

# CAFE CON CHISME

A comedic Web-series

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. BOYLE HEIGHTS, QUETZAL CAFE - ESTABLISHING SHOT -  
MORNING

The sun rises and lights up the tiny and cozy cafe in the  
barrio.

SEVERAL LATINO CUSTOMERS wait by the glass door for the cafe  
to open. LETI MENDEZ, late 20s, a Latina blogger and former  
journalist, knocks on the door. No one answers. She turns to  
the other customers.

LETI  
What's going on?

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, KITCHEN AREA - SAME

XOCHI "LA MEAN EYES" GOMEZ, a former gang member with tattoos  
and dark lipstick, hoop earrings, large intimidating  
eyebrows, busily unclogs the sink.

QUETZAL BOLIVAR, 30s, "CHICANO"/Guatemalan, tall, scruffy,  
but handsome, busily prepares for the day, making coffee.

QUETZAL  
Where is Juan Carlos? He's late and  
all the mugs are dirty!

XOCHI  
He probably got deported.

QUETZAL  
Xochi, that's not a nice thing to  
say.

XOCHI  
No disrespect, I just know Juan  
Carlos didn't have papers.

QUETZAL  
He showed me his social security  
card.

XOCHI  
Quetzal, you have a good heart, but  
you can't tell for shit the  
difference between a real Social  
and a cheap card you get at  
McArthur Park.

QUETZAL

Well, you're stuck washing these mugs until I can hire someone else.

XOCHI

(flirting)

Sure. Anything for you, guapo (handsome).

Quetzal walks past her, not registering her flirtation.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, FRONT DOOR - SECONDS LATER

Quetzal flips sign over to "OPEN", unlocks and opens it.

QUETZAL

Buenos dias! (Good morning.)  
Welcome to Quetzal Cafe. Sorry, we're a little late.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, COUNTER

SEVERAL CUSTOMERS line up to order.

Leti orders her drink from Quetzal.

QUETZAL (CONT'D)

What can I get you?

LETI

A green tea latte.

QUETZAL

Why don't you try the coffee? My coffee is the best, I even roast it myself.

LETI

Coffee is too acidic. I'll stick with my green tea latte.

MINUTES LATER

AT A CORNER TABLE

Leti types away on her laptop drinking her green tea latte.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN

Leti's Blog website: LATINA POLITICA L.A.

JESUS DE LOS SANTOS, 30s, fabulous and gay, sits with his friend VICKY QUINTANA 20s, blonde hair, exotic looking, in transition to becoming a woman, at a table next to Leti.

JESUS

Hey, I like the blonde hair.

VICKY

I'm thinking when I finally transition I'm going to be a blonde.

JESUS

I thought you looked good as a redhead.

VICKY

Oh, no. Don't want nobody thinking I'm trying to look like the Mayor. She's a tacky ho.

Leti listens in on the conversation, but pretends not to listen by typing slowly.

JESUS

You know what I heard about the Mayor, that she's sleeping with a reporter named Jacob Santos.

VICKY

Where did you hear that B.S.?

Leti leans in.

JESUS

This website called Latina Politica L.A.

VICKY

That's impossible. I had a one night stand with him, back in college, and I know he plays for our team.

Leti stops typing.

JESUS

I sure don't want to be the person who started those rumors because karma is a bitch and sometimes she's a chola who stabs you in the back when you least expect it.

Leti closes her lap top and takes a deep breath. Leti's cell phone rings. She picks up.

LETI

Hello?

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Leti..cia--

LETI

--Yes, this is Leticia Mendez. Is this Carol from--

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

--We are dropping our sponsorship on your website. The last article you wrote about the Mayor having an affair--

LETI

I never said she was having an affair. The reporter's assertions that she is going to pass that law -  
- I just wondered how it would be possible for that reporter to know and I wondered if maybe he was sleeping with her and it was pillow talk- but I said it as a joke--

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

We heard rumors that you might get sued for libel and we can't be associated with you.

LETI

Please let me explain--

Call goes dead. Leti sighs in frustration.

LUCIA "LA MARVILLA", 50s, a large woman with a strong character, puts a shawl over a table and sets up her tarot cards. She places a little sign that reads "Tarot Card reading \$5 & \$10 & \$20". "I can help you with your future."

Leti walks up to her table.

LETI (CONT'D)

Can I have a five dollar reading?

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA

Please sit down.

Leti sits. Lucia hands her the stack of Tarot cards.

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA (CONT'D)  
Hold the cards.

Leti holds the cards and hands them back to Lucia. She lays out the cards on the table in a cross pattern.

Leti's eyes widen as each card gets revealed.

Lucia flips over the card of "DEATH".

LETI  
That doesn't mean death, right?  
That's just symbolic of a new  
beginning right?

Lucia stares at the cards, disturbed.

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA  
M'ija, it says here if you don't  
stop... you're going to...

LETI  
What?

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA  
Hmm, how do I tell you... I'm not  
supposed to tell you these things.

