

A Play by Emmanuel

CHARACTERS

MANNY

DON RAMON

CUCHO

CHEF

SETTING

Restaurant

TIME

About 8 PM in the middle of rush hour.

SCENE

(Interior, CHEF's restaurant)

(MANNY is seen expediting orders to an unseen window on stage left. We can hear the sound of pots being sizzled, the silverware being banged against those same pots, the yell of orders can be heard. On stage, we can see a table, with chairs and a coat hanger with a jacket covered in snow residue. Suddenly, DON RAMON walks in, stage right, very upset. He's covered with snow and a bunch of coffee stains on his pants. MANNY stops what he's doing.)

MANNY

(Puzzled)

Where were you?

DON RAMON

In the train, man.

MANNY

Chef's really upset.

DON RAMON

(Taking off his outerwear)

Man, fuck him, he ain't Dad.

MANNY

But, how can you come at this time? The train station was right across the street from the hotel. I even gave you the directions as well. Just three stops down and when you come out, just make a left.

DON RAMON

(Taking clothes off)

Yeah, but I met this fine woman last night.

MANNY

Oh, really? You're such a ho.

DON RAMON

Yeah, man. Ya tu sabe, loco.

MANNY

Come on. Within a span of 8 hours in London, you managed to score?

DON RAMON

(Nods)

Yeah, man!

(Bangs on chest)

That's the Dominican way.

MANNY

(Laughs)

I hope you're the same with the way you can score some women, you can score a job.

DON RAMON

(Struggling to take pants off)

Just working por mi hijo.

(In his underwear)

And for the ladies...

(He gestures a humping movement. CUCHO walks in reading his notepad from stage left.)

CUCHO

(Walking)

Manny, Chef said that—

(Looks up at Don Ramon)

Oh... is this a bad time between you two?

MANNY

(Rolling his eyes)

What do you want?

CUCHO

He wants to know if table four's order has been given the beef samosas and lasses.

MANNY

Let me check.

(MANNY pulls out his notepad and checks. DON RAMON changes into a chef's attire.)

CUCHO

Yeah, I got that. No, they got the haggis with the bottle of pinot grigio.

MANNY

No, I said three beef samosas, one mango lassi, and a strawberry one with cinnamon.

CUCHO

I'm just letting you know because Chef's pissed.

(CHEF walks in discreetly.)

DON RAMON

It was just a mistake. He can't get upset, we're still learning.

CHEF

(Calmly)

Oh, it's just a mistake?

CUCHO

Damn it, Don.

DON RAMON

(Rolls his eyes)

It was just a mis—

CHEF

(Calm with a little bit aggressiveness)

You come in here an hour late and you have the audacity to tell me that it's just a mistake?

(DON RAMON sucks his teeth and finishes changing and goes to the kitchen. He tries to get past Chef, who's in his way.)

DON RAMON

Excuse me.

CHEF

You're not going in there.

DON RAMON

Excuse me.

CHEF

You're not going in there.

DON RAMON

Excuse me. I'm not going to be nice.

CHEF

You see what I mean? You walk in here thinking that's it's alright for you to come into work anytime you want?

DON RAMON

I had to do something.

CHEF

It doesn't matter if the pope was in danger I want you here at six o'clock right on the spot!

DON RAMON

My son is in the hospital. Car crash.

MANNY

Wait, but I thought that—

DON RAMON

I lied.

(CHEF looks at DON RAMON and doesn't seem convinced. DON RAMON walks backwards slowly.)

CHEF

Great, so you're a liar too?

DON RAMON

(Slams on table)

YOU DON'T KNOW ME. I had a hard life!

CHEF

Does it look like I care? You keep your personal life outside of the kitchen.

DON RAMON

(Flips table out of anger)

You see what's wrong with you? Never do you care about emotions. Everything is about "money" and "success." Damn.

MANNY

Listen, Chef. I'll talk to him.

CUCHO

Chef, come with me. He needs to cool down.

CHEF

(To Manny)

You can't be having this shit if you're not going to run a successful restaurant. I mean, how many times do I need to tell you that you are an investment? Not with money, but time.

(To CUCHO)

Get the orders for Table six.

MANNY

We'll get to it.

CHEF

I hope.

(To Don Ramon)

Liar.

(CUCHO escorts CHEF to stage left. Silence.)

MANNY

So, what are you going to do now?

DON RAMON

(Sniffing)

I just want to see Jose. Mi hijo.

MANNY

Come on. You'll see him. Just not now.

DON RAMON

No, I think I have to go.

MANNY

LOOK, you can't have everything that you want.

DON RAMON

All I have is him and my identity. My island. La Republica.

MANNY

You do. Keep it.

DON RAMON

Are you mad at me?

MANNY

No.

DON RAMON

Are you sure?

MANNY

(Hesitant)

Yeah. But not to the point where I want to cut it off.

DON RAMON

I love you, bro.

MANNY

What was that shit from Lilo and Stitch? Ohana?

DON RAMON

(Stitch's voice)

Ohana means family.

(Beat)

That's from Hawaii right?

MANNY

Yeah, we gotta go now.

(End Scene)