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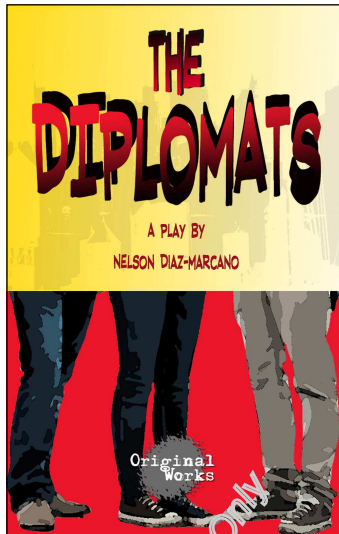
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Los Embrujados (The Haunted Ones)
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The Diplomats by Nelson Diaz-Marcano

Synopsis: A few days before election night 2016, close friends Annie and Carlos are reunited in her small Astoria apartment during his first visit to New York since he moved to be with his husband in Florida. At first, it seems their relationship hasn't changed. That is until Carlos brings an unexpected guest; Annie's old best and estranged friend Gary. Throughout the course of the night they learn that while they may not have changed much as people, society has. Now they have to confront each other in a whole new reality and their relationships may never be the same.

Cast Size: 2 Males, 1 Female

Los Embrujados
(The Haunted Ones)
by Mel Nieves

Sample Only

This play is dedicated to the founders of Apple Core Theater Company, Allison Taylor and Walter J. Hoffman whose generous commission and inspirational spirit helped give life to this play.

Special additional thanks to Raymond Nieves, my family, my blood, my hero

Los Embrujados (The Haunted Ones) was originally presented by the Apple Core Theatre Company in New York City on August 11, 2011. The production was directed by Walter J. Hoffman.

The cast was as follows:

Mike Havok - Arturo
Gustavo Heredia - Miguel
Damian Thompson - Aamir
Flor De Liz Perez - Nadia

Stage manager: Farin Rebecca Loeb
Scene design: Adam Kayran
Music-Sound design: Joemca
Lighting design: Jordan Acosta
Costume design: David L. Zwiers
Artwork: Katherine Miles Jones
Publicity: Bunch of People PR
Associate Producer: Barbra Harrison
Producer: Allison Taylor
Theatre Row general manger: Erika Feldman
Associate general manager: Shawn Murphy

Setting: The Wild Blue Dining Room at The Windows on The World Restaurant, North Tower.

Time: 8:00am, Tuesday, September. 11th, 2001

Characters:

Doug McMartin, Radio announcer/Voice only

Arturo Molina, 20's

Miguel Molina, 30's

Aamir Mamdouh, 30's

Nadia Santos, 20's

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Los Embrujados

Scene 1: The Wild Blue Dining Room, North Tower

Morning of 9/11

In darkness we hear the following.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: *(voice over)* ...reports are still coming in from U.S. Intelligence agencies regarding the September 9th assassination of Northern Alliance leader, Ahmed Shah Massoud in the Takhar province of Afghanistan by two suspected Arab Al Qaeda suicide bombers posing as journalist. As a military leader, Massoud had a leading role in driving the Soviet army out of Afghanistan, earning him the name, Lion of Panjshir. In other international news, reports are coming in that Charles Ingram cheated his way into winning the grand prize of one million pounds on England's Who Wants to Be A Millionaire? And if you're just waking up and tuning in, downing that first cup of Joe, well then hello and good morning to you, this is hour number three of The Doug McMartin Show coming to you every Monday through Friday from 6 to 10 on WNYC-AM New York and of course, I'm Doug McMartin. The temperature at 8:00AM is a perfect eighty degrees. A day that

looks to be filled with Sun and clear blue skies and with just a mere 112 days remaining till the end of the year on this absolutely beautiful September 11th morning I'm feeling like Autumn in New York and I like it!

(We hear a recording of Autumn in New York, written by Vernon Duke and sung by Frank Sinatra:

“Autumn in New York/Why does it seem so exciting (inviting)/Autumn in New York/It spells the thrill of first-nighting/Shimmering clouds – glimmering crowds (glittering crowds and shimmering clouds)/ In canyons of steel/They're making me feel – I'm home/It's Autumn in New York/That brings a (the) promise of new love/Autumn in New York/Is often mingled with pain/Dreamers with empty hands (they) All sigh for exotic lands/(But) It's Autumn in New York/It's good to live it again...

As the song fades lights come up to reveal)

BACK AREA OF THE WILD BLUE DINING ROOM

(We see a glimpse of the row of full length windows offering a sweeping panoramic view of New York City. The view is of the southern tip of Manhattan where the Hudson and East rivers meet. In addition, one can see the Liberty Statue park with Ellis island and Staten island with the Verrazano Bridge just off in the distance.)