LETI  
Que? What do the cards say?

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA  
Are you sure you want to know?

LETI  
Yes, of course. Tell me.

Lucia takes a deep breath and blurts it out.

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA  
If you don't stop gossiping you're  
going to die.

LETI  
I don't gossip.

LUCIA  
M'ija, por favor. (Darling,  
please.) You're not fooling anyone.  
You may call it bloging, but please  
- es puro chisme. (It's just pure  
gossip)

LETI

It's a blog--

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA

Blog ni que nada (yeah, right) - es chisme. (it's gossip)

LETI

Well, I disagree--

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA

Okay, no me creas- (don't believe me) I'm just the messenger, but if you die, don't come back to haunt me and blame me for not insisting, OK?

Leti shakes her head and hands her the five dollar bill without looking at her. She gets up annoyed.

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA (CONT'D)

Okay, pero te lo adverti. (but you were warned.)

TWO HIPSTERS, (late 20s) beards, skinny jeans, etc., walk up to the counter and order from Quetzal.

QUETZAL

What can I get you?

HIPSTER #1

What do you recommend?

QUETZAL

If you love coffee, try my Antigua dark and rich brew with a touch of cream.

HIPSTER #2

Dude, that sounds awesome. Give us two.

Quetzal passionately prepares two coffees. Xochi stares at him make coffee admiring his muscles and his buttocks.

XOCHI'S POV: IN SLOW MOTION QUETZAL shakes his head and takes off his shirt revealing his muscular chest

QUETZAL (O.S.)

Xochi! Xochi! Please give me the cream--

XOCHI  
 (flirting)  
 --No, you give me the cream!

BACK TO REALITY

Xochi snaps out of her fantasy.

QUETZAL  
 Xochi, hand me the cream!

Xochi grabs the creamer and hands it to him. She lowers her head embarrassed and gets back to heating a pastry.

AT THE ENTRANCE

PATSY VALENZUELA, 20s, cute, a free spirited fashionable artist with pink hair, enters holding a small artist portfolio.

Leti walks past Jesus and Vicky gossiping away and goes up to Leti lost in thought.

PATSY  
 Hey chica, what's up? (Then:) Earth calling Leti.

Leti finally notices her.

LETI  
 Oh, hey!

They hug.

PATSY  
 You okay?

Leti points to Lucia.

LETI  
 (whispering)  
 That crazy lady just told me if I didn't stop gossiping I was going to die.

PATSY  
 Oh... Lucia is good. You better listen to her.

LETI  
 You believe her?

PATSY

One time she told me I had to stop seeing a guy I was all into because he was "dangerous" for me.

LETI

Isn't that how you like your men?

PATSY

Yeah, but not "STD" dangerous.

LETI

Eeeughhh.

PATSY

So I took her advice and sure enough I found out from some other unlucky tramp that he had Herpes and bad credit. Herpes I can handle, but no way am I financially supporting another musician and ruining my credit.

Nicky leans over to Vicky and speaks to her.

PATSY (CONT'D)

Hey, you want to pose for me some time? I'm an artist and you have a very interesting look. I want to paint you.

VICKY

(jokingly)

Girl, get in line. Now that Caitlyn Jenner is out, being trans is seen as "cool" I just have too many invites and everybody wants me.

Jesus and Vicky laugh out loud.

Leti's cell phone rings. She answers.

Patsy continues talking with Jesus and Vicky.

LETI

Hello? Hello?

Leti gets up and EXITS.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - CONTINUOUS

LETI

Hello. Leticia Mendez speaking.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - SAME

The TWO HIPSTERS walk around putting their hands in a way that makes a frame A LA FILM DIRECTOR. They look through it. They nod their heads envisioning something.

They pick up their coffees and walk around the cafe as if they owned it, taking it all in.

Quetzal carries a tray bussing the dirty tables. He leans down to fix a wobbly table.

The TWO HIPSTERS walk by Quetzal, not noticing him on the ground, and drink their coffee. They take a deep breath.

HIPSTER #1

It's too bad this cafe is closing,  
the coffee is actually pretty good.

HIPSTER #2

Our gourmet cheese and olive shop  
is going to be the bomb. Maybe we  
can still serve this coffee. Maybe  
his regular customers will still  
come by.

ON THE FLOOR

Quetzal stops to listen in on the Hipster's conversation

HIPSTER #1

No, I don't think these customers  
can afford our cheeses and olive  
prices.

Quetzal stands up.

QUETZAL

What do you mean this cafe is  
closing?

HIPSTER #1

Ah, news flash, your landlord has  
promised to lease this locale to  
us.

QUETZAL

My lease doesn't expire for another three months and he hasn't told me anything!

HIPSTER #1

Look, we're willing to buy your used coffee equipment for a third of the price to help you out.

Quetzal grabs them by the shirts and drags them out the door.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Quetzal throws them out. The Hipsters throw him attitude and walk away muttering obscenities and insults at Quetzal.

