

obando  
a musical in two acts

\*songs are in bold text

OBANDO  
synopsis:

Once a year, in the merry month of May, the town of Obando, in Bulacan holds a three day fiesta that attracts thousands of people from all over the world. Guided by faith, these visitors dance and pray for children, spouses and good fortune.

Aling Sabel, in her eighties and dying of cancer, runs away from her home in Manila to pray for a wife for her only son, Benny. She had met Benny's father in that town and doesn't want her son to be alone when she's gone.

Lauren, a Filipino-American encounters a strange incident at the Chelsea Market in New York when a crab vendor tells her that the only thing that could save her marriage was if she went to Obando to pray for a son. Her husband, Alex wants to have a son, and takes this event as a sign.

Elise, a journalist in Manila, invites her twin sister Beth to join her as she reports about the fertility rites in Obando. They have been very close as children since their parents separated when they were young and escaped their mother's bitterness through life-affirming trips. Beth takes the opportunity to leave her husband who she has caught cheating on her.

Lola Mary lives in Obando with her grandson, Monmon. She is excited about selling her hand-made hats and fans to the visitors with the hopes of earning enough money to live a good life with Monmon.

Their lives cross each other's paths as they sing and dance and pray, hopeful that they will fulfill their heart's longings in the fishing village of Obando, in Bulacan.

obando

PLACE: Obando, Bulacan

TIME: Present

act one:

Scene One.....May  
Scene Two.....F/B to April  
Scene Three.....Morning  
Scene Four.....Noon  
Scene Five.....Afternoon  
Scene Six.....May 17

act two:

Scene One.....Evening  
Scene Two.....May 18  
Scene Three.....Noon  
Scene Four.....Afternoon  
Scene Five.....Evening  
Scene Six.....May 19

CHARACTERS:

BENNY - 40's, closeted gay, good-hearted

ALING SABEL – 80's, kind faced, mother of Benny

ELISE - 40's, matronly, simple

BETH – 40's, fraternal twin of Elise, *sosyal*

ALEX – 30's, typical NY yuppie

LAUREN – 30's, pretty, New York born and raised, wife of Alex

SARGENT LUCIO – 30's, handsome

MONMON – 8 years old, precocious

LOLA MARY – 60's, his groovy grandmother

JIM – 30's, ruggedly handsome, Elise's cameraman

COMPANY – made up of men, women and children of different ages, playing the supporting roles and helping with the set/costume changes.

musical numbers:

act one:

<i>Obando</i> .....	Company
<i>Incident at the Market</i> .....	Lauren
<i>A Little Miracle</i> .....	Aling Sabel/ Benny
<i>The Girl I Knew</i> .....	Elise/Beth
<i>Live Life</i> .....	Lola Mary/ Monmon
<i>Oh, Dear Santa Clara</i> .....	Company

act two:

<i>Peace and Quiet</i> .....	Lola Mary/ Aling Sabel/ Monmon
<i>How I Miss New York</i> .....	Lauren/Alex
<i>Pandango</i> .....	Elise/Beth/ Aling Sabel
<i>Please, Sir</i> .....	Benny/Beth/ Aling Sabel
<i>The Hat Song</i> .....	Lola Mary
<i>Always There For Me</i> .....	Beth/Benny
<i>Someone For Me</i> .....	Lucio/Benny
<i>Obando (reprise)</i> .....	Company

ACT ONE.

Place: Obando, Bulacan.  
New York, New York  
Manila

Time: Present.

Scene One.  
May

[ALING SABEL is standing UPSTAGE CENTER, a single spotlight on her. She is in her 80's with a sweet, motherly face. She sings, maybe acappella or accompanied by a guitar, slowly, almost melancholic. She is dancing the pandango.]

ALING SABEL:

***Santa Clara, pinong-pino,*** {Santa Clara, most refined  
***Ang dasal ko po ay dinggin mo.*** Please hear my prayer.  
***Pagdating ko sa Obando,*** When I get to Obando,  
(She winces in pain, stopping her  
dance before continuing her song.)  
***Hihiling ako ng milagro.*** I will ask for a miracle.}

[Music under as she turns and walks away in between a row of church pews.]

STREETS OF OBANDO.  
UPSTAGE RIGHT.

[Light on ELISE as she reports on a piece for her news program. She is in her 40's, pretty and simply dressed in a linen blouse and pants. She is holding a microphone, facing a camera that is handheld by JIM. He is in his 30's and dressed comfortably. Her report is in rhythm with the choir.]

ELISE: (she nods at Jim)  
Okay Jim, I'm ready...

[Jim signals her.]

ELISE: (glancing at her notepad)  
Once a year...

INSIDE THE CHURCH IN OBANDO.

There is a row of church pews DOWNSTAGE CENTER.

[Lights on the COMPANY in old costume sitting around the pews.]

COMPANY: (singing like a church choir)

**We, the citizens of this  
Old sleepy town...**

ELISE: ...in the merry month of May...

COMPANY:

**Are awakened every May...**

ELISE: ...the town of Obando in Bulacan...

COMPANY:

**Throw your city cares away...**

ELISE: ...hosts a fiesta...

COMPANY:

**Come and sing and dance and pray  
And eat with us.**

ELISE: ...that is unlike any other fiestas on  
earth. People from all over the Philippines  
and the world...

COMPANY:

**We will welcome all of you  
Who still believe...**

ELISE: ...make their pilgrimage here to  
pray...

COMPANY:

**In the power of a prayer.**

ELISE: ...for a son or a daughter...

COMPANY:

**We have miracles to share.**

ELISE: ...a husband or a wife...

COMPANY:

**Just as long as you can bear  
The heat with us.**

ELISE: ...or for good fortune and happiness...  
The faithful come...

COMPANY:

**Give us all your faithful,  
Your hopeful,  
Your tireless throng.**

ELISE: ...for three days...

COMPANY:

**For three days, we're grateful  
But hope you'll  
Stay twice as long.**

ELISE: ...to Obando...

COMPANY:

**Obando is here  
For you the whole year.**

ELISE: ...with the hopes of...

COMPANY:

**It would be delightful  
If you ful-  
Fill your heart's longing.**

ELISE: ...fulfilling their heart's longing.  
This quiet fishing village opens its  
homes to everyone...

COMPANY:

**We, the people of this  
Fishing village, know  
Once the fiesta is all done**

ELISE: ...and once the fiesta is done...

COMPANY:

**And to your lives you've moved on.**

ELISE: ...the journey has just begun...

COMPANY:

**That your journey's just begun.  
We hope that it was fun  
To be with us.**

ELISE: ...for the thousands who visited,  
taking with them something life-  
affirming, an experience that will  
hopefully change their lives forever.  
This is Elise Tantoco reporting  
from Obando, Bulacan...

[Elise and Jim freeze.]

COMPANY:

**We, the citizens of this old sleepy town,  
Are awakened every May.  
Throw your city cares away.  
Come and sing and dance and pray  
And eat with us.  
We will welcome all of you who still believe  
In the power of a prayer.  
We have miracles to share  
Just as long as you can bare  
The heat with us.  
Give us all your faithful,  
Your hopeful,  
Your tireless throng.  
For three days, we're grateful  
And hope you'll  
Stay twice as long.  
Obando is here  
For you the whole year.  
It would be delightful  
If you ful-  
Fill your heart's longing.  
We, the people of this fishing village know  
Once the fiesta is all done,  
And to your lives you've moved on.  
That your journey's just begun.  
We hope that it was fun...  
And life-affirming...  
And faith-restoring...**

COMPANY:

**And spirit-raising  
To be with us.**

[Lights out on choir and back to Elise and Jim. She stays for a beat until Jim signals to her that it's done.]

JIM: Elise, I want to take some shots of  
the town...

[Elise nods as Jim leaves. After a beat, her cell phone RINGS. She looks at the number, hesitates for a second before answering it.]

ELISE: Hello...

Scene Two.  
Flashback to April.

CHELSEA MARKET, NEW YORK CITY.

DOWNSTAGE RIGHT is the Lobster Place inside New York's famous Chelsea Market which has different sections for the different seafood.

[Lights out on Elise as LAUREN enters. She is a typical yuppie, doing her marketing. She is on her cell phone, as she stops by the crab section. There is a market EMPLOYEE in white smock with his back to the audience.]

LAUREN: (on phone) Hello...  
Honey, how about soft-shell crabs?  
(pause)  
Okay...we'll also get some sushi...Just  
meet me here...Bye.

[The crab vendor nods at Lauren as she points. He is wearing a white butcher's coat, his back to the audience.]

LAUREN: I'd like a dozen soft-shell crabs,  
please...

[The vendor starts counting some crabs.]

LAUREN: You'll clean it for me...?

[The vendor nods and disappears. Lauren takes a selfie and checks it on her phone, posting it. After a beat he comes back with a paper package in hand.]

VENDOR: Is there anything else?

LAUREN: That's it, thank you...

VENDOR: How about a baby?

LAUREN: Excuse me?

VENDOR: I think you want to have a baby...

LAUREN: What?

VENDOR: Your husband wants to have a child...a  
son...

LAUREN: I don't see how that's any of your...

VENDOR: You should go back home to your country...

LAUREN: Are you...?

VENDOR: You are Filipino, right? There is a town  
called Obando...

LAUREN: (getting upset)  
Are you fucking crazy?!

VENDOR: Obando...that's where you should go and  
pray to San Pascual in mid May...You'll need a  
miracle to save your marriage...Excuse me...

LAUREN: That isn't any of your fucking...

[Enter ALEX as the vendor disappears. He is handsome in a suit. He leans to kiss Lauren who is close to tears.]

ALEX: Hey, Honey...I got two packages of eel...  
honey? What's...what's the matter?  
Why are you crying?

LAUREN: That fucking vendor...

ALEX: What happened?

LAUREN: He was crazy...

ALEX: (looking around)  
What did he do?

LAUREN: He said...he just upset me...

ALEX: (almost shouting)  
Can we have the manager!

[Two MEN approach, one being the manager.]

MANAGER: I'm the manager...how can I help you?

ALEX: As you can see, one of your men really  
upset my wife...

MANAGER: I'm so sorry...which one?

LAUREN: The crab guy...

MANAGER: This guy?

LAUREN: No, the other man...

MANAGER: What other man? Did you get his name?  
Do you see him anywhere?

LAUREN: (looking around)  
No...He was the one assigned here...

MANAGER: David here is in charge of this section...

LAUREN: There was another man...

MANAGER: There is no other man assigned here, Ma'am...

DAVID: I was on a break...

ALEX: Honey, are you sure...

LAUREN: (getting agitated)  
Of course, I'm sure...He gave me this...

[Lauren hands Alex the package of crabs. He opens the package and finds a statue of a San Pascual. Lauren faints and Alex catches her. The Chelsea market employees take off their smocks and join the Company in the church pews.]

ALEX: What kind of joke is...honey...Honey!

[Lights out and on the choir. Music under.]

COMPANY:

<b><i>Santa Clara, pinong-pino.</i></b>	{Santa Clara, most refined,
<b><i>Ako po ay bigyan nyo</i></b>	Please give me
<b><i>Ng asawang mahal ako.</i></b>	A wife that loves me
<b><i>Na hindi sira ang ulo.</i></b>	Who is not crazy.}

[Lights out on choir.]

#### DOCTOR'S OFFICE, NEW YORK CITY.

There is one leather club chair and a comfy couch facing each other.

[Light on Lauren, sitting on the long couch, in the middle of a session with her PSCYCHIATRIST, whose back is to the audience.]

LAUREN: It's just one of the many  
reasons why I want to leave this  
city...New York is just full of  
crazy people...  
**It was after  
That incident  
At the market,  
That things took a turn  
For the worse.  
It was after  
That incident  
At the market  
We came home  
With some sort of curse...**

[Lights out on the doctor's office. A soft spotlight remains on the doctor's chair. Lauren stays on the couch.]

ALEX AND LAUREN'S APARTMENT, NEW YORK CITY.

UPSTAGE CENTER is the couple's apartment with giant windows. The living room is spare and beige.

[Light on the apartment. Lauren is on the couch which is now a part of the apartment, avoiding looking at the statue which is sitting on top of the coffee table. Alex is pacing with his phone. The session continues with Lauren occasionally answering back to her doctor. When she does, Alex freezes his action or maybe lights dim.]

LAUREN: Honey, can we please just throw it out...it's giving me the creeps...

ALEX: I think that's a sign, don't you...

LAUREN: You are as crazy as that man...

PSYCHIATRIST: Did you think it was sign?

LAUREN: (looking at psychiatrist)  
Oh, God, no...

[Alex stops pacing and reads off his phone.]

ALEX: You're the one who said the statue looked like that man...He's right though... Wikipedia says it is a statue of San Pascual Baylon, the patron saint of fertility, wealth and abundance...one of the patron saints in the town of Obando, in Bulacan province that hosts a fiesta every May... What else did he say?

LAUREN: He said that we needed to have a son to save our marriage...Does our marriage need saving?

ALEX: Honey...

LAUREN: We've been trying so hard...

ALEX: I know...and we'll keep trying...

LAUREN: So why was he saying that...

PSYCHIATRIST: Was there reason for him to say that..

ALEX: I don't know, honey...he was crazy...