(We see, ARTURO MOLINA, mumbling to himself as he polishes silverware.)

(Out of view in the back room we can hear Arturo's older brother, MIGUEL, singing an old Mexican ranchero song called, El Rey/The King)

ARTURO: ...The bill of rights are the first ten amendments of the constitution...the principle is the...no, not the principle...the parable...the pineapple...the PREAMBLE! ...that's it. The preamble is the introduction to the constitution...

(Arturo continues to set up the room.)

(MIGUEL MOLINA enters carrying a stack of napkins in one hand and a citizenship booklet in the other.)

ARTURO: Buenas dias, Capitan.

MIGUEL: Buenas. Do me a favor, take these napkins and put them in their proper place. Donde estas Nadia?

ARTURO: I don't know.

MIGUEL: She's very late. It's very busy today.

ARTURO: I know. She probably got stuck on the seven train.

MIGUEL: You were not with her yesterday?

ARTURO: No. I saw her, but I had to study. I talked to her at 9:30 last night to say goodnight.

MIGUEL: She knows that this is a big day for you right?

ARTURO: Yes, she knows. I've been doing my studying with her too. By the way, thank you for doing this.

MIGUEL: We've been waiting a long time for this day.

ARTURO: Five years.

MIGUEL: Long time.

(Arturo stretches and yawns)

MIGUEL: I have the booklet.

(Miguel takes out a citizenship booklet.)

MIGUEL: You want to practice a little now before you go for your test?

ARTURO: Yeah, yeah sure.

(They sit down)

MIGUEL: Que te pasa buey?

ARTURO: Nada, I'm good. A little tired maybe. I have a lot of things on my mind.

MIGUEL: You ready for this?

ARTURO: Si, of course. Go ahead.

MIGUEL: Okay, what is the fourth of July?

ARTURO: That is the day para Los Independistas.

MIGUEL: Arturo, no mancha's buey!

ARTURO: Sorry, that is the day of independence.

MIGUEL: Now, how many stripes are in the flag?

ARTURO: Thirteen.

MIGUEL: What do those strips mean?

ARTURO: They each represent the original states of the union.

MIGUEL: Now name them.

ARTURO: Name what?

MIGUEL: Bueno chico, name the original 13 states.

ARTURO: You kidding me?

MIGUEL: No. Come on.

ARTURO: Chinges buey.

MIGUEL: Watch your mouth. You got sixty seconds.

(Arturo thinks for a moment)

MIGUEL: Come on, time is wasting.

ARTURO: Okay, okay...Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Rhode Island and Maryland.

MIGUEL: Perfect. Now don't forget to make sure before you leave to put all the knives, spoons and forks in their proper order, okay?

ARTURO: Yes, sir.

MIGUEL: Okay, let's begin again. What country did the United States fight during the revolutionary war?

ARTURO: That's an easy one.

MIGUEL: Okay, so tell me.

ARTURO: England. I saw that in the Al Pacino movie on channel 41 a few nights ago with Nadia.

MIGUEL: *Carlito's Way*?

ARTURO: No, *Revolution*. It's a very good one. I learned a lot watching it. He's a very good actor.

MIGUEL: *Scarface*.

ARTURO: Si, that's the best.

MIGUEL/ARTURO: *"The world is mine: The DREAM and the POWER and the MONEY."*

MIGUEL: You are going make an excellent Capitalista Norteamericano buey. I am very proud of you.

ARTURO: Be proud of me when I pass the test.

MIGUEL: You will. I believe that in my heart. I wish that mama y papa could have been here with us to see this day with their own eyes.

ARTURO: Me too.

MIGUEL: Pero, I know, and I believe that they will be watching over you in spirit when you take the test.

ARTURO: Mira, Miguel, how come you never wanted to take the test yourself?

MIGUEL: Who said I didn't want to?

ARTURO: Okay, so why haven't you? I mean you are very smart. You know more about being a citizen than I do and I'm the one taking the test.

MIGUEL: That is a very long story.

ARTURO: I have time.

MIGUEL: Arturo, come on, no mancha's buey!

ARTURO: Fine, you don't want to tell me. Then I don't take the test.

MIGUEL: What, after all the hours of sleep I lose helping you study?

ARTURO: Bueno, I'm sorry that you had to lose so many hours of sleep for nothing.

MIGUEL: This is crazy talk.

ARTURO: So is probably the reason why you never tell me why you don't take the test yourself.

MIGUEL: You serious?

ARTURO: Si como no?

MIGUEL: You remember what I use to play beisbol?

ARTURO: Yes, you were the best.

MIGUEL: I use to think that I was too, pero that wasn't the case. You were probably too young to remember him, but I played beisbol with a guy called, Edwin Sanchez. He was a fantastic player.

ARTURO: What position did he play?