QUETZAL

Don't ever come around here! Until the landlord has kicked me out, you got no business here cabrones (assholes)!

Quetzal shakes his head and cleans the outdoor tables close to Leti. She is at the curve on a serious phone call that has her looking stressed out.

LETI

(pleading)

No, please don't sue me! I'll just seize and desist. No more blog I promise! Hello, hello! Hello?

Leti lowers her head defeated and leans into the curve. A CYCLIST is about to run into her at high speed. Quetzal pulls her back on the curve saving Leti and the Cyclist from a fatal crash.

QUETZAL

Are you okay?

LETI

No. I've lost my job, I've lost everything...

BEAT

QUETZAL

You want a job?

SMASH CUT TO:

MONTAGE

LETI BUSSES THE TABLES

LETI WASHES DISHES

LETI SWEEPS AT THE END OF THE DAY

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - NIGHT

XOCHI is at the door with Quetzal about to lock it. Xochi gives Leti dirty looks as she exits leaving Leti and Quetzal by themselves. Quetzal locks the door flips sign to "CLOSED".

QUETZAL

You'd make a great full time employee. So do you want the job?

LETI

Yes, I can use a job... for right now.

QUETZAL

Great. Here, let me show you how to make some hot drinks.

FADE OUT.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - MORNING

Sun rises

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - MORNING

The "CLOSED" sign at the door switches to "OPEN."

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, KITCHEN AREA

Leti puts on her apron and puts her hair in a ponytail.

Xochi goes to the stove and checks on a Mexican clay pot of coffee. She stirs it and rolls her eyes in annoyance. She goes to Leti and gets in her face.

XOCHI

You forgot the cinnamon and the piloncillo (brown sugar).

LETI

Oh, sorry. Quetzal didn't mention to add those things. He just said--

XOCHI

It's called Cafe de la Olla (coffee made in a pot), I guess he figured you were Mexican enough to know the ingredients.

LETI

It's just that I am overwhelmed to be honest with you. It's a lot to remember. I'm barely getting the hang of the espresso machine and steamer.

XOCHI

Well, you won't last here long, so don't worry about it.

Leti walks up to Xochi.

LETI

What makes you say that?

Xochi gets in her face again.

XOCHI

(threatening)

Cause you ain't tough enough to hang here with me and Quetzal. This ain't no job for a college girl. You'll leave at the end of the week like most people like you do. You'll find something better and move along with your skinny ass.

Quetzal walks into the back door carrying a tray of giant muffins and conchas (Mexican bread).

Xochi goes up to Quetzal and lovingly takes the tray from him.

XOCHI (CONT'D)

Looking good ese. I can tell you've been working out.

QUETZAL

Ah... Thanks.

Xochi goes to the front of the counter.

Quetzal looks at Leti, who looks a little stunned and is speechless.

QUETZAL (CONT'D)

You okay?

LETI

Where did you find Xochi?

QUETZAL

Don't let her get to you. She's just establishing her territory. Xochi is a former gang member I hired from Homeboy Industries. She's cool people, and knows everything about the cafe business. She's a cyber "chola" too if you need any technical help.

LETI

I don't think she likes me.

QUETZAL

She's a pussycat in the body of a bull dog, don't let her eyebrows scare you.

Leti chuckles.

QUETZAL (CONT'D)

Now go make the rounds and clean up tables.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - A LITTLE LATER

AT A TABLE

Jesus sits with Vicky in the middle of a conversation.

JESUS

So I was at Fred Segal. You know I just like to window shop and again, some old white guy checks me out and asks me if I need a Sugar Daddy.

VICKY

You are the Sugar Daddy magnet. You got a big ol' sign on your back that says "I'm the ho for you."

JESUS

But this guy is actually very handsome and I agree to go out on a date with him. At the end of the night he tells me he wants me to move in with him and he'll give me every thing I need. I look around his mansion kinda getting tempted, but then he tells me... "The only thing I ask is that you don't act so gay when I take you out to parties."

VICKY

I told you, that's the problem. You're too gay.

JESUS

There's no such thing as being too gay! Gay is a rainbow.

VICKY

No, but you're too gay for most people, even gay people.

JESUS

No, I'm just "too gay" for all those still in the closet because they can't handle the fact that I've never been ashamed of being gay and I'm just being my true self.

VICKY

Yeah, but sometimes you fulfill the stereotype.

JESUS

(annoyed)

Oh, yeah, well look at you running for "Queen of the Court". That's a stereotype for a transwoman!

Leti comes by about to pick up their dirty mugs.

LETI

Can I take these from you?

JESUS/VICKY

(upset)

No!

Leti senses the tension between them and walks away to another table.

AT ANOTHER TABLE

MARTIN, 20s, is about to break up with ROSIE, 20s, a chunky Chicana with a sweet smile.

MARTIN

It's not you; it's me--

She stops him.

