

HOPE

Written by

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INT. RUÍZ APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jane lays wrapped in a falsa, or native blanket, on the sofa in the dark, watching TV at low volume. Her eyes look puffy, and her expression blank.

The noise of keys outside the apartment does not cause her to stir, and the door opens to reveal a struggling Gloria as she juggles many things at once in her hand.

GLORIA
Mija, you here?

Gloria locks the door. She's holding her purse, jacket, and some sort of food dish covered in aluminum.

Jane, quiet, is discovered on the couch.

GLORIA
Oh, there you are. How was work today?

Jane lifts the remote and raises the volume a bit as Gloria turns away to set her stuff down on the kitchen counter. Once her hands are free, she sighs and looks to the living room.

No answer from Jane. Gloria leans on the counter.

GLORIA
(mimicking Jane)
Hola, mamá. My day was fine! Very busy at the store. How was your day?
(Gloria's voice)
Well, mija, I was actually busy today too. That's why I am a little late. So many clients, I thought I'd buy us some take-out and spoil us a little bit. But as I was leaving, Tyler's mom came to the salon. She dropped this off.

Gloria lifts the food tray in her conversation with herself.

GLORIA
So, if you'd like to join me at the table for dinner, because it's still warm, and I haven't eaten all day...

With an eye-roll, Jane sits up and removes the blanket, revealing she's still in her work uniform and grey hoodie. She moseys over to the table for two.

Gloria walks over and sets down the food. She turns on the light above the table, and returns to the kitchen quickly for utensils and two glasses of water.

Jane removes the aluminum to reveal a casserole.

Gloria returns to the table and sits in front of Jane.

GLORIA

Apparently, you died. Or at least that's how Carrol thinks about it, with how she talks about you and the typical American casserole... thing.

Jane begins to serve herself.

JANE

It's just a gesture.

Gloria also starts to serve herself.

GLORIA

I don't remember saying I didn't appreciate it.

Jane keeps her head down at her plate. The two dig in quietly, in the dark, with the single light above them lighting the space harshly like an interrogation room.

Each take a couple of glances at each other between bites.

Gloria scans the meal at her plate with curiosity and begins to chuckle.

GLORIA

I'll never understand the obsession Americans have with queso like this. I love queso, pero the cheddar and the American cheese in everything...

She creates a cheese pull with the cheesy casserole to make her point.

JANE

It's fine to me.

They both make eye contact for a heated moment, before they silently continue eating.

Jane suddenly sets her fork down a little aggressively and looks at her mother.

JANE

Why did you keep me?

Gloria, shakes her head, confused.

GLORIA

Keep you... Keep you from what?

Jane takes a deep breath.

JANE

Why did you *keep* me?

Appalled, Gloria sets her fork down and sits back.

GLORIA

Why are you asking me this?

JANE

None of this would have happened to me if you just got rid of me, gave me away, I don't kn--

GLORIA

Ohh! ¿Estás jugando? This is my fault now? I never wanted you to go to that stupid club in the first place! What happened to you could've happened to any of your friends that were dumb enough to go with you!

Jane slams the table and raises her voice.

JANE

But it happened to ME! The daughter of the knocked-up, drop-out of Amarillo High!

Gloria sits back again, nodding her head, eyes watering.

GLORIA

So we're cuttin' that deep this time, huh?

Gloria stands up and pushes her chair in roughly, only instead it falls over. She takes quick, long strides to the front door and pulls it open harshly.

GLORIA

You want another mom so badly? Go! Ándale.

Get Carrol to make some more casseroles for you, and maybe you'll be appreciative for once! Go! Find another mom!

Jane rises from her seat and rolls her eyes.

JANE
(under breath)
God! You're so dramatic!

GLORIA
I'm dramatic?! You should look in a mirror.

JANE
That's the FUCKING problem! I AM looking in a mirror!

Jane begins to head towards her room. Both women are crying.

Before Jane enters the hallway, Gloria slams the front door.

Jane slams her bedroom door shut.

Gloria is breathing very heavily, as if she just stood up from a fist fight.

She starts to lose balance a little as she races over to her purse and pulls out the pills from Tyler.

She stares at it with desperation.