LAUREN: Why would he say that? Obviously,  
he could sense it...I mean to just say  
that out of nowhere...to know that I was  
Filipino...How did he know that...And about  
that town...Obando...

[She pronounces it Oh-Band-Oh. Alex corrects her.]

ALEX: Obando.

LAUREN: What?

ALEX: It's pronounced...never mind...it was just  
some random New York thing...

LAUREN: God...I really hate this city...

ALEX: What are the odds of this happening...

LAUREN: The odds of this happening are high  
here in New York...Please, can we just  
throw it out...?

[Alex nods. He picks the statue up and takes a selfie with it before leaving the room.  
Lights out on the apartment and back on at the doctor's office. Music under.]

LAUREN: I think with the change in  
season, people here in this city  
just get a little crazier...call it  
cabin fever or sun-associated  
depression...after a long winter...  
People just get a little nuttier  
for my taste...even us...  
**Both my husband  
And I haven't  
Been the same since then.  
Now I wonder when  
We'll be fine again.  
With each other.**

[Lights out on the office and back on the apartment. The statue is now sitting on one of  
the side tables. Lauren turns and sees the statue. She lets out a bloodcurdling  
SCREAM.]

LAUREN: EEAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!!!!

[Alex runs in groggily, wielding a baseball bat.]

ALEX: What!? What!?

LAUREN: (pointing at the statue)  
It's back!!!!!!!

ALEX: Jesus, honey...

[Alex collapses on the couch, LAUGHING.]

LAUREN: You think it's funny!  
(to psychiatrist)  
It wasn't funny at all...

[Lauren throws a pillow at Alex.]

ALEX: I couldn't throw it out...

[Lauren is still shaky.]

ALEX: I thought...well, what if it IS a  
sign...

[Lauren stands up and grabs the statue, angrily.]

LAUREN: You are insane...if you don't want  
to throw it out, I will...

[She wraps it in her shawl and tucks it under her as she sits back down on the couch.]

PSYCHIATRIST: Did you?

ALEX: Honey...no...

[Alex stops her.]

ALEX: Maybe, I am insane but we've tried  
everything... And Dr. Goldberg says that there is  
no reason why we can't have a baby...  
so call me crazy...but there's no  
harm in believing...

[Lauren shrugs him off and turns back into the office with the statue. Alex just slumps back on the couch. Lights out on the apartment and back into the office. Lauren produces the statue, unwrapping it for the doctor. Music under.]

PSYCHIATRIST: I guess you didn't throw it out...

LAUREN: No...I didn't throw it out...  
I couldn't...

PSYCHIATRIST: Why do you think?  
Guilt?

[She hands the statue to her doctor who looks at it curiously.]

LAUREN:  
**You can tell me  
That incident  
At the market,  
Is guilt  
Manifesting itself.**

PSYCHIATRIST: Was it?

LAUREN: I don't know...  
**I guess maybe  
That incident  
At the market  
Was just me  
Protecting myself...**

PSYCHIATRIST: From what?

LAUREN: What?

PSYCHIATRIST: You said you were protecting yourself...from what?

LAUREN: I don't know...

PSYCHIATRIST: Why would you say it?

LAUREN: I don't know...maybe, I'm protecting myself from the hurt...

PSYCHIATRIST: The hurt?

LAUREN: Well, it's not that I don't  
want to have a baby...Alex wants one  
so desperately...but...

**I am just so  
Afraid my ment-  
Ality will wane...  
I will go insane...  
What an awful bane...  
For a mother.**

[Lights out on the doctor's office and back on apartment as Alex enters. She is furious.]

LAUREN: I wish you talked to me first...

ALEX: I wanted to surprise you...

LAUREN: Well, you did...

ALEX: I thought...

LAUREN: You always do this, God!

ALEX: It would be good for us...Besides  
you always wanted to visit the  
Philippines...

PSYCHIATRIST: This is not about surprising  
you with a visit to the Philippines,  
is it...

LAUREN: Not this way...  
(to both)  
I feel like I'm being pressured...

ALEX/PSYCHIATRIST: About what?

LAUREN: (to Alex)  
**ABOUT HAVING A BABY!**

[Beat. Music under.]

LAUREN: (to psychiatrist)  
About having a baby...

ALEX: I'm not pressuring you...I've never...  
I have never pressured you...

LAUREN: God, Alex...

ALEX: I just thought...I just thought...

LAUREN: (to Alex)  
What?! What?! That we'll have a  
baby after praying for one in that  
town? Seriously?

ALEX: I just thought it would be fun,  
that's all...after that weird incident,  
you haven't been the same...Please calm  
down...

LAUREN: (to psychiatrist)  
He thinks it as a sign...that we will  
finally have a child because of some  
crazy person...

ALEX: I thought going to that place...  
I thought maybe you will see how  
ridiculous that incident was...it was  
a joke...it was meant as a joke...

LAUREN: (to psychiatrist)  
He meant it as a joke...  
(to Alex)  
Well, it's not funny.  
(to psychiatrist)  
It wasn't funny...

ALEX: You've been so uptight...  
upset...ever since that day...

PSYCHIATRIST: You have been so uptight...  
upset...ever since that day...

LAUREN:  
**Yes, I know  
'Til I give him a son,  
That he won't really be  
Content.**

LAUREN:

**I would go  
On deceiving him if  
It were not for that strange  
Event.  
At the market.**

ALEX: I think we both...A trip would do us  
both a world of good...You love beaches...  
the Philippines has the best beaches...

LAUREN: (to Alex)  
I do...

ALEX: We don't have to go to that town...

LAUREN: (to psychiatrist)  
God! I am just so afraid to have  
a child...  
(to Alex)  
No, I want to go...  
(to psychiatrist)  
But I am more afraid of losing him...

ALEX: Are you sure?

LAUREN: (to Alex)  
Yes...we've tried everything else...  
why not listen to a crazy man...

ALEX: (getting excited)  
Great, honey!...

LAUREN: (to psychiatrist)  
I will have a child when I'm ready...

PSYCHIATRIST: And are you willing to tell  
him that?

[Beat. Music under.]

LAUREN:

**It was after  
That incident  
At the market  
That things went from  
Just bad to worse.**

PSYCHIATRIST: You say that you're afraid of losing him...what do you think would happen when he finds out that you haven't stopped taking birth-control pills...

LAUREN:

**It was after  
That incident  
At the market  
When I came home  
With that curse.**

PSYCHIATRIST: When he finds out that you have been lying and deceiving him all this time...

LAUREN:

**I am just  
Hoping it isn't  
Something I'll regret!**

PSYCHIATRIST: All this anxiety and fear of yours, it all stems from that deception...

LAUREN:

**There's no point  
To this argument.**

PSYCHIATRIST: And I feel that I cannot help you if you're not willing to be true to yourself...

LAUREN:

**I am living  
In such torment.**

PSYCHIATRIST: You are just wasting my time and your money...

LAUREN:  
**All because of  
That incident!**

ALEX: I love you so much...

LAUREN: (to psychiatrist)  
I'm so afraid of losing him...  
(to Alex)  
I love you, too...

PSYCHIATRIST: I think our session is  
finished...

ALEX: You are going to be the best mother  
in the world...

LAUREN:  
**At the market.**

[Lights out.]

Scene Three.  
Morning.

BENNY'S APARTMENT, MANILA.

UPSTAGE LEFT is Benny's apartment in Manila which is small but clean.

[BENNY shares his apartment with his mother, Aling Sabel. They are eating breakfast.]

BENNY: *Inay*, not again...

ALING SABEL: I'm just saying...I don't want you  
to grow old alone...

BENNY: (almost simultaneously with his mom)  
I know...I know...you just don't want me  
to grow old alone...

ALING SABEL: *Anak*, you're not getting any younger...

BENNY: *Ay, Inay*...I'm fine being by myself...

ALING SABEL: What will you do when I'm gone...  
Who will take care of you?

BENNY: Don't worry about me so much, *Inay*...  
Somehow, I know that there is someone  
out there for me...I just have to find...  
that person...Besides, I'm here to  
take care of you, not the other way  
around...

ALING SABEL: We should really go to Obando...  
The *fiesta* is in two weeks...

BENNY: Here we go again...

ALING SABEL: Maybe you'll meet your future wife  
there...That's where I met your father, you  
know...He was dancing in the streets with his  
troupe...pandango-ing his way to church when I  
saw him...

BENNY: I know...I know...and where is he now?  
Maybe we should go back there to look for  
him...

[Aling Sabel is offended. She stands up and takes the dishes and brings them to the sink. Benny regrets what he just said. He stands up and approaches his mother. Music under.]

BENNY: I'm...I'm sorry, *Inay*...I didn't mean what  
I said...

[Aling Sabel just nods.]

BENNY: Let me do that...

ALING SABEL: No, it's fine...  
(beat) I also went to Obando to pray  
for a son...it was a miracle that I had  
you...I was already 42...  
(she winces in pain for a second)

BENNY: I know...I know...

ALING SABEL:  
**I still believe, anak,  
In miracles.**

BENNY:  
***Ay, Inay...***

ALING SABEL:  
**You think it's wrong  
But I don't care...**

BENNY:  
**Not that I think  
It's wrong.**

ALING SABEL:  
**Everyday we experience  
Different  
Little miracles.  
We take for granted  
Like the air.  
So what, but it  
Helps me get through  
My day.  
Something to look  
Forward to I must say.  
It gives me a  
Reason to hope  
And pray...**

[Aling Sabel winces in pain.]

ALING SABEL:  
**A little miracle  
Goes a long, long way.  
You have to have a little  
faith, *anak...***

BENNY:  
**It's not that I do not  
Believe in miracles, *Inay.***

ALING SABEL:  
***Ay, anak...***

BENNY:

**I'm living proof,  
You always say...**

ALING SABEL:

**What a prayer  
Can do...**

BENNY:

**I do believe in God  
No matter what you think,  
*Inay,*  
But it gets harder  
With each day.  
Just look all around you,  
Aren't you worried.  
There's poverty, sickness,  
Hunger and greed.  
The wars that religions,  
Mostly, decreed.  
A little miracle,  
No.  
A ton of miracles  
Is what we all need.**

ALING SABEL:

**But what about the sun,  
The moon, the stars, the sky...  
A rainbow when it rains,  
It always makes you sigh.  
An orchid that's in bloom.  
The flowers and the trees...  
The ocean and the seas...  
The world in all her glories...  
These are the miracles  
I always talk about, *anak...***

BENNY:

**Yes, I know...**

ALING SABEL:

**It wouldn't hurt  
To just believe...**

[Benny yawns.]

ALING SABEL: You better go sleep...you  
look tired...

[Benny nods then kisses his mother.]

ALING SABEL: Do you want me to wake you up?

BENNY: I'll set my alarm. Good morning, *Inay*...

ALING SABEL: Good morning, *anak*...

**It wouldn't hurt  
To just believe...**

[Lights out.]

Scene Four.  
Noon.

INSIDE A CAFÉ, MANILA.

A typical café for ladies who lunch.

[BETH is already seated, having a glass of wine. She is dressed to the nines. After a beat, ELISE comes in. She is as pretty as her twin but dressed simply in jeans and a t-shirt. She gives Beth a kiss before sitting down.]

ELISE: Sorry...

BETH: My dear sister, it's okay... you are only  
two glasses late...  
(takes a swig of her white wine)

ELISE: I'm starving...  
(picks up menu)

BETH: And I'm thirsty...  
(looking around for a waiter)

ELISE: How is everyone?

BETH: Eric's fine...Regina's  
fine...where is our waiter...

ELISE: Beth...

BETH: What?

[Elise gives up and goes back to the menu.]

BETH: I'm so looking forward to our spa weekend...

ELISE: (puts down menu)  
About that...

BETH: C'mon, Elise...

ELISE: I'm sorry...

BETH: Do you know how difficult it was to get a reservation to that spa...I've waited three months!

ELISE: I had no choice when they gave me the assignment...

BETH: And did you tell them you had plans?  
(beat)  
Unbelievable...waiter! Where is that waiter!

ELISE: I'm sorry...

BETH: For once you should tell them that you have plans...

ELISE: I know...

[Beat]

ELISE: Why don't you come with me...I'm covering the fiesta in Obando...

BETH: No, thank you...

ELISE: It will be fun...I'm staying in a nice hotel...

BETH: Where is that waiter...?

ELISE: C'mon, Beth...we hardly see each other...

BETH: And whose fault is that?

ELISE: I know...that's why you should come with me...it will be fun...the Tantoco twins on another adventure...it's been a while...

[The WAITER comes to take their order. Music under.]

BETH: Finally...I'll have a Waldorf Salad but no eggs or raisins...and another glass...

[She taps at her glass.]

ELISE: And I'll have an Adobo Sandwich and a Pineapple Juice, please...thank you... I'm serious...you should come with me...

[The waiter leaves.]

ELISE: I miss you...

BETH: I miss you, too but c'mon...do you really expect me to drop everything to go to Obando...of all places...No, thanks...

ELISE: You would have...a long time ago... (beat) C'mon, Beth...you could pray for a husband for me...

BETH: Ha!...a husband for you...that will be a miracle...

ELISE:  
**What happened to the girl  
I knew a long time ago...  
That person who...  
Made me pursue...  
My dreams so long ago**

[Beth gives her a look and drinks her glass down.]

BETH: I got older.