ROSIE

Yeah. It's you. You're too intimidated by the fact that I have a college education and you don't and I'm gonna make more money and make you look like the pendejo (idiot) that you really are. Save the stupid speech. Don't waste my time. I was going to surprise you with a threesome tonight, but now that I'm single... I'm going to invite your best friend instead--

Leti approaches their table.

LETI

Can I take these dirty plates away?

ROSIE

Yeah, take it all away. I'm done here.

Rosie gets up and throws her napkin on the table triumphantly and walks away leaving Martin stunned.

AT ANOTHER TABLE

A CON MAN, 40s, wearing an ugly Hawaiian shirt is on his cellphone talking. Leti approaches him and busses his table listening to the whole conversation.

MAN

Yes, the IRS has already implemented the lawsuit, but you can pay me with a credit card right now so I can stop the lawsuit. I am authorized to stop these legal proceedings... Is it Visa or Mastercard?

Leti frowns and walks towards Lucia's table.

AT LUCIA LA MARAVILLA'S TABLE

Lucia is reading cards for a SALVADOREAN WOMAN, 30s, who is practically in tears.

SALVADOREAN WOMAN

(in Spanish)

If I can't find work I won't be able to bring my children and it's so dangerous in El Salvador right now and I don't know what to do.

LUCIA slides her a piece of paper.

Leti sees this action from a short distance.

LUCIA

(in Spanish)

Look at the paper very carefully and study the information. Memorize it.

The Salvadorean Woman stares at it as though her life depended on it.

Leti is about to approach Lucia's table when Lucia motions for her to go away and not interrupt their session.

LUCIA (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

Now your future will change.

Lucia's hand takes the paper from the lady and puts in her candle to burn the note.

INT. AT THE COUNTER - A LITTLE LATER

Quetzal takes orders.

PABLO SALAZAR, 40s, an undercover detective dressed as a typical hood rat, approaches the counter. Quetzal looks up at him and lights up with joy.

QUETZAL

What a surprise! What would you like? On me.

PABLO

(loudly)

Hey, vato, wuz up? (then whispers)  
It's an official visit so I gotta pay. Can we talk in private?

QUETZAL

Ah, sure. Let me just take these two people behind you and I'll meet you at a table.

AT ANOTHER TABLE

MIRAIIDA, 30s, JENNY, 30s, two women gossip quietly. Leti comes by and discreetly bussess their table and hears the conversation.

MIRAIIDA

(passionately)

He was such a good fuck. I mean the best. He just knew what to do and he used to kiss my chest and my neck with his juicy lips and I swear he's the only man whose ever made me cum without cunnilingus.

JENNY

So why'd you break up with him?

MIRAIIDA

He was always busy running this stupid cafe.

Leti drops a mug and almost breaks it. The WOMEN stare at her, she looks away embarrassed and walks away to the kitchen area.

AT ANOTHER TABLE

Quetzal listens attentively to Pablo quietly sharing some bad news.

PABLO

Word on the street is there's a drug dealer operating out of here.

QUETZAL

(playfully)

Shut up fool.

PABLO

Not joking... Not just that. All these social security numbers of dead people have been posting taxes and we suspect that they're coming from here.

QUETZAL

No! It can't be. My customers wouldn't do that. And you know I run a clean business.

PABLO

Oh, I know you're squeaky clean. In Berkeley every other fool would play women and lie to get some action, but you never once did that or took more than your fair share. Remember our stingy roommates?

QUETZAL

Cheap bastards.

They laugh out loud.

PABLO

Anyway, they're watching you.

QUETZAL

We're under surveillance?

PABLO

I just know some undercover cop is assigned to this place. Don't know who, but I came to tell you so you can fix it. Don't want to have to shut you down. I know you have a good heart and you want the best for this community. You're my bro and I gotta look out for you.

QUETZAL

I appreciate that. Thanks, man.

They give each other a brotherly hug. Pablo leaves, walking like his pants are slipping off all "gangster" looking.

INT. KITCHEN AREA - A LITTLE LATER

Leti washes dishes in the sink. Xochi throws her dirty dishes on top of the clean ones and walks away to make a sandwich.

LETI

Hey, those were already clean!

XOCHI

(sarcastically)  
Oops, now they're not.

LETI

Is that how you do it? You make an employee's life difficult so they quit? Well it's not going to work. I went to a predominantly white university where there were bigger jerks than you and I didn't quit.

XOCHI

Don't be calling me a jerk, bitch!

Xochi grabs a knife to cut the sandwich in two.

LETI

Look, I don't want this job and I don't want Quetzal. So you don't have to be threatened by me --

Xochi turns around holding the knife.

XOCHI

I ain't scared of you.

LETI

Are you threatening me?

Xochi laughs out loud, shakes her head, rolls her eyes.

LETI (CONT'D)

Look, I know you like Quetzal so you ain't gotta worry about it. I don't shit were I eat. I know this is your "territory".

Quetzal walks in on the conversation.

QUETZAL

Did you eat?

LETI

Oh, that's right. I haven't taken my lunch break yet.

QUETZAL

Can we talk outside before you go on break?

