white tablecloth with border green.

PILAR

I think I had a small piece. Can I have more flan?

RAMONA

Who know? Maybe it for Christmas or maybe she just throw out good tablecloth after he use one time only. Then he throw in garbage and buy more.

PILAR

Flan...flan...

JULIAN

Well, at least it's work. The only tablecloth we've ever had was the one from Abuela.

RAMONA

I make tablecloth for you and Pilar then.

PILAR

I want MORE FLAN!!

JULIAN

Enough, Pilar! Enough! Mr. Berger will complain again if you yell. You can have a little bit, okay? But no more after this for tonight. We'll have more tomorrow.

(JULIAN cuts her a small piece. PILAR stares at the dress)

PILAR

I could never do that. I can't use needles.

RAMONA

No, you cannot.

JULIAN

We don't want you to hurt yourself like you did before when you scaped the potatoes.

PILAR

All bloody.

RAMONA

Si, all bloody. And I throw out good clothing.

PILAR

I can do other things, though! I can name all the animals at the zoo! And...I can draw...and I used to write stories.

(JULIAN and RAMONA exchange glances)

I'm going to write stories again soon. The doctors said I can.

JULIAN

(carefully)

Do you remember the stories you used to write, Pilar?

PILAR

No. But the doctors said they were...

(thinks)

Hmmm...sss--...no...creative! Were they creative? Did you get to read them?

RAMONA

Pilar, you get Julian's present now.

JULIAN

You got me a present?

PILAR

Tía helped me.

RAMONA

Si. We give Julian presents now. You go get, Pilar.

(PILAR exits)

Why they tell her about stories?

JULIAN

Well, at least they told her they were creative.

RAMONA

They wrong! Well, she can not write story now. So not matter.

JULIAN

Listen, about the tablecloth, we really don't need another one. We hardly use *Abuela's*.