ELISE:

**The things we did...  
When we were kids...  
I fondly still remember.  
What happened to  
My sister?**

BETH:

**Well, I became  
A wife and mother.  
Experience  
Has taught me since  
To be responsible  
The consequences  
Of my actions,  
Irreversible.**

ELISE: Really?!

BETH: Really.

**The things we did  
When we were kids  
I'm happy to remember.  
I tell my loving daughter  
The fun we always  
Had together.**

ELISE:

**We were so young...**

BETH:

**We were naïve  
From the facts of life,  
Dear sister.  
The lessons I learned  
Are hard to believe  
From being a wife...  
And mother.**

ELISE:

**The journeys we took  
Were one for the books  
And always life-affirming.**

BETH:

**If you want life-affirming  
Just wait until you're giving  
Birth.**

ELISE: Really? Giving birth?

BETH: Yes, giving birth...you should try it sometime...Just see how you feel after pushing a watermelon through your...

ELISE:

**What happened to  
The girl I knew...**

BETH:

**She grew up,  
Don't you know...**  
You push so hard that it tears right through your...

ELISE:

**That person who,  
With me, went through  
So much, so long ago...**

BETH: (amused)  
You won't recognize it after...

ELISE: (laughing)  
Enough! God!

BETH:

**I'm still right here  
But one thing's clear.  
I'm older and I'm smarter.  
Remember our dear mother...**

ELISE: Why bring her up?

BETH:  
**How she became so bitter...**

ELISE: And angry...and impossible...

BETH:  
**I understand her better...**

ELISE: What do you mean?

BETH:  
**Because now,  
I am exactly like her.  
And that's what happened to  
The girl you knew...**

[The waiter comes with their drinks. Beth takes a swig of hers as soon as the waiter puts it down making Elise notice.]

ELISE: Thank you.  
[Beat.]  
Is that why you drink?

BETH: I drink because I can...

[Awkward beat as Beth takes another sip.]

ELISE: So what do you say to Obando?

BETH: I don't know...

ELISE: C'mon, Beth...*Ate*?

BETH: (amused)  
Stop it!

ELISE: Please, *Ate*...

BETH: (takes a sip of wine)  
Is that cute cameraman of yours  
coming? What's his name...

ELISE: Jim...

BETH: Yes...Jim...is he still in love with you?

ELISE: Beth...

BETH: I don't see why you never...

ELISE: We work together...

BETH: Right...right...well, if he's coming... count me in...

[Elise reaches over to hug Beth who is scandalized.]

ELISE: Thanks, Ate!

BETH: (dryly)  
Just the place I've been dying to visit...Obando, Bulacan...

[She raises her glass and downs it. Lights out.]

Scene Five.  
Evening.

STREETS OF OBANDO.

A street corner.

[Lights on a street corner as MONMON enters with his wooden tray of cigarettes. A MAN walks by and Monmon 'trips' in front of him, his tray spilling cigarettes on the street.]

MONMON: Ay, Sorry, Sir...

MAN: It's okay...

[As the man bends down to help and Monmon quickly pickpockets his wallet off him. He stands up after a beat, leaving Monmon to nurse after his 'hurt' knee.]

MONMON: Thank you, sir...

MAN: Are you okay?

MONMON: Yes, yes...thank you...

[The man leaves and Monmon smiles as he checks the cash in the wallet. He looks up to the heavens before walking away.]

MONMON. And thank you for this pocketful  
of miracles...

HOTEL ROOM.

DOWNSTAGE LEFT is a hotel room that is supposed to be the best in Obando, but is like a three-star hotel room with two double beds. It is cramped with a desk and chair.

[Beth and Elise enter and Beth is immediately disappointed. A hotel BELLBOY carries their bags in, Beth having over-packed as usual. Elise is amused as the bellboy struggles. She looks over at her sister who is already looking for the mini-bar. Beth notices as Elise gives the bellboy a tip.]

BETH: What?

ELISE: Nothing...

BETH: I thought you said that this was a  
nice hotel...

ELISE: Ay, Beth...

[ELISE starts taking her shoes off.]

BETH: What kind of a hotel doesn't have a mini-bar...

ELISE: Seriously? We are here for a religious  
festival...

BETH: Even Jesus drank, Elise...

ELISE: What?

BETH: At the last supper?

[Elise collapses on one of the beds, not sure of how to react.]

ELISE: Aren't you drinking a little too much  
lately?

BETH: I've always drank a little too much...

ELISE: No, but, lately...Eric said...

[Elise stops, hoping that Beth didn't hear what she just said. But she did.]

BETH: What?

ELISE: Nothing...

BETH: What do you mean Eric said...

ELISE: Nothing...

BETH: Did he call you...? Elise...?

[Beth is suddenly nervous.]

BETH: Did he call you?!

ELISE: Yes...yes...

BETH: When?

ELISE: He was just worried...He said since Regina started college...

BETH: When?! When did he call you?!

[Beth is pacing. Elise sits up.]

ELISE: Your husband called me a couple of weeks ago...He said he was worried...He said he had come home several times at night and you were drunk...and angry...belligerent at times... Of course, this worried me so much...Beth?

BETH: So much so that you cancelled out on our spa date...

ELISE: I wanted to take you on an adventure... something that we would have done when we were younger...something that you used to enjoy...an exotic, meaningful adventure... a journey as you always said...something life-affirming...

BETH: Yah...this is life-affirming all right...

ELISE: I'm serious, Beth...I'm worried about you...  
What is going on, Beth?

[Beat.]

BETH: I left Eric.

ELISE: What do you mean?

[Beth starts putting her bags together to leave. Elise stops her.]

ELISE: Beth, please...

BETH: I have to go...He'll know that I'm  
here with you...He might follow...

ELISE: Beth, please...what happened?

[Elise blocks the door.]

ELISE: Please, sit down...

[She tries to guide her to sit in bed and Beth just swats her away.]

ELISE:

**What happened to  
The girl I knew  
A long time ago...**

[Beth calms down and sits down.]

BETH: Not again...

ELISE: So what happened?

[Beat.]

BETH: He's having an affair...

ELISE: What?! Who?

BETH: I don't know...

ELISE: Then how can you be so sure...

BETH: A wife knows...

ELISE: C'mon, Beth...a wife knows?...

BETH: A wife knows...

[Beat.]

BETH: Journalism 101...

ELISE: What are you talking about?

BETH: You're not the only Journalism  
major here...I did my own investigation...

ELISE: And what did you find out?

BETH: That it was inevitable...ever since Regina  
left for college, things haven't been the same...

ELISE: Does Regina know?

BETH: We were already falling apart...it was  
really just a matter of time...

ELISE: Does your daughter know?

BETH: Of course...I wouldn't just decide  
without telling her...what kind of a  
mother do you think I am...

ELISE: And what did she say?

BETH: That I was being foolish...she said  
that we just probably needed this  
time alone...to rekindle...those were her  
exact words...to rekindle...like we were  
firewood...not restore...refresh...renew...  
reawaken...I mean, I'm paying so much for  
her to become a fucking writer  
herself and all she can use is rekindle...  
I guess when the fire burns out in a  
relationship, it's an appropriate word...

[ELISE listens to her sister ramble. Beth notices ELISE.]

ELISE: How long has it been since you found out?

BETH: Oh...it's been eight months, almost a year... when I came back from the States...Eric was in HongKong on business that time...I called him at the Mandarin Oriental where he usually stays... He wasn't in his room so I left a message...I told them to tell him to return his wife's call... and the concierge was a little confused but told me anyway that there was a problem with the dress I had dry-cleaned that morning...something about the stain...I think...I can't remember... I had hung up at that point...

[Beat.]

BETH: Aren't you going to ask who?

[Beat.]

ELISE: So, who is it? Do you know who?

BETH: That's the only thing I haven't figured out, yet...

ELISE: Have you spoken to him?

BETH: No...

[Beth is close to tears.]

BETH: But I don't care, anymore...it's been a while since we've had sex...

ELISE: (suddenly uncomfortable)  
*Ate, TMI...*

BETH: Well, I still have my needs...

ELISE: I can't listen to this...

[ELISE stands up and gets ready to go out.]

BETH: Where are you going?

ELISE: I need a drink...

[Lights out.]

LOLA MARY'S SHACK, OBANDO.

UPSTAGE CENTER is a small room with a *papag* and a small table with a small single countertop stove. There are hats and fans everywhere.

[Light on small room. LOLA MARY is in bed napping as her grandson MONMON prepares dinner. He sets the table and goes to wake her up. Music under.]

MONMON: *Lola...Lola...*it's time to eat.

LOLA MARY: (sitting up, confused)  
Ah...is it lunchtime, already?

MONMON: No, *Lola...*it's dinner time...it's six  
o'clock...

LOLA MARY: Oh...

[Monmon helps his grandmother up. She is dressed nicely in a very brightly colorful duster. She is holding a hat that she was working on. She puts it aside. Music under.]

MONMON: I made *sinigang*...

LOLA MARY: With shrimp!

[They sit and he serves her.]

MONMON: I know you love shrimp, *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: Where did you get the money...?  
This is so extravagant...

MONMON: I sold a lot of cigarettes today...

[Lola Mary seems touched.]

LOLA MARY: Thank you, my dear...you must have spent  
everything you earned...

MONMON: It's okay, *Lola*...I'll earn it again...you always say that I have a pocketful of miracles...

LOLA MARY: You are a good *apo*...I will pay you after the fiesta...from what I get for my hats...from MY pocketful of miracles...

MONMON: *Lola, talaga*...Besides, you told me to enjoy life...

[Monmon starts to eat. Lola Mary reaches for his cheek. She starts to eat and grimaces.]

MONMON: What's the matter, *Lola*? Is it not sour enough?

LOLA MARY: Uhm...Yes...but it's fine...it's fine, sweetie...

MONMON: I didn't have enough money to buy the tamarind...

[Lola Mary is touched.]

LOLA MARY: It's delicious...

[They enjoy their dinner, the little boy happy that his grandmother is eating well.]

LOLA MARY: So, what does my little man want?

MONMON: Nothing...

LOLA MARY: What do you need? I made extra hats this year...and judging on the weather, I will probably sell most of it...

MONMON: Nothing, *Lola*...I don't need anything...

LOLA MARY: Well...what do you want...?

MONMON: I don't want anything...

LOLA MARY: I know what you want...you want to go back to school...

MONMON: No, *Lola*...not anymore...it's too late  
for me now...I'm way behind...You get  
something nice for yourself...

[The little boy starts eating. Lola Mary is bothered by what her grandson said but lets it  
go.]

LOLA MARY: I have everything I need...  
**I know we don't have money, honey.**  
**I know we don't have much.**  
**And things aren't always sunny, sonny.**  
**But we're not out of touch**  
**From the realities of life.**  
**We're poor but manage to survive.**  
**The more important thing of all...**  
**What matters most, if you recall...**  
**I've told you this since you were small...**  
**Be thankful you're alive...**

MONMON: (almost simultaneously)  
Be thankful you're alive...

LOLA MARY:  
**That's why**  
**You've got to live life**  
**To the fullest.**  
**You've got to**  
**Be all you can be.**  
**Just live a good life**  
**For you are blessed.**  
**The best things in life**  
**Are for free.**  
**You've got to savor**  
**Every moment**  
**That you've spent under the sun.**  
**If you just live life**  
**Like you really haven't,**  
**Go ahead and have fun!**

[They start enjoying the song, acting and dancing.]

MONMON: (maybe rapping?)  
**My parents left me**  
**With you, Grandma.**  
**Abandoned me for good.**

MONMON:

**And yet I did  
Survive the trauma.  
The pain, the tears  
That came with drama.  
You never thought I would.  
I thank you for your  
Sacrifice.  
Your love, your care,  
Your good advice.  
Because of you  
I've always felt  
We lived in paradise.  
(back to singing?)  
And so  
I always live life  
For the present.  
I always live life  
Day to day.**

LOLA MARY:

**You've got to treat life  
Like a birthday present  
That you unwrap  
Everyday.  
You've got to love life  
Like no other.  
It's the only one you've got.  
And so, above all  
Just remember, brother.  
Go, enjoy it a lot!**

[They start piling up the hats on top of Lola Mary's head, gathering it by batches until it is so high, in rhythm to song.]

MONMON:

**We're very poor  
And our future  
Is looking bleak  
They say.**

Scene Six.  
May 17, morning.

STREETS.

The streets of Obando.

[Lola Mary and Monmon make their way UPSTAGE CENTER. She is wearing a tall pile of hats on her head and holding a bundle of fans.]

LOLA MARY:

**But we don't care  
We have each other.  
And that's just enough  
For us to live today.**

MONMON:

**That's why  
I always live life  
For the present  
I always live life  
Day to day...**

LOLA MARY:

**You've got to treat life  
Like a birthday present  
That you unwrap everyday.  
You've got to love life  
Like no other.  
It's the only one you've got.  
And so, above all  
Just remember, brother,  
Go, enjoy it a...**

MONMON:

**Go, enjoy it a...!**

LOLA MARY/MONMON:

**Go, enjoy it a lot!!!**

LOLA MARY: Okay, my *apo*, I'll meet you at  
9 tonight...inside the church...

MONMON: Okay...

[Monmon makes his way off-stage with his box of cigarettes as Lola Mary peddles her wares.]