LETI

Ah, sure, yeah.

Leti takes off her apron and they exit.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE, BACK OF THE CAFE AREA - CONTINUOUS

LETI

Did I do something wrong?

QUETZAL

No, ah, I just wanted to ask you a favor.

LETI

Yes, just tell me what it is.

QUETZAL

It's kinda... Ah, when you were bussing tables did you hear anything disconcerting?

QUICK FLASHBACK

SCAM ARTIST

ROSIE TALKING ABOUT HER THREESOME

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA PASSING A SLIP OF PAPER TO SALVADOREAN WOMAN

RETURN TO REALITY

LETI

Dis...concerning? Ah, what exactly do you mean?

QUETZAL

Can you keep a secret?

LETI

It depends, but yes, if you tell me something I'm not supposed to repeat I can do it.

QUETZAL

Okay, but you gotta promise this won't get out.

LETI

Yes. I promise you.

QUETZAL

I just had a talk with an undercover detective who told me that there are some shady things going on here and they might shut me down.

LETI

No. Really? But I've been coming here for so long and it's such a great vibe and most of your customers are cool.

QUETZAL

Well, yeah, but I have to stop this. Did you hear anything suspicious when you were busing the tables?

LETI

Ah...

INSERT FLASHBACK

LUCIA LA MARAVILLA

(sternly)

If you continue gossiping you are going to die!

BACK TO PRESENT

LETI

No, I didn't hear anything...

QUETZAL

Okay, well, from now on, please keep an ear out for anything suspicious. I mean anything.

LETI

(concerned)

You want me to spy on your customers?

QUETZAL

No, not really. Just if you happen to hear something, you know... suspicious.

LETI

Okay, I'll be on the look out.

QUETZAL

Thanks...

Leti walks away.

Quetzal takes a deep breath, drops his hands defeated

QUETZAL (CONT'D)

Ah, man... if the landlord doesn't shut me down, the police might!  
 What the fuck! (half-jokingly) What did I do in my past life to be born a Chicano?! What am I going to do?

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

The sign for "OPEN" now switches to "CLOSED".

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Quetzal finishes turning around the sign to "CLOSED".

Xochi and Leti busily clean up.

QUETZAL

Another day another chanclaso.  
 (pounding) Xochi, go home now.

XOCHI

I still have dishes to wash.

QUETAL

No, you better go. Don't want Father Boyle calling me to tell me I've over worked you.

XOCHI

Shut up fool! You know you need me here.

QUETZAL

Yeah, but you have a life. You have a kid and he needs you to go home.

XOCHI

He's with his dad. So I can hang as long as you need me. You need me to update your website, change your analytics or something?

QUETZAL

Not today... Leti, you can go home too. I'm going to continue with the cleaning.

LETI

Okay, but I don't have anyone  
waiting for me at home so I can  
stay if you need me.

Xochi shoots a dirty look to Leti and mimics silently "if you  
need me."

QUETZAL

Thank you, you two. I'm so lucky to  
have two great employees, but I got  
this.

Xochi and Leti grab their belongings and exit.

Quetzal grabs the broom and continues sweeping and cleaning.

TIME PASSES ON THE CLOCK

Quetzal turns off the lights at the cafe.

INT. KITCHEN AREA - A LITTLE LATER

Quetzal gets on a step ladder and searches at the top of the  
shelf.

He reaches for a cookie tin box. Quetzal opens it and inside  
is a gun and other suspicious looking items.

He pulls out the gun out of the box and hides it in his pants  
by his belt.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - BACK OF THE CAFE AREA - ALLEY WAY - A  
LITTLE LATER

Quetzal comes out of the cafe and looks to see if there is  
anyone around. When he's sure that there is no one, he takes  
out the stuff from the cookie tin box.

He walks around his cafe throwing "used" syringes on the  
floor in the alley way.

Quetzal throws an open condom wrapper.

He finishes it off by firing some SHOTS into the sky and  
quickly runs back into the cafe.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE, BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Quetzal is about to run into the back door when Leti steps in front of it.

He shrieks, frightened.

LETI

I saw you do that! Why did you do that?

Quetzal grabs her and drags her into the cafe.

QUETZAL

Ah, you saw me do what exactly?

LETI

Quetzal, I saw you shoot that gun. And you threw ...condom wrappers and syringes?

QUETZAL

You saw that? How long where you standing there? Why did you return?

LETI

I was riding my bicycle close by and I saw you scattering some things. When I saw you pull out the gun I ran to see what was wrong.

QUETZAL

I know this looks really weird and this is awkward, but can you just trust me that I wasn't doing anything bad.

LIGHTS FROM A POLICE SQUAD CAR shine through the window. He puts his arm around her and they duck. He shushes her until the lights pass.

LETI

(whispering)

Okay, I trust you, but tell me why.

QUETZAL

(whispering)

Back when the gangs roamed free in this barrio, nobody wanted to come live in this hood or rent in this building. Now that its safe, the hipsters are taking over.

