

## NOTES

In recent years, human trafficking has become a global crisis. In this explosive and haunting play, we are introduced to Nicolás Portillo and Eliseo Alvarado, two young men, whose dream of crossing the border into America is their last hope for a better future. This contemporary one-act is perhaps best performed by two males and be entered in either Duet Acting or Duo Interpretation; however, this selection may also be used in Dramatic Interpretation. The scenes between Nicolás and Eliseo must be portrayed with 100% honesty; after all, they represent the millions of illegal immigrants, real people, who simply want a better life. This is the story of desperation, dreams, and ultimately, the desire and willingness to risk everything to cross that “invisible line.”

### Characters:

911 Operator  
Nicolás Portillo  
Eliseo Alvarado  
Old Man  
Awards Announcer  
Salvador Gutiérrez  
Ricardo Solís, an immigration attorney

### Scene 1: *The Call*

**911 Operator:** 911. What’s your emergency?

**Nicolás:** Policía? Ayuda. *Help.* Estamos sofocante. Nos estamos quemando.

*(Police? Help us. Ayuda. We are suffocating. We are burning up.)*

**911 Operator:** Please repeat that, sir?

**Nicolás:** Mi nombre es Nicolás Portillo. Estamos en un camión grande. Somos ilegales.

*(My name is Nicolás Portillo. We are in a big truck. We are illegals’.)*

**911 Operator:** *(To someone in the room)* Hey, can someone here translate for me? Anybody speak Spanish?

**Nicolás:** ¡Por favor! Estamos en la parte trasera de un camión grande! No podemos respirar y muchos están muriendo! ¡Ayuda! *Help to us!* Contratamos Coyotajes. Somos los ilegales!

*(Please! We are in the back of a big truck. We can’t breathe, and many are dying. Help! ¡Ayuda! We hired Coyotes. We are illegals!)*

**911 Operator:** I need someone who can translate! *(Call Disconnects)* Sir? Hello? Hello? *(To someone in the room)* I lost the connection.

**Scene 2:** *Evening. Eliseo’s house.*

**Eliseo:** Nicolás! Who hit you?

**Nicolás:** I'm fine.

**Eliseo:** You don't look fine!

**Nicolás:** It's just a black-eye. I'm okay.

**Eliseo:** It's really swelling.

**Nicolás:** I just got jumped. I'm okay.

**Eliseo:** What happened?

**Nicolás:** I'm okay!

**Eliseo:** Nicolas, you're my best friend. Who did this?

**Nicolás:** Victor and one of his friends.

**Eliseo:** Victor with the MS-13? They are still trying to recruit you?

**Nicolás:** Yeah, and the 13 is still trying to recruit you, too!

**Eliseo:** I should have been at school with you today. This wouldn't have happened, if we were together.

**Nicolás:** Yes. It would have.

**Eliseo:** They wouldn't have come after two of us.

**Nicolás:** Yes, they would. They have people everywhere.

**Eliseo:** They control this town.

**Nicolás:** Everybody has to pay them for "protection."

**Eliseo:** Protection from them.

**Nicolás:** The police just let them do anything they want.

**Eliseo:** Like what happened to Daniel and his girlfriend last month, and Junior before.

**Nicolás:** Just there's nobody who will do anything.

**Eliseo:** What can they do? It's all about money.

**Nicolás:** And drugs.

**Eliseo:** *(Long pause)* Are you sure you're okay? Your face is pretty messed up.

**Nicolás:** It's mainly just my eye.

**Eliseo:** No. I just meant your face is messed up. That's why you don't pull girls.

**Nicolás:** Don't make me laugh. It hurts my head.

**Eliseo:** Just trying to make you smile, man. *(Pause)* We have to leave. We have to get out of here.

**Nicolás:** I know.

**Eliseo:** But if we get caught, they'll just send us right back. And they'd kill us.

**Nicolás:** If we don't join the 13 now, we're dead anyway.

**Eliseo:** Even if we join, we'd end up dead or worse.

**Nicolás:** I will never be a part of them.

**Eliseo:** But doesn't America give asylum or refuge or whatever for kids like us?

**Nicolás:** That's what every illegal immigrant claims.

**Eliseo:** But it's true for us!

**Nicolás:** So... IF we get caught, we just have to explain it to them.

**Eliseo:** Right. If the border patrol captures us, we'll just explain it to them. *(Pause)* How soon can we go?

**Nicolás:** We have to get a coyote.

**Eliseo:** What about money?

**Nicolás:** We can get it.

**Eliseo:** It will be dangerous.

**Nicolás:** Of course, it's dangerous. But we'll have a better chance in America than if we stay.

**Eliseo:** Our family?

**Nicolás:** They will understand.

**Eliseo:** We can send money.

**Nicolás:** Maybe get them to America, too.

**Eliseo:** It would be good in the long run.

**Nicolás:** So, we do it.

**Eliseo:** Yeah.

**Nicolás:** No waiting.

**Eliseo:** No. Let's do it.

**Nicolás:** We have to.

**Scene 3:** *In front of the Arizona Capital building.*

**Phil Brewer:** This is Phil Brewer reporting live in Phoenix, Arizona. Hundreds of people have gathered here in front of the Arizona Capital building in what appears to be a largely peaceful protest regarding the State's new immigration law. But the true question is: Why do so many Latin Americans try to illegally immigrate to the U.S. in the first place?

**Scene 4:** *In the desert in a secluded place a few miles from their town.*

**Nicolás:** Where are they? Maybe the coyote changed his mind?

**Eliseo:** I don't think a coyote will say no to the money we are paying.

**Nicolás:** We don't have all of it yet.

**Eliseo:** We'll figure it out along the way. We only have to pay half now, the other when we get there.

**Nicolás:** *(Skeptical)* Yeah. Do you really think we can trust them?

**Eliseo:** They can't be worse than the 13's. And it is the same coyotes that my older sister used. She made it.

**Eliseo:** Also, we're both guys. It would be much more dangerous, if we were girls. I've heard stories.

**Nicolás:** Yeah. They claim they do it to help, but everything is about money. *(Changing subject)* They say in America, you have the opportunity to do anything as long as you work hard. Which, I can do.

**Eliseo:** That's why they call it the Land of Opportunity.

**Nicolás:** What is your biggest dream?

**Eliseo:** What do you mean?

**Nicolás:** You know. You're dream. When we get to America?

**Eliseo:** *(Thinking)* Um...I guess I dream of having a very respectable job, and everyone loves me.