LOLA MARY: Hats...fans...Would you like a hat,  
sir?...Hats...fans...

[Beth and Elise make their way across the stage. Beth is wearing a beautiful linen dress that is too short and sexy for church and heels.]

BETH: I thought you said Jim was going to  
be here...

ELISE: Not til tomorrow night...Let's go, I don't  
want to miss mass...

BETH: Hold on, I need to buy a hat...

[Beth stops by Lola Mary to pick a hat.]

BETH: Good morning, *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: Good morning, Miss...Would you like  
a hat?

BETH: Yes...one to match my dress...

LOLA MARY: (looking at Beth)  
Dress...I thought you forgot your pants...  
Let me see...

[Elise is amused at the old woman's comment as Lola Mary pulls the hats off her head. She picks a wide-brimmed one with white flowers.]

LOLA MARY: How about this?

[She hands it to Beth who puts it on. Lola Mary takes out a hand mirror and Beth looks at herself.]

BETH: Perfect. How much?

LOLA MARY: Just a hundred pesos...Why not  
buy a fan?

[Beth takes out her wallet to pay for the hat.]

BETH: Here...Thank you, *po*...and a fan...How much for that?

[She points at a fan and Lola Mary takes it out. Elise is getting impatient.]

LOLA MARY: Fifty pesos...

BETH: Here, thank you, *po*

ELISE: Are you done?

[Beth sneers at her sister before taking out her phone to take a selfie.]

BETH: Not quite...

[She poses provocatively before Elise pulls her along, amusing Lola Mary.]

BETH: Now, I'm done...

ELISE: Let's go...

[Beth waves at Lola Mary who smiles as she puts the stack of hats back on.]

LOLA MARY: Hats...how about a hat, Miss...

[Light on choir.]

COMPANY:

<b><i>Santa Clara, pinung-pino</i></b>	{Santa Clara, most refined.
<b><i>Ako po ay bigyan nyo</i></b>	Upon me, please bestow
<b><i>Ng asawang labing-tatlo</i></b>	Thirteen wives who
<b><i>Sa hirap di magreklamo...</i></b>	Won't complain if we're poor.}

#### ST. CLARE HOSTEL, OBANDO.

A typical hostel room holds a bunk bed, DOWNSTAGE RIGHT with just an antique desk and an electrified gaslamp. The *capiz* windows provide little breeze as evidenced by the crocheted curtains. There is a ceiling fan that doesn't work. There is a small door that will reveal a tiny bathroom.

[Enter Lauren, dressed in a linen jacket and skirt wrinkled from a day of travel. She is dying from the heat. She looks around, unhappy with the room. She attempts to turn the ceiling fan on as her husband, Alex comes in with their matching bags. He is handsome in linen clothes.]

LAUREN: Are you kidding me?!!!

ALEX: Honey, please...(beat)  
It was the best I could do on short notice.

[Lauren paces while attempting to take off her jacket. She sits on the lower bed.]

ALEX: You're the one who insisted on coming here...I told you we could skip it...

LAUREN: Alright...Again, it's my fault...  
God...why is it so hot?! I need a shower...

ALEX: It's the Philippines, honey...

[Music under from outside the window as the *Santa Clara* song is played by bamboo and local instruments. Alex looks out the window.]

ALEX: We better go. We don't want to miss mass...

LAUREN: I need to shower...we've been traveling for over a day...

ALEX: I don't want to miss mass...

LAUREN: I need to take a shower!

[She opens the bathroom door and turns the shower on and no water comes out.]

LAUREN: Are you kidding me!

[Alex sits on the bunk bed shaking his head. It will be one of those trips. The song plays. Lights out on hostel.]

INSIDE THE CHURCH OF OBANDO.

There are rows of pews facing the audience DOWNSTAGE CENTER separated in the middle by an aisle.

[The COMPANY is crowded in the pews, some in native costumes, some in light loose clothing, some with fans. The Company recite a litany of prayers, overlapping each other until it becomes a cacophony that turns into music.]

MAN: Please find me somebody to love for the rest  
of my life...

WOMAN: I pray for a husband who will cherish me...

WOMAN 2: A daughter, dear Santa Clara, or my  
husband will leave me...

MAN: I beseech you, Santa Clara, I am desperate to  
find a spouse...

WOMAN: You are my last hope, holy Santa Clara...my  
last hope...

[Light on Aling Sabel.]

ALING SABEL:

**Please find him a wife...**

**A sweet, loving wife...**

**Oh, dear Santa Clara.**

**A partner for life,**

**My son needs a wife...**

**Holy Santa Clara.**

**Someone who'll win his heart**

**So he won't be alone.**

**And he can finally start**

**A family of his own.**

**I want to rest and be at peace.**

I love my son but I am sick...and tired  
of cooking and cleaning for him...

**Oh, dear Santa Clara...**

**Santa Clara,**

**Hear me, please.**

[Light on Lauren. She is dying from the heat, Alex beside her, fanning her to no comfort. Music under.]

LAUREN: God!

ALEX: Please, honey...

LAUREN: Can we just get out of here!

ALEX: After the mass...(beat)  
**I pray for a son  
Please give me a son...  
Oh, dear San Pascual  
Who will carry on  
My name when I'm gone.  
Blessed San Pascual!  
My boy will be the best  
At everything he does.**

LAUREN:  
**God, it's so hot!**

ALEX:  
**We will feel truly blessed  
If you'll bestow this gift to us.**

LAUREN:  
**It's very hot!**

ALEX:  
**Our marriage needs it to survive.**

LAUREN:  
**I'm so hot.**

ALEX:  
**Oh, dear San Pascual.  
San Pascual.**

[Light on Monmon as he squeezes through the pew past Alex and Lauren. Music under.]

MONMON: Excuse me, *po...*

[Monmon squeezes past Alex, bumping him.]

MONMON: Sorry.

[Monmon makes his way out before Alex realizes that he has been pickpocketed. He is missing his I-phone.]

ALEX: HEY!

LAUREN: What happened?

ALEX: That kid stole my phone!

LAUREN: Honey!

[Monmon looks back, smiling as they stare at each other for a beat. The little boy disappears in the crowded church. Alex tries to squeeze past the frenzied crowd but fails. Light on Beth and Elise who are sitting beside Aling Sabel.]

BETH:

**Please find  
A husband for my sister.**

ALING SABEL:

**My son needs a wife...**

BETH:

**A kind  
And handsome man.**

ALING SABEL:

**O, dear Santa Clara...**

ELISE:

**Some peace  
Of mind  
for my dear sister**

COMPANY:

**Please give us a sign  
That things will be fine.  
We beseech you, hear us...**

ELISE:

**To ease  
Her pain in life.**

COMPANY:

**Please give us some hope!  
Some reason to cope!  
We beseech you, hear us!**

BETH:

**A husband...**

ALEX:

**Son...**

ALING SABEL:

**A wife...**

ELISE:

**Peace of mind...**

MONMON:

**And good fortune...**

LAUREN:

**I am so hot!**

COMPANY:

**We thank you with  
Our lives  
And pray  
You bless us  
All soon.**

LAUREN:

**It's very hot!**

ALING SABEL:

**I still believe  
In miracles...**

LAUREN:

**I'm sweating!**

COMPANY:

**Holy Virgin Mother...**

ALEX:

**Blessed San Pascual...**

ALING SABEL:  
**O dear Santa Clara...**

COMPANY:  
**Hear our prayer!**

ALING SABEL:  
**Please find him a wife...**

COMPANY:  
**AMEN.**

[Aling Sabel faints and Elise catches her. Lights out.]

## ACT TWO.

Scene One.  
Later that evening.

PLACE: Obando, Bulacan

### INSIDE THE CHURCH.

[Lola Mary enters the church with her stack of hats. She genuflects in the middle before going in one of the pews. The church is peaceful and quiet with barely anyone in there. Music under. She puts her hats aside before kneeling.]

LOLA MARY: (does the sign of the cross)  
In the name of the Father, the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit...  
**Please give him some good fortune.**  
**And happiness, too.**  
**I pray that you always keep him**  
**Safe and sound and true.**  
**Holy Virgin Mother.**  
**Amen.**  
**I love to sit here**  
**In the peace and quiet,**  
**Away from all the worries**  
**In my head.**  
**Most people never really**  
**Seem to try it,**

LOLA MARY:

**Have peace and quiet  
In lives they've led.  
I love to sit alone  
With my own thoughts.  
It makes living worthwhile.  
I love to sit here  
In the peace and quiet  
And linger for a while.**

STREETS.

[Monmon is lurking in the streets for his next victim.]

MONMON: *Yosi...halls...Yosi...*

[His next victim approaches. He stalks it like a cat.]

MONMON:

**The sky is losing light.  
The sun has finally set.  
Another perfect night  
Of peace and quiet.  
The shadows from the moon,  
Such magic they can bring,  
It never is too soon  
For pocket-picking  
Of miracles.**

[He approaches his victim and is about to pounce when SARGENT LUCIO comes from around the corner. Monmon is quick to abort and acts normally.]

MONMON: Good evening, Sargent Lucio...

SARGENT LUCIO: Monmon...

MONMON: Isn't this a beautiful night?

SARGENT LUCIO: Yes, it is...And how is your  
*Lola Mary?*

MONMON: I am just about to meet her...in fact,  
I better go or I'll be late...

SARGENT LUCIO: Say Hello for me...

MONMON: I will...Babay...

[Sargent Lucio continues his beat as Monmon enters the shadows.]

INSIDE A CLINIC.

DOWNSTAGE LEFT is a doctor's office.

[Aling Sabel is seated, as a DOCTOR talks to her.]

DOCTOR: (with sensitivity)  
*Lola*...without further tests, I cannot  
really tell you for sure but I think  
you're very sick...

ALING SABEL: I have cancer...

[Beat.]

ALING SABEL: I've known for a long time...

DOCTOR: Do your daughters know how...  
how serious this is, *po*?

ALING SABEL: Oh...they are not my  
daughters...I just met them here, this  
morning...

DOCTOR: Well, who did you come here  
with?

ALING SABEL: Uhmm...I came with my son...  
I mean I came by myself for my son...  
I know...I know I don't have much time  
left...and I don't want him to be alone...  
But you see, he doesn't believe in  
miracles...

DOCTOR: Does your son know?

ALING SABEL: Oh...no...I didn't want him to have  
to worry...He has enough to worry about...

[Beat.]

ALING SABEL: He has enough to worry about...  
I should be going...

DOCTOR: *Lola*, I cannot really...I don't want to  
release you, *po*, without...without telling  
your son about your cancer...how serious this  
is...

ALING SABEL: *Doktor*, I don't have a lot of time  
left, so I should be going...

DOCTOR: *Lola*...

ALING SABEL: Thank you...

[Aling Sabel stands up and leaves. The doctor follows her outside the door where Elise and Beth are waiting.]

ELISE: Is everything okay?

ALING SABEL: Everything is fine...

[Aling Sabel heads straight for the door, Beth following her. Elise is a little confused.]

ELISE: Doc?

[Aling Sabel stops short and looks at the Doctor.]

DOCTOR: Everything is fine...

ELISE: Okay...thank you...

[They all exit, the Doctor giving Elise a strange look.]

### OUTSIDE A CLINIC.

[Beth is still wearing her ridiculously large hat and fanning herself to no relief.]

ALING SABEL: Thank you again for helping me...  
I better be on my way...

BETH: Okay...Good night...

[Aling Sabel walks away.]

ELISE: Aling Sabel...wait...Where are you staying, *po*? We'll take you...

ALING SABEL: No, it's okay...you have done more than enough...I have to wait for my son...He's arriving tomorrow...

ELISE: Aling Sabel, please...

BETH: She has to wait for her son...

ELISE: Why don't you stay with us, *po* at our hotel tonight...just until he comes...

[Beth pulls Elise aside, away from Aling Sabel.]

BETH: Excuse, *po*...(whispers)  
Elise, it's bad enough that I agreed to go with you on this life-affirming trip... but I don't want to spend the three...no, two days left, baby-sitting...

[Elise just looks at her sister and goes near Aling Sabel.]

BETH: Unbelievable...

ELISE: Please, we'll feel much better...we can't just leave you...

ALING SABEL: It's alright...

BETH: She says it's alright...

[Elise glares at Beth.]

ELISE: We insist, *po*.

[Elise waits for Beth to answer. Beat.]

BETH: (finally taking the hint)  
Yes...please...we insist, *po*...

ALING SABEL: Okay...

ELISE: How about your son?

ALING SABEL: I will just text him.

BETH: Did you happen to notice a liquor store  
near the hotel?

[Elise is amused at her sister. Aling Sabel walks ahead. Music under.]

ALING SABEL:

**I love the peace and quiet  
Of the evenings,  
When everybody  
Has gone home to sleep.  
I love to walk alone  
And count my blessings,  
The many mornings  
I get to keep.  
To have the time  
To ponder on my life  
Be thankful I'm still here.  
I love the peace and quiet  
Of the evenings,  
When I can disappear.**

[They make their way across the stage passing Monmon UPSTAGE CENTER. He is carrying his cigar box.]