MIGUEL: He was a third baseman. He was a very important prospect with the Houston Astros team. It was my first time in this country. I didn't know anybody or anything. All I know was

beisbol and that I had a dream to play as a professional. We both had the same representative, a man named Santos Allegro. He promised to take care of us no matter what. He gave me the promise of escaping the poverty that I was living in. He said to me, "*Miguel, if you make the cut, your dream becomes that much closer to being a reality.*" Not only for me, but for my whole family. But he also said, "*If you don't make the cut, Bueno then you got no home to go back to, but you can stay in America and be a dishwasher.*"

ARTURO: He said that to you?

MIGUEL: Yes, but I didn't listen to him. I never saw not being a professional happening to me. It wasn't part of my reality. Then one day during practice, Edwin *Sample Only* threw out his knee. I swear to you, you could hear the pop all over the stadium. He was never the same ballplayer again. A week later the manager of the team ask me to come into his office. Mr. Allegro was there waiting for me. I was cut from the team; not because I was hurt like, Edwin. But because I wasn't good enough.

ARTURO: No.

MIGUEL: Si, chico. They didn't want me. My dream of playing in *las grandes legas* was gone in a blink of an eye.

ARTURO: I'm so sorry, Miguel.

MIGUEL: You don't know how many times, carnal I saw myself standing at Yankee stadium with my cap across my heart singing the National anthem, hearing the umpire scream, PLAYBALL! But I woke up finding myself standing on a corner with others like me... hanging out on the street looking for work.

ARTURO: Why didn't you just come back home?

MIGUEL: Arturo, you are still too young to understand, pero I was ashamed to go back.

ARTURO: Why?

MIGUEL: La familia, mama and especially papa, they had high hopes for me. I was the one that was going to take care of la familia. I could not face them after that. I had no money. Nothing, but the old clothes on my back and the broken shoes on my feet. So, I stayed. I came here to New York because another Latino player, a Puerto Rican named, Tito Santana had family here, so I stayed with his family until I could get a job.

ARTURO: As a dishwasher?

MIGUEL: Si and other kinds of not-so-glamorous jobs. What else was there for me to do? My English was not very good.

ARTURO: And now you work here, at the Windows on the World. You did good.

MIGUEL: Yes, I do work here, but I want you to do better than this.

ARTURO: I will. I promise.

MIGUEL: Good.

ARTURO: Did Edwin go back home?

MIGUEL: No, Edwin stayed here.

ARTURO: Where is he now?

MIGUEL: The last time I heard of him, he was mopping floors in a Brooklyn bodega and playing semi-pro beisbol games out in Staten island on weekends. He is still calling Santos every day. Santos never calls him back.

ARTURO: You know just because you can't play professional beisbol doesn't mean you can't take the test too. You are smarter than me.

MIGUEL: I never went to school Arturo! How many books you think I have read in my life? I tell you, nada. Not even in Spanish. I don't have the passion to do it. Everything in my life since I learned to breathe was beisbol.

(Miguel gets up, starts to fold some of the napkins.)

MIGUEL: I always tried to take care of mi familia. I always sent money from whatever job I could find back home to mama y papa. I got you this very good position here at Windows on the World when you first came over, no?

ARTURO: Yes. I appreciate it very much.

MIGUEL: I didn't want you to have to bust your ass like I did when I first got here. Working fifty to seventy hours a week in cheap restaurants, cafes, bakeries, hotels for custodial companies, cleaning dirty sheets, sitting in bathrooms handing out paper towels to Americanos to dry their hands after they finished taking a shit.

ARTURO: I respect everything that you have done for me y la familia. You know something, Miguel?

MIGUEL: What?

ARTURO: I am going to take the test for the both of us.

MIGUEL: Thank you, carnal. Now, I have something very important to ask you.

ARTURO: What?

MIGUEL: Why did the Pilgrims come to America?

(Arturo is not listening. His mind is somewhere else now.)

MIGUEL: Que te pasa buey?

ARTURO: Nothing.

MIGUEL: You didn't hear the question?

ARTURO: No. I mean yes, I did hear it. Can I show you something?

MIGUEL: What do you want to show me?

ARTURO: You can't say anything about this to anyone yet okay?

MIGUEL: Okay?

ARTURO: You promise?

MIGUEL: I promise. Come on hurry up. Time means money around here, orale.

(Arturo takes out a crumbled piece of toilet paper from his jacket pocket. He gently unfolds the paper, revealing a diamond engagement ring. Miguel is speechless.)

ARTURO: Well, what do you think?

MIGUEL: I don't know.

ARTURO: What do you mean, you don't know, it's beautiful right?

MIGUEL: Yes, it's very beautiful...pero...

ARTURO: What?

MIGUEL: This is so sudden.