(MORE)

QUETZAL (CONT'D)

I want the police to think this block is not safe and report it so the Hipsters will reconsider taking over my cafe space.

LETI

(whispering)

But you were shooting real bullets?

QUETZAL

(whispering)

No, no, they were blanks. I wouldn't risk hurting someone.

LETI stares at him.

LETI

(whispers)

That's pretty brilliant.

Quetzal smiles.

They get up.

QUETZAL

Nah, I'm an idiot thinking that's going to work. I was so dumb to think that by opening this cafe and turning it into a cultural center I was going to make a difference and inspire people to believe in their community.

LETI

Well you made this community cool--

QUETZAL

That's the problem. It's a cool community now and the pinche (damn) hipsters want it and my space.

LETI

So did you talk to the landlord?

QUETZAL

No, not yet. I can't do it. I'm afraid if I find out it's true I'll strangle him and I can't go to jail.

LETI

Well, maybe you can just move your cafe--

QUETZAL

It's not just the hassle of moving... It's starting again and for what? If this barrio is not going to be for my people once it's gentrified, why bother starting again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - MORNING

Xochi and Leti set up the tables and chairs.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, KITCHEN AREA

Leti throws cinnamon in the clay pot of coffee. She rushes back and forth accomplishing many tasks.

Xochi picks up her pace. They both multi-task trying to outdo each other.

Quetzal walks in with a tray of pastries.

QUETZAL

Leti did you put the piloncillo--?

LETI

Cafe de la olla - check.

QUETZAL

Xochi, did you--?

XOCHI

It's done. We are ready to open.

QUETZAL

Great, we can open early.

LETI

I'll be cashier this morning.

QUETZAL

Yes, Xochi, let Leti do it this morning.

Quetzal goes to open the door.

XOCHI

But you better not fuck up. Don't want to fix your screws ups.

LETI

(sarcastically)  
Glad you have my back.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, COUNTER

Lucia steps up to the counter.

LETI (CONT'D)

Buenos dias (Good morning), what can I get you?

LUCIA

Nothing... I just came to tell you not to fall in love with him.

LETI

What? Who? What are you talking about?

LUCIA

You know who I am talking about. No te agas mensa. (Don't play dumb.)

Leti rolls her eyes dismissing her. LUCIA walks away giving her the "evil eye". Jesus steps up to the counter and orders.

JESUS

How's it been working out, chica (girl)? You look like you finally know what you're doing.

LETI

Yeah, I finally got the swing of things. What would you like?

JESUS

I like my coffee the way I like my men, very dark, but with lots and lots of cream. Yummm.

LETI

(playfully)  
Cochino (you're so dirty).

JESUS

(playfully)  
Bitch, don't be jealous. You'll get some soon I can feel it.

LETI  
I'll get your coffee black, you add  
all the cream you want yourself.

MONTAGE

LETI TAKES PATSY'S ORDER

LETI TAKES VICKY'S ORDER

LETI TAKES ROSIE'S ORDER

She goes to make a coffee and accidentally burns her hand.  
Leti yelps in pain. Quetzal goes to her and takes her hand.

QUETZAL  
Xochi, take over.

XOCHI  
(mutters)  
I knew she couldn't hang.

Xochi jumps in and finishes the coffee.

LETI  
It's no big deal. I can continue--

QUETZAL  
We have to stop it from continuing  
to burn.

INT. BACK OF THE CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Quetzal takes her to the sink and washes her hand gently.  
Leti is both touched and aroused.

He takes out the first aid kit and puts ointment and a  
bandage on it. Quetzal and Leti share a tender smile.

Their eyes seem to sparkle and their mutual attraction shows  
for a second, until they quickly dismiss it and jump back to  
work.

EXT. STREET - A LITTLE LATER

Leti walks to a bike rack and sees a chain on the floor. She  
runs to the chain and sees that it was cut.

LETI  
Someone stole my fucking bike!!!

Leti cover her face in frustration and anger. She shakes her heads and tries to stop her tears.

LETI (CONT'D)

As if things weren't bad enough  
someone steals my bike. Aughhh...

She walks looking down trying not to cry and avoids seeing people.

A TALL WOMAN, late 20s, dressed fashionably approaches Leti.

TALL WOMAN

Leti, is that you? What are you  
doing here?

Leti is caught like a deer in headlights.

LETI

Huh? Are you talking to me?

TALL WOMAN

It's me Portia.

Leti hugs her. She quickly wipes away her tears and recognizes her.

LETI

Ah, what are you doing around here?

PORTIA

I was doing a fashion shoot for a  
Hipster magazine called Urban  
Original. Leti, you look like a  
mess. What's wrong?

LETI

Ah, it's a long story. Ah, I  
stopped blogging and I started  
working at a cafe --

PORTIA

You're not blogging anymore? Oh, no.  
Oh, wait. Can you work for me? I'm  
starting a fashion website for my  
consultation business. I need  
someone to write my blog and be my  
director of social media.