MONMON:

**The stillness in the air,  
So peaceful, one forgets  
To always be aware  
Of empty pockets.**

[A MAN in dark clothes approaches him. Monmon lifts a carton of cigarettes from his box and takes out an I-phone which he hands to the man. The man looks at it then gives Monmon a wad of cash. The young boy counts the money then pockets it.]

MONMON:

**The later goes the night,  
The quieter it gets.  
Makes everything just right  
For picking pockets  
Of miracles.**

INSIDE THE CHURCH.

[Lola Mary is inside the church.]

LOLA MARY:

**I love to sit here  
In the peace and quiet  
And linger for a while.**

[After a beat, Monmon joins her in the pew. She looks over and reaches a hand out to caress his head.]

ST. CLARE HOSTEL.

There are mosquito nets draped over each level of the bunk bed.

[The rhythmic cricket SOUNDS and an occasional Gecko(tuko) CRY blend into the silence. Then, Lauren's bloodcurdling scream breaks the peace and quiet. Music continues but a different rhythm.]

LAUREN: EEEEEEEAAAHH!

[She runs out of the bathroom in a T-shirt and shorts, her mouth still foamy from brushing her teeth. She jumps on the lower bunk, obviously scared and upset, under the mosquito net. There is light inside the net. Alex, on the top bunk, jumps off.]

LAUREN: Oh, God! Oh, God! Oh, God!

ALEX: What!? What!?

[Lauren just points and shakes.]

LAUREN: Please hand me my purse...

ALEX: What happened?!

LAUREN: HAND ME MY PURSE!!!

[Lauren begins to cry as Alex hands his wife her purse. She takes out her hand sanitizer and proceeds to frantically rub it all over her arms and hands and legs, while mumbling to herself.]

LAUREN: What was I thinking, coming  
here...insisting on coming here...  
I never should have agreed...why...

ALEX: What happened?!

LAUREN: A FUCKING WATERBUG THE SIZE OF  
BROOKLYN LANDED ON ME, OKAY!!!

[Alex goes inside the bathroom to check it out. He takes off one of his flip-flops and looks for it. He sees it, throws the slipper on it and runs out to join his wife in bed, also afraid.]

LAUREN: Did you kill it?

ALEX: You're right, that cockroach is big...  
I've never seen anything that...what?

LAUREN: Did you kill it?!

ALEX: I...I think so...

LAUREN: You think so?! You think so?!

ALEX: Honey, it's just a roach...

LAUREN: It wasn't a cockroach...it was a  
waterbug...a freaking, flying waterbug...  
I've never seen such a thing...

ALEX: That's a cockroach here...

LAUREN: Whatever...It was flying, whirring  
like a helicopter before landing on me.  
Alex, honey, please, can we just go home?

ALEX: Honey...

[A Gecko CRIES.]

LAUREN: What is that, now!

ALEX: A *tuko*...ahm a gecko...

LAUREN: A gecko?

ALEX: It's a kind of...lizard...that's harmless...

LAUREN: I know what a f...  
(tries to keep it together)  
I know what a gecko is...can we  
please just go home...

ALEX: They're harmless...

LAUREN: Honey, please...I just want to go home...

[Lauren is still crying as Alex jumps on the top bunk, entering his mosquito net.]

ALEX: Just two more days, honey...

LAUREN: I just want to go home...

ALEX: Just two more days...good night...

[After a beat, only Lauren's SNIFFLES can be heard along with the rhythm of the crickets and gecko SOUNDS which becomes the background to Lauren's song. Pretty soon, Alex's SNORING joins in.]

LAUREN:  
**How can you be sleeping  
Through this peace and quiet?  
With a heat so stifling,  
Under this old, mosquito net.  
I am suffocating,  
Slowly dehydrating.  
Why can't we just  
Go home, please?  
How I miss New York.**

[A Gecko CRIES and Lauren jumps up on Alex's bunk, waking him up. Music under.]

LAUREN: Oh, God!

ALEX: What...?

LAUREN: I miss New York...

ALEX: Try to get some sleep, baby...  
Just a couple more days and  
we'll be in Boracay...

LAUREN: I can't sleep...  
**Lizards crawling everywhere.**

ALEX:  
**Honey, please...**

LAUREN:  
**Flying roaches in the air.**

ALEX:  
**Can't this wait...**

LAUREN:  
**The mosquitoes that are car-**

ALEX:  
**Try to sleep.**

LAUREN:  
**Riers of disease.**

ALEX:  
**It is getting late.**

LAUREN:  
**And the quiet, humid night,**

ALEX:  
**Don't stress out.**

LAUREN: (close to losing it)  
**That is making me uptight.**

ALEX:  
**It's okay.**

LAUREN:  
**I am begging  
On my knees.**

ALEX:  
**You'll wake up.**

LAUREN:  
**How I miss New York.**

ALEX:  
**To another day.**

LAUREN:  
**I miss the traffic that's  
Everywhere...**

ALEX:  
**There's no place else...**

LAUREN:  
**That's nowhere near as bad  
As the traffic here.**

ALEX:  
**I'd rather be.**

LAUREN:  
**I miss the firetruck  
Sirens that blare,  
The cold winter air,  
Can't wait to  
Gettata here. (get out of)**

ALEX:  
**Just a few more days,  
Honey.**

LAUREN:  
**The increasing subway fares.  
Parking in the streets so scarce.  
And the neighbors kid upstairs  
With its feet of lead.  
How could I not even know  
I already miss them so,  
Like the snow up to my knees.  
Before I catch some disease.  
Why can't we just go home, please?  
How I miss New York.  
I do miss New York!**

ALEX: Just a few more days then  
we'll be back home...

LAUREN: Well, it's not soon enough...

[Lauren's I-phone gets a message ALERT. Alex reaches for her purse in the lower bunk.]

ALEX: I don't know why I didn't think of  
it sooner...I could track my I-phone with  
your I-phone...

[He goes through her purse and finds the birth-control pills. He takes them out and is  
enraged, jumping out of bed. Lauren remains under the mosquito net.]

ALEX: (holding them up)  
What's this?

LAUREN: Those are my old...

ALEX: Have you been taking birth-  
control pills all this time?  
How can I be so stupid!

LAUREN: No, Alex...those are old...

ALEX: Don't lie to me!

LAUREN: I'm not...Those are old...from...

ALEX: Why didn't you just tell me you  
didn't want to have kids? Why did  
you have to take these behind my back?

LAUREN: I want to have kids...

[Alex stands and waits. Lauren is so uncomfortable.]

LAUREN: I do, babe...please believe me...  
I'm just so...I'm just so afraid to have  
them...I don't know what it is...I'm not  
ready to have any...

[Alex throws the pills on the floor, shattering the round case, before walking out.]

LAUREN: (crying)  
Alex, please...I'm sorry...  
**Why can't we just go home, please?**  
**How I miss New York.**

[He comes back after a beat and just goes on the lower bunk without saying a word.]

LAUREN: Honey? I really am so  
sorry...

[Cricket and gecko NOISES break the awkward silence. Lights out.]

Scene Two.  
May 18, morning.

CHURCH.

[Light on the Company. Music under.]

COMPANY:

***Santa Clara, pinong-pino.  
Ang pangako ko ay ganito  
Pagdating ko sa Obando  
Sasayaw ako ng pandango.***

{Santa Clara, most refined,  
This is my promise:  
When I reach Obando  
I'll dance the pandango.}

HOTEL ROOM.

[Lights out on Company and back on Aling Sabel who is already up. She is trying to keep quiet as she prepares to leave. Elise wakes up. She is sharing her bed with Beth.]

ELISE: Is everything okay, Aling Sabel?

ALING SABEL: (whispering)  
Oh, yes...Good morning...I was trying  
to keep quiet...Sorry to wake you...

BETH: (under an eye mask)  
Not quiet enough...

ELISE: (amused)  
Good morning, *po*...I was already awake...

BETH: I am STILL awake...God, what time is it?

ALING SABEL: I think six...I'm sorry, Beth...

ELISE: Don't mind her...She's usually *masungit* by nature...

BETH: I am not bitchy by nature...only first thing in the morning...

ELISE: Yes, you are...are you okay, *po*?

ALING SABEL: Yes...Yes...I just wanted to get to church early...It can get pretty crowded as you know...

ELISE: (sitting up)  
Let me accompany you...

ALING SABEL: Oh, no...please, Elise...it's just a few blocks from here...I can manage... I've troubled you enough...

ELISE: No, please...Let me just change...Beth?

BETH: She said she can manage...

ALING SABEL: Please...I will be fine...Please...

BETH: She said she'll be fine...

[Elise pulls the blanket off her sister. Aling Sabel is amused. Music under.]

BETH: Oh, all right...

ALING SABEL: You know I met my husband here...I danced and danced for three days and there he was, dancing the pandango himself...

[Beth is still in bed while Elise stands up to change.]

BETH: See, Elise, you better learn to pandango so you can find a husband...

ELISE: Very funny...

ALING SABEL: You don't know how to pandango? How are you ever going to find a husband?

BETH: Yes, Elise, how are you ever going to find a husband?

[Aling Sabel starts swaying to the waltz. Beth is suddenly interested and leans to watch.]

ALING SABEL: Come, come...it really is simple...  
You sway your hips like this...

ELISE: It's okay, Aling Sabel...I am not...I'll never get married...

ALING SABEL: Why not?

ELISE: I'm not the marrying type...I'm happy just the way I am...

ALING SABEL: You and my son are the same...  
*Dyos ko...*This is surely a sign...

ELISE: *Ano, po?*

ALING SABEL: Oh, thank you...thank you...  
My prayers have been answered...

ELISE: Oh, no, no...

ALING SABEL: You and my son...It is a miracle...

[Aling Sabel has stopped dancing.]

ALING SABEL: Oh, Elise...you will like him...he's kind...and responsible...

ELISE: Oh, no...no...I wasn't...

ALING SABEL: He's handsome, too...My God...

[Aling Sabel is all excited. Beth takes notice and Elise starts getting nervous. Music under.]

ALING SABEL: Come, Elise...

ELISE: Aling Sabel...

ALING SABEL: You have to meet my Benny...

BETH: Benny and Elise...

[Beth starts to laugh. Elise hits Beth with a pillow to stop.]

ALING SABEL: Yes...Come, Elise...you have to pandango  
to celebrate and thank the saints that you  
finally found someone...Come, Beth...let's dance...

BETH: I'm already married...Oh, wait, I forgot...

[Beth stands up and joins Aling Sabel.]

ALING SABEL: He will like you...

**Let me show you  
How easy  
It is to dance  
The pandango.**

[She tries to pull Elise up.]

BETH:

**C'mon, Elise, let's dance...**

ALING SABEL:

**A tradition  
From Spain  
Now you have your chance  
To pandango.**

BETH:

**See, this could be your chance...**

[Aling Sabel is persistent and Elise begins to follow the old woman.]

ALING SABEL:

**Sway your hips  
To and fro  
So the spirit of life  
Can waltz into  
Your heart and your soul.  
Raise your arms**

ALING SABEL:

**Let it flow  
And inhabit your life.  
Before you even know it  
You're losing control.**

[They start enjoying themselves.]

ALING SABEL:

**Santa Clara  
Will smile  
When you dance for her  
The pandango.**

ELISE:

**I will never get married.**

ALING SABEL:

**You can dance your  
Own style  
On your way to church  
The pandango.**

ELISE:

**Still I'll never get married...**

ALING SABEL:

**Sway your hips,  
That's the way  
Your heart hopes  
for a pray-  
Er that ends  
In an Amen  
Of dance.  
The pandango...**

BETH/ELISE:

**The pandango...**

ALING SABEL:

**The pandango...**

BETH/ELISE:

**The pandango...**

[Aling Sabel almost collapses from pain, Elise and Beth catching her.]

ELISE: *Dyos ko!*

ALING SABEL: Please take me to the hospital...

[Lights out.]

Scene Three.  
Noon.

STREETS OF OBANDO.

The procession is in progress.

[There is a crowd of SPECTATORS here and there, facing the audience, some swaying, some dancing. There will be marching band music passing through. Benny enters from UPSTAGE RIGHT. He is looking for Aling Sabel who is being wheeled in a gurney with a frantic Elise and Beth across the stage. Music under.]

BENNY: (showing a picture)  
Excuse me, *po*, I was wondering if you saw  
my mother?

[He goes to several people who say 'No'. Music under.]

BENNY:  
**Please,sir,  
Have you seen this old woman.  
Here, sir,  
Is a picture of her.  
If, sir  
You do see this old woman,  
Please tell her,  
I'm looking for her.  
You see,  
She came here for a miracle, too.  
Just like you.  
Thanks, sir,  
I hope you have a good day  
today.**

[He approaches a young woman.]

## HOSPITAL.

[Aling Sabel is in a hospital bed, surrounded by Elise and the Doctor. Beth sits in a chair, just looking at the old woman, who is unconscious.]

DOCTOR: She is very sick...

ELISE: Oh, God...

DOCTOR: Do you know how to contact her son?

ELISE: (shaking her head)  
No...she never told us where she was  
meeting him...I can't even remember  
his name...

BETH: Benny...

ELISE: Right...Good, Beth...Benny...

BETH: Benny and Elise...

ELISE: Benny Macaraeg...Dok, do you have a  
computer?

DOCTOR: Yes, in my office...

ELISE: Well, maybe we can find him...

[The Doctor and Elise exit. Beth stays behind. Music under.]