ARTURO: I know, but it's important. I'm in love.

MIGUEL: I didn't know that you felt this way about me?

ARTURO: WHAT!?!

MIGUEL: This is such a sudden shock to my corazon.

ARTURO: Oh, come on, why do you have to be so stupid? This is a very serious and important day for me. There is no time for joking.

MIGUEL: I know mi carnal, I know. It's a beautiful ring. I'm very happy for you.

ARTURO: You think Nadia will say yes?

MIGUEL: Yes, yes. To both you and the ring she is going to say yes to.

ARTURO: I want you to be my best man.

MIGUEL: It will be my honor to be your best man carnal.

(Arturo refolds the ring, puts it back in his pocket.)

ARTURO: Good. This is good, right?

MIGUEL: It is very good Arturo.

ARTURO: Then why am I suddenly feeling so nervous?

MIGUEL: It is a very big step for you in your life.

ARTURO: Yes.

MIGUEL: This is your day carnalito. Enjoy it.

ARTURO: I'll try.

MIGUEL: No trying bro. You going to do it. You want to be able to have a real good job and a good career to support that kid, no?

ARTURO: What kid?

MIGUEL: Kid?

ARTURO: Yeah, you said kid.

MIGUEL: I know, I know...I was just talking about the future and the baby that I hope that you and Nadia have after you get married, of course, and get a nice house with big trees and a dog. Look, I just wanted to express that if and when it happens between you and Nadia, that I am looking forward to being an uncle and teaching your son about beisbol.

ARTURO: What happens if we have a girl first?

MIGUEL: That's good too. Okay, come on, enough goofing off.

(Miguel sits back down, reopens the citizenship booklet.)

MIGUEL: Round two. Who was the president during the Civil war?

ARTURO: Religious freedom.

MIGUEL: What?

ARTURO: Religious freedom.

(Miguel is confused.)

ARTURO: That was the answer to the last question about why the Pilgrims came to America.

(Miguel checks the booklet.)

MIGUEL: You're right.

ARTURO: I was going to say for the free turkey dinner that they got from the poor Nauset Indians.

MIGUEL: Don't start getting political. Now, what is the legislative branch of this government?

ARTURO: The Congress.

MIGUEL: Si, and what is the Congress?

ARTURO: The Senate and the House of Representations... no, that is not right. The Senate and the House of Representatives.

MIGUEL: Now, what is the duty of the Congress?

ARTURO: To make laws.

MIGUEL: And who elects the Congress?

ARTURO: The people.

MIGUEL: Good. Very good Arturo. You are going to do great.

ARTURO: Miguel, can I ask you something?

MIGUEL: What?

ARTURO: Do you think Americans know all these things that I am studying to learn?

MIGUEL: No.

ARTURO: Why not?

MIGUEL: Because they were born here. They don't have to know anything. That is their right as Americans.

ARTURO: When I become a American citizen the first thing that I am going to do is take a day off and go to sleep. That is a very American thing to do, right?

MIGUEL: Yes, but you will have plenty of time for that IF you become a citizen, but right now, you are still just another Mexican bus boy, a nobody, a nada, but when you come back this afternoon you are going to own the world.

ARTURO: When I come back I'm going to be, Arturo "Yankee Doodle Dandy" Molina.

MIGUEL: That's what I want to hear! Now who was the President during the Civil war?

ARTURO: Mister four scores and seven years ago, Abraham Lincoln.

MIGUEL: The world is going to be yours!

ARTURO: The world is going to be mine!

MIGUEL/ARTURO: "*The DREAM and the POWER and the MONEY.*"

(Miguel and Arturo high five each other.)

MIGUEL: Excellent. Now, finish folding the rest of the napkins. You ain't no big-headed Americano citizen yet.

ARTURO: Si mi Capitan.

(Arturo starts folding the rest of the napkins.)

MIGUEL: Mira, by the way, you know this one, who is the greatest American-born Latino hitter of all time?

ARTURO: Pedro Martinez?

MIGUEL: What, no. Que Pedro Martinez. That guy was a pitcher from the Dominican Republic. He was not a hitter.

ARTURO: I like Soccer.

MIGUEL: Ted Williams, buey! The Splendid Splinter.

ARTURO: Ted Williams?

MIGUEL: Si, that's right. His mama was Micaela Venzor. She was una Mexicana from El Paso, Texas. You can look it up.

(AAMIR MAMDOUH, enters)

AAMIR: There they are, the Ringling Brother twins.

MIGUEL: Hey man.

AAMIR: What is this I see, hiding from the customers?

MIGUEL: Nobody is hiding from nobody.

AAMIR: I don't know man. I just don't know. All I know is what I see. I was always led to believe that you Latino types were the hardest working people in the entire world.

MIGUEL: We Are. What are you talking about?