LETI

You do?

PORTIA

Yes, I need someone who can follow me giving my minute to minute accounts of my exciting life as a professional model on social media. I need someone like you right away. You would be perfect!

LETI

Oh, a fashion blog? Huh, yeah, I could possibly do that. It's better than working at a cafe.

PORTIA

How sad, you have to work as a barista right now, that's tragic. Yes, you need to work for me. Perfect. Yes, you would be great. Make me sound smart and all. Look, here's my card so call me. I have to rush to another fashion shoot--

LETI

This sounds great, but I ah, need to talk about it with my boss to let him know first... But can I let you know by ah... Friday?

PORTIA

Okay, but don't take longer, otherwise I have to find someone else.

MONTAGE

LUCIA THROWS CARDS FOR A CUSTOMER

VICKY AND JESUS GOSSIP

ANOTHER COUPLE BREAKS UP

ASPIRING WRITERS TYPE AWAY

END OF MONTAGE

THREE PROTESTORS, young Latinos in their 20s, enter the cafe. They carry signs stating "Stop Gentrification", "This is urban colonialism", "This is our barrio and we will defend it by any means necessary".

The Three Protestors stand in a triangle around the cafe and shout.

## PROTESTORS

Say no to Gentrification! Stop coming to this cafe which has become an a beacon attracting hipsters! We demand that this cafe shut down immediately! We are Defenders of Boyle Heights and will not allow our community to be sold to the highest bidders!

## QUETZAL

Hey, hey! You know I'm not the enemy. I'm for the community. I'm for our gente (people).

## PROTESTORS

Sorry, Quetzal, it's places like yours that made this a cool neighborhood and now look what you did.

## QUETZAL

Idiots! Blame the city planners and the real estate developers not me. Get your facts straight pendejos (idiots)! Get out of here!

He takes the signs away from them and throws them out the door. The protestors leave. Quetzal looks at his customers and addresses them.

## QUETZAL (CONT'D)

Hey, everybody, I want you to know that I have not raised my prices in five years. I have gone out of my way to keep the prices affordable and accessible to the people of this community so don't anybody accuse me of being a gentryfier!

Quetzal leaves in a huff and locks himself in the bathroom.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, COUNTER - AN HOUR LATER

Patsy walks up to the counter where Leti wipes the counter with a rag.

PATSY  
(whispers)  
So have you made out with him? I  
see the way you check him out.

LETI  
Him? He's not my type.

PATSY  
Good, so you won't mind if I make a  
pass at him.

LETI  
That "chola" behind me will stab  
your hand if you try.

PATSY  
Never mind. Is the bathroom  
working? The door has been locked  
for an hour and I really need to  
go.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, BATHROOM AREA - SECONDS LATER

Leti knocks on the bathroom door. Patsy waits behind her.

LETI  
Quetzal, are you okay?... Someone  
really needs to use the bathroom.

The door opens. Quetzal, at the door, takes a deep breath as  
if getting the courage to face the day and walks out.

QUETZAL  
It's all yours.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - NIGHT

A few CAFE CUSTOMERS get up and leave.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - SAME

Leti picks up mugs from a table where CUSTOMERS left.

Quetzal locks the doors after the customers leave. He tears up the Open sign and sticks it in the trash. He goes to the kitchen.

Leti goes to the trash and sees the sign.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, KITCHEN AREA - CONTINUOUS

Leti walks into the kitchen and sees Quetzal handing Xochi a check.

QUETZAL  
Xochi, here's your check.

XOCHI  
Why are you paying me today?

QUETZAL  
I'm not opening tomorrow. I need time to think.

XOCHI  
So you're closing?

QUETZAL  
No, I'm just taking a few days to think things through. I'll call you.

Xochi stares at her check and then leaves shaking her head and giving Leti the "I'm watching you" sign with her fingers.

Quetzal turns to Leti and hands her a check.

LETI  
Those guys were jerks. Everyone here knows you're not a gentryfier. They're dumb kids who are just trying to get attention.

QUETZAL  
Landlord isn't renewing my lease, police wants to bust me, these wannabe activist punks want to shut me down. I thought I was tough, but this is too much tension. (about to cry) My dream was to create a place where everyone felt safe and happy and can belong...

Leti hugs him... before they know it they kiss. The kissing gets faster and more intense. They run to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

They make out furiously and he kisses her neck and chest. Clothes come off as though they are burning up. They lean against a corner of the bathroom and make moans and lustful noises.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUETZAL CAFE

Vicky and Jesus gossip at a table.

VICKY

I need to get sponsors for my pageant.

JESUS

I don't think you should run this year.

VICKY

Why not? I have a killer dress and a make up artist who can make me look better than J. Lo.

JESUS

I heard a rumor that the people organizing the event were not going to let you run until you were...

VICKY

What? Just say it!

JESUS

More feminine and beautiful and completely a "woman".

VICKY

Well I feel beautiful and feminine and those bitches can't stop me.