BETH:  
**Aling Sabel,  
Please help us find  
your son.**

## STREETS.

[Benny approaches a young WOMAN.]

BENNY:  
**Please, Miss,  
Have you seen my dear mother.**

BENNY:

**She's miss-  
ing for over a day.  
And Miss,  
I don't mean to be bother-  
ing you on this beau-  
tiful day.**

HOSPITAL.

[Aling Sabel rouses from her unconsciousness. Beth sits up and looks for the Doctor before standing up. Music under.]

ALING SABEL: Benny...Benny...

BETH: Hey...Good afternoon, Aling Sabel...  
*Kamusta po?*

ALING SABEL: Where...where am I?

BETH: You're in the hospital, *po*...

[Beth is uneasy, looking for Elise and the Doctor.]

ALING SABEL: (little confused)  
What? No...

[She tries to get up. Beth stops her.]

BETH: Easy, *po*...

ALING SABEL: I...I have to get to the  
church...

BETH: You're not well enough...please...  
just...just rest for now...

ALING SABEL: I'm fine...I have to go...I'm  
going to miss mass...

BETH: Aling Sabel...please...you are a very  
sick woman...

ALING SABEL: I have to pray for a wife for  
my Benny...

[Light on Benny.]

BENNY:  
**But she ran away  
Just to pray for her son.**

ALING SABEL:  
**I came here  
For a miracle, too...**

BENNY:  
**My *Inay*...**

ALING SABEL:  
**For my son...**

BETH: Where is Benny, Aling Sabel...?  
What time is he arriving, today...?

ALING SABEL: I don't know...

BETH: Does he even know that you are  
here?

[The old woman stays quiet.]

BETH: I'm guessing that he doesn't know  
you are even here...

ALING SABEL: I have to go to mass...

BETH: He doesn't even know you're sick,  
does he?

BENNY:  
**Thanks, Miss,  
I hope you have a good day  
Today.**

BETH:

**Aling Sabel,  
You have to tell,  
Your son.**

[It becomes a trio.]

ALING SABEL:

**I came here  
To pray for my son...**

BENNY:

**Inay, I am here...**

BETH:

**If you don't  
I will...**

ALING SABEL:

**So, he'll have  
Someone when I'm gone...**

BENNY:

**And I  
Am in fear.**

BETH:

**You are  
Very ill...**

ALING SABEL:

**I don't want  
To use that one  
Miracle meant for him.**

BENNY:

**It will  
Take a  
Miracle to find you.**

BETH:

**If, in miracles  
You still believe,  
You'll pray.**

## STREETS.

[Lucio is standing UPSTAGE LEFT. He is in his 30's, handsome and muscular. He surveys the surroundings as Benny takes the picture from the young woman. Lucio notices Benny immediately as he approaches him. They both stare at each other for a beat.]

BENNY:

**Good sir,  
Have you seen my dear mother,  
today...**

[Benny's hand shakes as he gives Lucio the picture of Aling Sabel. Lucio takes it, his hand also shaking. They can't take their eyes off each other. It is love at first sight.]

BETH:

**Aling Sabel,  
You have to tell  
Your son.**

[Beth holds Aling Sabel's hand. Lights out on the hospital.]

[Lucio finally looks at the picture.]

LUCIO: Lucio...

BENNY: *Po?*

LUCIO: My name is Lucio...

[They both smile at each other.]

BENNY: Good afternoon, *po*, sir Lucio...Have you seen...

LUCIO: Just Lucio...

[He glances at the picture for just a mere second and goes back to talking to Benny, giddy like a little boy.]

LUCIO: Ahm...No...no, I haven't, Mister...?

BENNY: Benny...Benny Macaraeg...

[Lucio offers his hand and Benny takes it.]

LUCIO: Hello, Benny...Benny Macaraeg...Lucio...  
Lucio Relucio...

BENNY: (smiling)  
Lucio Relucio?

LUCIO: My parents had a sense of humor...Ahm...

[They realize they are still holding hands and let go.]

LUCIO: Did you say your mother?

BENNY: Yes...Sabel...

LUCIO: Did you lose her in the crowd?

BENNY: No...I didn't realize that she  
was gone until this morning...when  
I came home from the call center...she  
usually prepares me breakfast...

LUCIO: So you don't know how long she's been gone...

BENNY: No...No...it could be from yesterday afternoon...

LUCIO: Well, do you have relatives here?

BENNY: Just my father...My father was from here...

LUCIO: So could she have gone to your father?

BENNY: He left years and years ago...I don't  
even know if he's still alive...I doubt it if  
she went to his relatives...

LUCIO: So, why would she come here...by  
herself?

BENNY: She wanted me to accompany her so I can  
find a...someone...it's a long story...

LUCIO: You're not married...

BENNY: No...She was going to pray for me to  
find someone...so I don't grow old alone...

[Beat.]

LUCIO: I don't think you will...

BENNY: What?

LUCIO: I don't think you will find her like  
this...Ahm...Let's go back to my precinct and  
report this...then, I'll help you go around  
the clinics and hotels...She must have slept  
somewhere last night...

BENNY: Okay...thank you...

LUCIO: You're welcome, Benny...

[Benny begins to tear up, stepping away. Lucio tries to console him. Music under.]

LUCIO: Hey...hey...

BENNY: I'm sorry...

**I am  
Afraid something  
Might happen to her.  
Because of me...**

[Lucio puts his hand on Benny's shoulder.]

BENNY: All she wanted was for me to  
find someone...

LUCIO: I will help you with that, also...

[Benny turns around and smiles at him.]

LUCIO:

**Don't fret,  
We will go find your mother  
Today...**

BENNY:

**Thank you, kind sir...  
Help me find her  
Today...**

[Benny and Lucio exit.]

HOSPITAL.

[Elise and Beth are with Aling Sabel as the Doctor tries to talk some sense into her.]

ELISE: They are only going to release  
you to your son, Aling Sabel...

[The old woman just remains quiet.]

DOCTOR: *Lola*...this is very serious, *po*...

ELISE: I don't think you know how  
serious this is...Please, Aling Sabel...  
please tell us how to contact your  
son...

ALING SABEL: He'll be here, soon...

DOCTOR: How...

ALING SABEL: I will give you his cell number...

[Elise takes a pen and notebook from inside her purse, listening intently.]

ALING SABEL: On one condition...

ELISE: What condition?

BETH: That we don't tell Benny that she  
is sick...

ELISE: Aling Sabel, you are being very  
unreasonable...

DOCTOR: I don't think I can agree to that...

BETH: You have no choice...look...  
(to Aling Sabel)  
we'll do what you want...

ELISE: Beth!

DOCTOR: He has a right to know...

BETH: Yes, he has a right to know and  
she has the right to tell him  
herself...isn't that right, Aling  
Sabel...

[Beth sits down by the old woman and takes her hand.]

BETH: Right, Aling Sabel?

[Aling Sabel nods and reaches for the pen and pad that Elise offers her. She jots the phone number down and hands the paper to Elise.]

ELISE: Thank you, *po...*

[Elise takes out her cell to call Benny. She dials it as Aling Sabel hands Beth the pen.]

ELISE: Hello...hello...is this Benny?  
Yes...You don't know me...I'm Elise  
Tantoco and your mother...yes...yes...  
She's fine...

[She looks at Aling Sabel. Beth glances at the pen and just suddenly stands up to leave, dropping it on the floor. Beth steps out of the hospital room, in tears. She stays for a beat then walks away.]

ELISE: I'm here with her...at the  
San Pascual Hospital...she's...  
fine...she's fine...ahm...okay...

[Elise is confused why her sister just ups and leaves.]

ELISE: Yes...we'll wait for you...Okay...  
we'll see you...you want to talk  
to your mother?

[Aling Sabel shakes her head, not wanting to talk to her son.]

ELISE: Ahm...she's resting now...we'll see  
you when you get here...thank you...

[Elise hangs up and goes out to look for her sister.]

ELISE: Beth...? Excuse me...

[She leaves the Doctor and old woman alone.]

ALING SABEL: Dok...if you can just tell Benny  
when he comes that it was the heat...

DOCTOR: You promised to tell him...you have  
to tell him sooner or later, *po...*

ALING SABEL: I will, at the right time...I'll  
wait until we're back in Manila...is that okay?

[Elise comes back as the Doctor leaves.]

DOCTOR: Elise, I have to go... please call me  
when Benny comes...

ELISE: Of course... thank you so much...

DOCTOR: Aling Sabel... remember your promise...

[The old woman nods.]

ALING SABEL: Where did your sister go?

ELISE: I'm not sure...

[She steps on the pen and picks it up, putting it inside her purse. Lights out.]

Scene Four.  
Afternoon.

STREETS.

The procession is still in progress.

[Lola Mary is out selling her hats and fans. She looks tired as she takes her place in the middle of the stage with her pile of hats on her head.]

LOLA MARY: Hats... fans... hats...  
How about a hat, Sir? Hat, Miss?

[Enter Lauren and Alex from UPSTAGE RIGHT. She is chasing after him. They are both pulling their carry-on luggage.]

LAUREN: Alex, c'mon! Really!  
You're just going to ignore me  
the rest of the trip?

[They walk pass Lola Mary as Monmon enters UPSTAGE LEFT. Alex immediately spots him.]

ALEX: HEY, YOU!!!!

[He leaves his bag and wife to chase after him. Monmon is quick to respond. Lauren stays by Lola Mary.]

LAUREN: Honey! HONEY! Shit.

LOLA MARY: Hats...fans...hats...You look like you could use a hat, Miss...

LAUREN: I need more than a hat...

LOLA MARY: A fan?

LAUREN: I need to wake up from this crazy nightmare...

LOLA MARY: Is everything okay? You are not having a good time at our fiesta?  
Hat, Sir?

[Lauren sits down on her bag. The old woman puts down her hats. People come and go to check out Lola Mary's wares.]

LAUREN: (sarcastically)  
I'm having the time of my life!  
Woohooo! How could you tell?

LOLA MARY: Hat, Miss? Well, it looks like you were either coming or going...  
I'm guessing you were about to leave...

LAUREN: What gave that away?

LOLA MARY: I'm sorry you didn't have a good time...I just hope you get what you came here for...

LAUREN: Oh, sure...I got what I exactly came here for...Let's see...I have bug bites, I'll probably catch some disease, I'm miserably hot, my husband won't talk to me, he got his phone stolen...what a great time we're having...let me post this incredible vacation on facebook...

LOLA MARY: Hats...fans...Somebody stole his phone?

LAUREN: A little boy stole his phone inside  
the church yesterday...

LOLA MARY: What is the world coming to...little  
boys stealing on the feast day of Sta. Clara...

LAUREN: He just saw him and went after  
him...

LOLA MARY: I hope he catches him...here...

[Lola Mary offers her a hat and a fan. Lauren takes it reluctantly then goes through her  
purse to pay her. Music under.]

LAUREN: How much do I owe you...?

LOLA MARY: Oh, nothing...I just wanted you  
to leave with something nice to  
remember our town with...

LAUREN: (touched)  
Ahm...thank you...that is so sweet...

LOLA MARY: You are very welcome, my dear...  
And I hope that your husband talks to  
you soon...

[Lola Mary puts the stack of hats on her head and walks away in rhythm.]

LOLA MARY: Hats...fans...  
**Would you like a hat, sir?**  
**How about a hat, miss?**  
**A chapeau to shelter your head.**  
**Go ahead, and try this**  
**What about a sombrero**  
**That is hand-made out of straw?**  
**A beret**  
**Will shield you away**  
**From the rays**  
**Of the sun...**

[UPSTAGE LEFT, Light on Monmon as Alex finally catches up with him and grabs him  
by the collar. Monmon struggles for a beat but Alex is too strong. Music continues.]

ALEX: (panting)  
Stop...stop, already...

[Monmon stops for a beat then attempts to get loose again.]

ALEX: What did I tell you? You are not  
going to win!...Jesus!

[Monmon elbows Alex who collapses in the street, COUGHING. Monmon runs away but stops when he sees that Alex looks seriously hurt. He goes back to help him.]

MONMON: (keeping his distance)  
Mister! Mister! Are you okay?

[Alex does not respond. The little boy approaches a few steps.]

MONMON: Mister! I'm...I'm sorry if I hurt  
you...Are you...are you okay?

[Alex still doesn't respond. Monmon takes a few more steps, getting worried. He looks around. The streets are empty as everyone is by the parade route.]

MONMON: Mister! Oh, God...

[He kneels to turn Alex over and Alex grabs him.]

ALEX: Gotcha, you little thief...

MONMON: Thank you, God...

[Monmon seems relieved. He was really shaken and Alex senses this. Monmon is close to tears. Alex lets go of him.]

ALEX: Hey...hey...I'm all right...

MONMON: I thought...I thought I hurt you...

ALEX: I'm okay...you do have a mean elbow...Ow!  
That still hurts...

MONMON: Are you sure you're okay...?

[Alex seems touched.]

ALEX: Yes, I'll be fine...I'm fine...

MONMON: Good...bye!

[Monmon sprints out, looking back and smiling at Alex.]

ALEX: (amused)  
You little prick!

[Alex runs after him again. Light back on Lola Mary, as a MAN and his little boy stop by.]

LOLA MARY: Hat, Sir?...  
**Try a baseball cap, boss.**  
**And one for your little man.**

MAN: How much...?

LOLA MARY:  
**Just a hundred pesos,**  
**The cost of avoiding a tan.**

MAN: I don't know...

LOLA MARY: (handing him another)  
**Or a native salakot?**  
**The fedora you've had bought**  
**Will be on display**  
**On your way to a day**  
**Of good fun.**

[Beth passes by, looking depressed and disheveled. Music continues.]

LOLA MARY: Hats?...fans?...Hello...

[She recognizes her.]

LOLA MARY: Are you having fun at this  
fiesta?

[Beth bursts out crying. Lola Mary takes off the pile of hats and puts it on the ground.]

LOLA MARY: What happened? Are you okay?

[Beth shakes her head, No.]

LOLA MARY: Whatever it is, please stop crying, *iha*...It can't be that bad... Hat, Sir? Fan...No?

[Lola Mary tries to console Beth but she is still trying to sell hats so anytime a potential customer passes by, she offers.]

LOLA MARY: So tell me, what happened? It can't be all that bad...Hat, Miss? So?

BETH: My husband is cheating on me...

LOLA MARY: Oh, *iha*...

[Now, she has the old woman's undivided attention.]

BETH: Yes...but it gets worse...I just feel so betrayed... I shouldn't really be...

LOLA MARY: No, please...it will make you feel better to talk about it...

BETH: Okay...well, I found out that he was cheating...

LOLA MARY: Yes...

BETH: And just now, I found out who the other woman was...

LOLA MARY: Did you confront this other woman?

[Beth shakes her head, No.]

LOLA MARY: What are you going to do?

BETH: I don't know...

LOLA MARY: Well, if I were you, I would go inside the church and pray for guidance...for peace of mind...

BETH: Pray? That's your solution?

[A COUPLE approaches to look at hats. Lola Mary excuses herself to them to talk to Beth.]

LOLA MARY: Yes...so you can think things  
through clearly...you'll be surprised  
at the power of a prayer...

BETH: I don't know if I know how to pray  
anymore...it's been a while...

LOLA MARY: You never forget...

BETH: Thank you...

LOLA MARY: It will be okay, you'll see...

[Beth walks away and Lola Mary goes back to the couple. Other people approach to buy hats from Lola Mary.]

LOLA MARY: Hat, Sir? Miss?  
**Why not buy a fan.**  
**It would look fantastic.**  
**While you are pan-**  
**Dangoing down the street.**

[The woman buys a fan.]

LOLA MARY: *Salamat.*  
**Get it while you can.**

[One takes out a credit card.]

LOLA MARY:  
**No, I don't take plastic.**  
**With some cold hard cash**  
**You'll be fashionably**  
**Beating the heat.**  
**How about a hat, Miss?**  
**You could use a hat, Sir.**  
**In a tropic heat such as this,**  
**It is just de rigueur.**  
**Can I add just one more thing?**  
**Wear some light and loose clothing.**

LOLA MARY:

**And always remember to hydrate.  
Drink a lot water to hydrate.  
You don't want to end up dehydrated  
While having fun.  
Under the sun.**

[She sells a lot of hats, and people disperse as they pay.]

LOLA MARY: *Salamat, po...* Thank you...

*Salamat...*

[Lola Mary happily counts her earnings and pockets it. She picks up the stack of hats that's left and puts it on top of her head as Elise comes by.]

LOLA MARY: Hat, Miss?

ELISE: Hello, *Lola*...Remember me? My sister  
bought a hat from you, yesterday?

LOLA MARY: I think so...

ELISE: Did you happen to see my sister?

[Beat.]

LOLA MARY: Yes...she was just here...crying...  
I told her to go to church...she just  
found out...

ELISE: Thank you...

[Elise leaves Lola Mary in a rush and the old woman puts two and two together.]

LOLA MARY: ...about her husband's...Oh...  
(realizing it's the sister)  
Oh...

[Lights out on Lola Mary.]

HOSPITAL.

[Benny and Lucio enter the hospital room. Benny rushes to her mother's bedside.]

BENNY: *Inay...*

ALING SABEL: Hello, *anak...*

[Lights out.]

Scene Five.  
Evening.

HOSPITAL.

[Aling Sabel is sleeping when the doctor comes in and signals him up. Benny stands away from the bed to talk to the doctor. They whisper.]

BENNY: So, *Dok*, when can I take her home?

DOCTOR: Why don't you go and let her rest tonight and come back tomorrow morning...

BENNY: I want to take her home tomorrow...

DOCTOR: We'll see...

BENNY: Can't I stay here tonight?

DOCTOR: She needs her rest...

[Benny feels that the doctor is being evasive.]

BENNY: Is she going to be okay?

DOCTOR: Let her get her rest and we'll see tomorrow...

BENNY: This has nothing to do with the heat, *ha, Dok?*

[Beat.]

DOCTOR: Come back tomorrow...we'll see how  
she is and maybe you can take her home...  
Just let her rest, for now...

[Benny goes to her mother and kisses the sleeping woman on the forehead before  
heading out. Music under.]

### CHURCH.

[Beth enters the church and sits at one of the pews. After a beat, she breaks down  
crying. She looks up and wipes her tears.]

BETH:

**It's been a while, I know.  
Since you have heard from me.  
It seems so long ago  
Since I came by to see you.  
It's been over a year,  
The last time I was here.  
And yet, I know  
You're always there for me.**

### PRECINCT.

UPSTAGE CENTER is typical precinct with a desk and long bench.

[Monmon and Alex are sitting on the bench as Sargent Lucio processes some papers  
on his desk. The little boy is sniffing from crying.]

ALEX: All I want is my phone, then  
you can go home...

[Monmon stays quiet.]

ALEX: I won't press charges...

LUCIO: Monmon, tell us already who  
you sold it to...

MONMON: I still have the money...

ALEX: I want my phone back...

[He offers the money to Alex who stands up, frustrated.]

ALEX: Can I use your phone to call my wife?  
I'll give you money for the charges...

LUCIO: Please...you don't have to pay...

[Lucio nods. Lucio stands up and kneels in front of Monmon.]

LUCIO: I will have to tell your *Lola* Mary  
about this, Monmon...

MONMON: Please, Sargent Lucio, please,  
don't...

LUCIO: So will you tell me who you sold the  
phone to?

MONMON: I don't know his name...I can tell  
you how he looks but not his name...

[Lola Mary enters, still wearing her stack of hats. Lucio stands up to greet her.]

LOLA MARY: (near panic)  
*Naku*, Sargent...have you seen my Monmon...  
He was supposed to meet me at church  
tonight...It's been over an hour...

[She finally notices him.]

LOLA MARY: Thank God...Monmon...

[She approaches him.]

LOLA MARY: Are you all right?

[She notices that he has been crying. She sits with him as Alex joins them.]

LUCIO: *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: What happened?

LUCIO: *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: Come, let's go home...

LUCIO: *Lola*...

[She finally hears the policeman. She stands up.]

LUCIO: He can't go home...not until he  
tells us...

LOLA MARY: What? Why not? What has he done?  
(turning to her grandson)  
What have you done?

LUCIO: He stole this gentleman's  
phone...

LOLA MARY: (in disbelief)  
What?

ALEX: He stole my phone and sold it...

LOLA MARY: There must be some kind of  
mistake, Sargent Lucio...he promised  
me that he won't ever do that again...tell  
them, Monmon...tell them that you are not  
a thief...This is just a...

LUCIO: He admitted it, *Lola*...He can't  
go home until he tells us who he sold  
it to...

LOLA MARY: What?

MONMON: (suddenly in tears)  
I'm so sorry, *Lola*...I tried to give them  
back the money...

[Lola Mary is so hurt that she just stands up and leaves, embarrassed.]

MONMON: I'm so sorry...

[He starts crying. Lights out on precinct. Music under.]

CHURCH.

[Benny enters the church and sits by himself on one of the pews. Light on both Beth and Benny.]

BENNY:  
I know that you're aware

BETH:  
In the life, I've known...

BENNY:  
Of everything at hand.

BETH:  
I've been on my own...

BENNY:  
You always seem to care,

BETH:  
But I've always grown

BENNY:  
Enough to understand me.

BETH:  
From the love you've shown  
Me...

BENNY/BETH:  
Although, we've been apart  
I feel it in my heart,

BENNY:  
Somehow...

BETH:  
It's true...

BENNY:  
Somewhere

BETH:  
I knew...

BETH/BENNY:

**You're always there for me.**

[Spotlights remain on Benny and Beth.]

STREETS.

[Lola Mary is crying. She takes off her stack of hats and sits on the curb. Lauren passes by her and stops.]

LAUREN: Excuse me, Ma'am...which way to the precinct?

[Lola Mary looks up and Lauren finally sees that she is crying.]

LAUREN: Oh, it's you...

LOLA MARY: That way...

[She points with her finger.]

LAUREN: Thank you...my husband caught the thief who stole his phone...

LOLA MARY: I know...it was my grandson who stole your husband's phone...

BENNY/BETH:

**Though there were times  
I almost felt**

BETH:

**Abandoned,**

BENNY:

**Forsaken...**

LOLA MARY: It's my fault that he does that...The first time he did it, I was devastated...How I failed him...How I failed his parents, whoever they were...Oh, sure...he's not really my grandson...

LOLA MARY: I just found him wandering  
the streets, after a *fiesta*...He was  
maybe, two or three years old...I reported  
it and everything but nobody claimed  
him...Can you imagine? Like a lost dog...  
I knew I didn't have the means to keep  
him but I thought, this surely was a  
sign...a miracle...what else could it have  
been?

BENNY/BETH:  
**So many times  
I felt I was alone...**

LOLA MARY:  
And I tried, believe me, I tried  
to keep a good home for him...but being  
poor doesn't give him a future...  
doesn't give anyone a future...First,  
it was candy...then it became bigger  
and bigger...fruit...canned goods...all  
were easy to repay...but now, a phone...  
how can I pay for that...and you can't  
blame him for doing that...it's my fault...  
and now, I'm not sure I want him back...  
how can a poor old woman teach a young  
boy not to steal if he's hungry...

BENNY/BETH:  
**But now I know  
I surely was mistaken.  
Awaken,**

[Lauren is touched.]

LOLA MARY: Could you help me up, Miss?

[Lauren nods and does so.]

LOLA MARY: Ahm, the precinct is that way...I'm  
so sorry for my grandson...

[Lola Mary walks away.]

BENNY/BETH:

**And you will find  
You're never on your own.  
You're not alone.**

PRECINCT.

[Lauren joins Alex and the boy.]

LAUREN: Honey...

[She tries to kiss him and Alex turns away.]

LAUREN: Really?!

ALEX: I'm still angry at you...

LAUREN: Fine.

[Alex stands up and she sits with Monmon. After a beat, she talks to the little boy.]

LAUREN: What is your name?

MONMON: Monmon, *po...*

LAUREN: Well, Monmonpo, I just met your  
grandmother...

[Alex observes and manages a smile at his wife's silliness.]

MONMON: And how is she?

LAUREN: (looks at Alex)  
You broke her heart...

MONMON: (tearing up)  
Is she going to be okay?

LAUREN: I don't know...I think so...she is  
a strong person...  
(back to Monmon)  
from what I saw...And Monmonpo, she  
understands why you did it...  
(looking at Alex)

LAUREN: That you had to do what you did  
to survive...That you were afraid...  
(back to Monmon)  
of not having enough to eat...

[The little boy is crying silently now. Lauren puts an arm around him. Alex is intently watching.]

LAUREN: Shhh...It will be okay...  
(looks back at Alex)  
She needs you and I'm certain is  
afraid of losing you...

[Beat.]

LAUREN: And I'm so sorry...  
(back to Monmon)  
that you have to go through this...  
but I think this is a lesson for  
you...to stop doing what you did...

[The little boy nods, wiping his tears away.]

LAUREN: And to realize that you're very  
sorry you did it...  
(looks back at Alex)  
that you're very sorry you lied...  
And that it won't happen again...

[Monmon nods.]

LAUREN: And you just want everything  
back the way it was...

[Monmon nods again. It is Lauren now who is tearing up. Beat. Music under.]

BENNY/BETH:  
**A friend you are indeed,  
Until the very end.  
The times that I'm in need  
Of someone to depend on.  
I know that you're around  
To keep me on the ground.  
My whole life through,  
You're always there for me.**

[Alex approaches Lauren and kisses her, making her smile. They sit together beside Monmon. Beth makes the sign of the cross and leaves. Benny remains inside.]

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH.

[Beth comes out and finds Elise waiting for her.]

ELISE: My God, *Ate*...what happened?

[Beth is so angry that she slaps her twin in the face.]

BETH: How could you do that to me!

ELISE: What?! What did I do?

[Beth grabs Elise's purse and looks for the pen and takes it out. She throws it at her sister, Elise catching it.]

BETH: HOW COULD YOU, ELISE! HOW  
COULD YOU!

ELISE: What are you talking about?!

BETH: OF ALL PEOPLE! DO YOU KNOW HOW  
THIS HURTS?!

ELISE: *Ate*, calm down...I'm not sure what  
happened here...

BETH: READ THE PEN!

ELISE: What?!

[Beth walks away. Elise reads the pen.]