JESUS

But maybe after the nose job you'll have a better chance--

VICKY

(passionately)

What? Don't you know that being a woman is what is beautiful, everything else is extra.

(MORE)

VICKY (CONT'D)

I'm beautiful because I am a woman and because I say so. If I waited for everything to be perfect before I could love myself enough to believe I can win the beauty pageant then I would never do it, but God has told me to run so I'm going to run for Queen!

JESUS

Wow, you're right... I've been hearing God too, and God has told me to get a "Sugar Daddy." Sugar Daddys are God's way of "blessing me" for all the tough breaks I've had in life.

Vicky's jaw drops.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE - MORNING

Leti holds a plastic tray and buses a table with a big smile on her face.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Leti enters the cafe and everyone turns to see her. She pauses for a second wondering if maybe she has a bugger on her nose or her face is dirty. She wipes off her face and nose just in case.

ON A CELLPHONE SCREEN

A surveillance camera has captured Leti and Quetzal having hot dirty sex.

Leti passes by the person watching it on the screen.

Leti drops the tray and runs to hide.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, KITCHEN AREA

Leti runs in searching for Quetzal. She makes for the back door.

EXT. QUETZAL CAFE, BACK DOOR - SAME

Quetzal is on his cell in the middle of a call.

QUETZAL

You have to give me three months  
notice according to my lease--

Leti comes out the back door and gets in Quetzal's face.

LETI

How could you?!!!

QUETZAL

(into phone)  
I'll call you back. (To Leti:) Do  
what?

LETI

How could you put it on the  
internet?!

QUETZAL

Put what?

Leti shows him the video on her cellphone.

LETI

Us! In the bathroom! Last night!

ON CELL PHONE SCREEN

Quetzal kisses her neck and Leti moans. Quetzal drops his jaw  
horrified.

QUETZAL

What? No! I would never do this to  
you!

LETI

I'll never trust you again. I'll  
never forgive you!!

QUETZAL

I didn't do it! I swear!

THREE CUSTOMERS walk up to them and point at Quetzal.

CUSTOMER #1

There he is!

CUSTOMER #2

He did it!

CUSTOMER #3

He's the one who put the surveillance camera in the bathroom!

CUSTOMER #1

He should be ashamed of himself!

CUSTOMER #2

Even though it was sexy and hot you shouldn't be putting it on Youtube!

CUSTOMER #3

We're going to sue you for invasion of privacy!

QUETZAL

Yeah, and I am going to sue you for cutting into our private conversation! Now can you please butt out and let us talk.

The Customers roll their eyes and walk away from the Cafe.

LETI

I feel so humiliated. I thought you cared about me.

QUETZAL

I do care about you!!

A SHORT CUSTOMER is walking out of the back door when he stops and over hears Leti and Quetzal arguing.

LETI

And to think you made me feel so --  
Augh! I feel so disgusted and upset I can't even look at your face!

QUETZAL

Yes, I put the camera!

The Short Customer's jaw drops and rushes back inside the cafe.

QUETZAL (CONT'D)

I mean no, no I did not put the camera, but I had thought about putting it in the bathroom to spy on customers so I could find the drug dealer, but I would never do that, because it's wrong --

LETI

How could you have even considered it?

QUETZAL

Well I was desperate. I don't want the police to shut me down, I don't want the landlord to kick me out. I don't want to lose you! AUGH!!! I don't care anymore.

Quetzal throws up his hands ready to give up. He walks away from Leti. Leti shakes her head pissed and walk away from the cafe.

INT. QUETZAL CAFE, BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Quetzal walks into the cafe past the bathroom. Xochi is in the middle of an argument with a customer.

XOCHI

No, bitch you ain't gonna do that to my Quetzal!

CUSTOMER #3

I mean it! I'm going to sue his ass for invasion of privacy.

XOCHI

Quetzal would never put a camera in the bathroom and invade your privacy!

SHORT CUSTOMER

Oh, yes he did. I overheard him admit it to that girl he was screwing in the bathroom!

ANGRY CUSTOMERS get up from their chairs and commotion turns to chaos with them murmuring and whispering.

XOCHI

Look, there he is. Quetzal, tell them you didn't do it!

QUETZAL stares at them.

Customers get in his face.

His world starts spinning. He finally shakes his head and loses it.

QUETZAL  
Everybody out of my cafe!!!

The CUSTOMERS continue arguing.

QUETZAL smashes a glass on the counter and everyone shuts up.

QUETZAL (CONT'D)  
Out of my cafe now!!!

Some CUSTOMERS walk towards the door.

XOCHI  
Quetzal, calm down.

QUETZAL  
You too out!

XOCHI  
Quetzal, baby, I was defending you.

QUETZAL  
Please leave now!

CUSTOMERS leave.

XOCHI  
Quetzal, if you kick me out like  
this I'm not coming back.

QUETZAL  
Good. I don't care anymore. I don't  
care.

Xochi flips him off and walks out pissed, cussing under her  
breath.