ELISE: The Mandarin Oriental, Hong...  
Oh my God...BETH...BETH...

[She runs after her sister and catches up. She blocks her way. Beth keeps trying to walk away.]

ELISE: *Ate*, listen to me...Beth! *ANO BA!*

[Beth finally stops.]

ELISE: You actually think that I  
could do this to you...

BETH: Well...are you having an affair  
with Eric?

ELISE: You are basing this accusation on  
a pen...

BETH: Isn't it just such a coincidence?  
Are you having an affair with my  
husband?...or not? Simple question...

ELISE: You are being ridiculous...

BETH: ARE YOU?!!!

ELISE: Jesus, *Ate*...

{Beat.}

ELISE: No...of course not...I could never  
do that to you...and it really  
hurts me that you would think...

BETH: Oh, don't be so dramatic...

ELISE: How could you think that I am  
capable of doing that...

BETH: (calming down)  
Don't turn this around, Beth...  
What was I supposed to think?  
You and Eric talking about me  
behind my back? The pen? I see  
how Eric is around you...

ELISE: What?

BETH: When he's around you, he acts  
all excited...like a little boy...  
like he did when we first met...

[Beat.]

BETH: Please, forgive me...of course, of course you wouldn't do that to me...

ELISE: Of course not...and about the pen? I don't even know where this pen came from...I mean the Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong, obviously...but how it came to my possession...I don't know...

[Beth is starting to get suspicious again from her sister's ranting. Music under.]

ELISE: But one thing I do know...I would never do that to you...

BETH: I know...

[They hug.]

BETH: I need a drink, don't you?

[Elise nods and they exit.]

BENNY:  
**You're always there for me...**

### LOLA MARY'S SHACK.

[Lola Mary is finishing a hat when Monmon enters with Alex, Lauren and Lucio. The boy is tearful. They stay quiet for a beat. He notices a small paper bag.]

LOLA MARY: (without taking her eyes off what she is doing) Those are your things...

MONMON: *Lola*, I'm really sorry...

LOLA MARY: So am I...

[She finally looks up to see everyone.]

LOLA MARY: Oh...

LUCIO: Good evening, *po*, *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: Good evening...

LUCIO: We're sorry to bother you but we  
wanted to bring your grandson home...

LOLA MARY: Well, Sargent Lucio...I was just  
about to take him to you...I'm glad...  
you saved me a trip...

LUCIO: *Po*?

LOLA MARY: I want you to take him to that  
orphanage...the one outside of town...

LUCIO: *Po*?

ALEX: Are you serious?

[Monmon is now crying hysterically. Lauren holds him close to her.]

ALEX: *Lola*, there is no need to punish  
your grandson...

[Lola Mary finds a box and empties it of cash. She hands it to Alex.]

LOLA MARY: It is not a punishment...It's a  
present...Here is all the money I have...

ALEX: *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: Please take it...I insist...And please  
take Monmon...

MONMON: *Lola*, please...I'm sorry...I won't  
do it again...I promise...

LAUREN: Alex, do something...

LOLA MARY: That's what you said the last  
few times...

MONMON: But I mean it this time...

LUCIO: *Lola*...

ALEX: Look, Ma'am...I am not pressing charges...

LOLA MARY: You should...maybe he will learn...  
Now, please go...it's getting late...

MONMON: *Lola*, please...

LUCIO: *Lola*, can't we talk about this?

LOLA MARY: Please, go! GO!...just...go...

[They are shocked at her anger. Lauren pulls the crying kid away. Lucio follows them. Alex stays behind.]

ALEX: How can you just do that?

LOLA MARY: You must really think I'm  
a horrible person...but you see, the only  
way for him to stop stealing is to  
leave me...if he stays living with me, I'm  
afraid he will just become a common  
criminal...this way, he gets a chance at a  
better life if someone adopts him...

ALEX: And what if no one does...what then?

LOLA MARY: Someone will...he's a good and  
loving kid...who just needs a chance  
in life...

[Alex turns to leave. Lola Mary grabs him by the arm and looks into his eyes.]

LOLA MARY: (with intent)  
He's a good and loving kid...

[Alex nods before leaving. After a beat, Lola Mary breaks down crying.]

CHURCH.

[Lucio enters, makes the sign of the cross before sitting in the pew behind Benny. He doesn't see him at first. He kneels and finally sees Benny. His face beams. He slides closer to Benny who remains seated and stays looking front.]

LUCIO: Hey...

BENNY: Hey...

LUCIO: You look like you had a terrible day...Is your mother okay...?

BENNY: (shaking his head)  
Yes...yes...thank you...

LUCIO: I'm glad...

BENNY: You look like you had a terrible day...

[He glances at the policeman, briefly.]

LUCIO: (nodding)  
I'm not sure what's happening to this world anymore...everyday, I see things that make me want to give up on humanity...and yet, something happens that brings my faith back...

BENNY: You have a strong faith?

LUCIO: Yes...I need to, in my job...don't you?

BENNY: I'm not sure, anymore...

LUCIO: Well, tonight, I witnessed the purest form of love...a grandmother gave up her grandson so he can have a better future...as much as it killed her to do so, she made the ultimate sacrifice for his chance at a better life...

BENNY: (cynical)  
Wow...I think I saw that on TV the  
other day...

LUCIO: Make fun of it all you want...but  
it wouldn't hurt to just believe...  
it makes the world a better place...

BENNY: What did you just say?

LUCIO: It makes the world a...

BENNY: No, before that...

LUCIO: It wouldn't hurt to just believe...

BENNY: That's what my mother always says...

LUCIO: She's right...like I always believed  
that I would find someone...

[Lucio leans over and kisses Benny. Music under.]

LUCIO:  
**Somehow, I know that there is  
Someone for me.  
Someday, I'll go and find that  
Someone for me.**

[They both stand up and move to the streets.]

STREETS.

[Lucio walks Benny to the hospital.]

LUCIO:  
**Some nights, I wake up  
Thinking you are there.  
I reach for you.  
And feel the air.  
We both might share.  
Somewhere I feel you out there  
Waiting for me.  
Somewhat, so patiently I'm**

LUCIO:

**Waiting for love to find me.  
And when that moment comes  
I know it's all true.  
Somehow, that someone  
Is you.**

[They dance ala Ginger and Fred.]

BENNY:

**Most mornings I can feel you  
Next to me.  
I close my eyes  
It's you I see  
So lovingly.  
Somewhere I feel you out there  
Waiting for me.  
A miracle to happen someday  
And when it happens.**

BENNY:

**From that one moment on,  
My dream has come true.  
At last, we are one...**

LUCIO:

**Our waiting is done...**

LUCIO/BENNY:

**Because that someone  
Is you.**

[They kiss. Lights out.]

Scene Six.  
May 19, morning

STREETS.

[Light on Elise as she reports on a piece for her news program. Same as in Scene One. She is holding a microphone, facing the audience like she is facing a news camera.]

ELISE: (glances at a notepad)  
Once a year, in the merry month of  
May, the town of Obando in Bulacan  
hosts a fiesta that is unlike any other  
fiestas on earth that is unlike any  
other fiestas on earth. People from  
all over the Philippines and the world  
make their pilgrimage here to pray  
for a son or a daughter, a husband or a  
wife or for good fortune and happiness.  
The faithful come for three days to Obando  
with the hopes of fulfilling their heart's  
longing. This quiet fishing village opens its  
homes to everyone and once the fiesta is done...  
This is Elise Tantoco reporting from  
Obando, Bulacan...

[She stays for a beat until Jim signals to her that its done.]

JIM: Elise, I want to take some shots of  
the town...

[She nods as Jim leaves. After a beat, her cell phone RINGS. She looks at the  
number, hesitates for a second before answering.]

ELISE: Hello...hi...Yes...yes...Eric...Beth knows  
about us...no...we'll talk when I get  
back...I have to go...Goodbye...

[She hangs up immediately as Beth appears, in her sexiness.]

BETH: So, where is Jim...

{Elise just smiles and grabs her sister to go. Music under.}

## CHURCH.

[There is a light on the members of the Company. They sing but not like a church choir  
anymore.]

COMPANY:

**We, the citizens of  
This old sleepy town  
Are awakened every May.  
Throw your city cares away.  
Come and sing and dance and pray  
And eat with us...**

ORPHANAGE.

[Sargent Lucio is at the orphanage talking to the Manager when Alex and Lauren enter. They are surprised to see the cop there.]

ALEX: Sargent Lucio...

LUCIO: Good morning...

LAUREN: Good morning...we're actually glad  
to see you here...

ALEX: We have some good news...

LAUREN: We are thinking about adopting Monmonpo...

ALEX: Honey...

LAUREN: What?

ALEX: His name is...never mind...we talked  
about it last night and we want to  
talk to him to see how he feels  
about it...

LAUREN: I'm not sure how long the process  
takes but we're willing to come back...  
I wanted to talk to Lola Mary as well  
and...

LUCIO: Monmon is gone...

LAUREN: What?!

LUCIO: He ran away last night, after we  
left...that's why I'm here...

ALEX: Oh, God...

[Lauren begins to cry.]

LUCIO: I'm hoping that he went back home...  
I was just about to check...Please, God,  
let him be home...

LAUREN: Oh, honey...what's gonna happen  
to him?

ALEX: He's going to be fine...he knows  
how to survive...

LAUREN: Can we just go home now, please?

[Alex nods and they exit. Lights out and on to the Company.]

COMPANY:

**We will welcome  
All of you who still believe  
In the power of a prayer.  
We have miracles to share  
Just as long as you can bear  
The heat with us.**

LOLA MARY'S SHACK.

[Lola Mary wakes up to a KNOCK at her door.]

LOLA MARY: Monmon...

[The old woman jumps out of bed to answer the door.]

LOLA MARY: Monmon...

[She finds Sargent Lucio at the door.]

LOLA MARY: Oh, it's you...Sargent Lucio...

[Sargent Lucio tries to peek inside.]

LUCIO: Good morning, *po*, *Lola*...

LOLA MARY: Good morning...what can I do  
for you? *Tuloy...tuloy...*

[The cop enters the tiny shack and discreetly looks around.]

LUCIO: Ahm...

LOLA MARY: Did everything go okay last  
night?

LUCIO: Ahm...yes...yes...I was just checking...  
on you...are you okay, *po*?

LOLA MARY: No...I did a terrible thing...the  
worst thing imaginable...

[Beat.]

LOLA MARY: How do you think he is?

[Beat. Lucio is trying to decide if he should tell the old woman.]

LUCIO: Ahm, *Lola Mary*...ahm...I'm sure he'll  
be okay...Okay...I have to get going, *po*...

LOLA MARY: Could you...could you do me a  
favor, Sargent...could you pass by the  
orphanage and just see how he is?

LUCIO: Of course...

LOLA MARY: Thank you...

[The cop leaves the old woman feeling all alone. As he steps out, he sees Monmon approaching with a brown paper bag. Lucio smiles and exits.]

COMPANY:

**Give us all your faithful,  
Your hopeful,  
Your tireless throng.**

COMPANY:

**For three days we're grateful  
And hope you'll  
Stay twice as long.**

[Lola Mary takes a few steps to the small kitchen and discovers a cup of coffee on top of the table. She feels the cup and it is still warm. She is confused about the presence of the cup and sits down. After a beat, Monmon comes in with a brown bag of bread.]

MONMON: (as if nothing happened)

Good morning, Lola...I got some  
*pan de sal*...I didn't have enough  
money for some jam but we still  
have some butter left I think...

[The little boy unpacks the bread and Lola Mary beams. They begin to eat in silence. Lights out and on to Company.]

COMPANY:

**Obando is here  
For you the whole year.  
It would be delightful  
If you ful-  
Fill your heart's longing...**

HOSPITAL.

[Benny enters the hospital room to find the bed empty.]

BENNY: *Inay?*

[He collapses on the chair beside it and begins to cry.]

BENNY: *Inay*...I'm so sorry...

[After a beat, Aling Sabel joins him, all dressed up and ready to go home.]

ALING SABEL: Benny, *anak?*

BENNY: *Inay*...

[He hugs her tightly around her waist.]

ALING SABEL: I'm ready to go home...  
O...why are crying?

BENNY: I'm not crying...

ALING SABEL: Yes, you're crying...

[She tries to look at his face.]

BENNY: No, I'm not...

ALING SABEL: Yes, you are...O...did you  
think...Oh no...

[Aling Sabel lets out a laugh.]

ALING SABEL: Oh, *anak*...I'm not ready to  
leave you, yet...but I am ready to  
go home...

BENNY: Are you sure you're feeling  
okay enough to go...

ALING SABEL: Yes, I woke up this morning  
and felt great...Let's go home...

[There is a KNOCK on the door. Lucio enters. He approaches and Benny stands up.]

BENNY: *Inay*...this is Lucio...

LUCIO: I'm happy to meet you, *po*...

[Aling Sabel looks at her son who is beaming and smiles.]

ALING SABEL: I'm happy to meet you...

[Lights out and on the Company.]

COMPANY:

**We, the people of this  
Fishing village know  
Once the fiesta is all done.  
And to your lives you've moved on,**

COMPANY:

**That your journey's just begun  
We hope that it was fun  
And life-affirming...  
And faith restoring...  
And spirit raising  
To be with us.**

[Lights out.]

THE END.

1d/06-18-2014