

PAPITO

a family comedy in one act

by

Monique Franz

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PAPITO**a family comedy in one act****Copyright© 2022 Monique Franz**Characters

ZOE: A pregnant Latina mother in her thirties, dressed in her Sunday best.

MATEO: A thirty-something, exhausted Mexican accountant in a shirt and tie.

JULIA: Mateo's feisty, intrusive middle-aged Mexican mother.

Scene

Scene takes place in a modest LIVING ROOM in Southern California.

Time

The present.

SETTING: Scene takes place in a modest apartment where toddler toys scatter throughout the living room.

AT RISE: ZOE sits and waits at a table, dressed in her Sunday best with an empty highchair at one corner. The table is set nicely with a dinner, getting cold.

ZOE: (to the audience) Someone once said that you know a man is a good man by the way he treats his mother. (scoffs) I used to buy into this philosophy. So much so that when I met Mateo, I thought he would make the perfect life partner.

He was so loving towards his mother. Respectful. He put gas in her car. He carried her groceries. So, I thought to myself—hell yeah. I'm going to marry this man and give him a couple of babies. Well, it's been 1.5 babies so far...

(points to pregnant belly)

...and I've learned a few things I need to share with you ladies. If you meet a man good to his mother, don't marry him until you consult the flow chart.

(raises a flow chart to the audience)

Do you see this here? (pointing) If a guy is good to his mother, and his mother and father is in the picture, he is fit for marriage.

(points to a different point on the flow chart)

If a guy is good to his mother, and his mother is in a long-standing, healthy relationship, he is fit for marriage.

(again pointing)

If the guy is good to his mother and his father is in the picture, but he is underemployed and lives in the basement, he is not fit to marriage.

(points to a final corresponding point
on the flow chart)

If the guy is good to his mother and she does not have a long-standing man, then you might have a situation like mine....

(MATEO enters with his tie loosened from around his neck and lipstick on his collar.)

MATEO: Hey.

(MATEO goes to kiss his wife on the cheek, but she pulls away.)

MATEO: What's wrong? Where's Maddie?

ZOE: I put her to bed. Where have you been?

MATEO: Nowhere.

ZOE: Is that lipstick on your collar?

MATEO: (checks his collar)Huh?

(ZOE rises and circles MATEO, sniffs around his upper body.)

ZOE: Just what I thought.

MATEO: What?

ZOE: (almost hissing)*Pozo/e!* You were with Julia!

MATEO: (stammering, obviously lying)Listen, I can explain...I—I was at a strip club...with a younger woman.

ZOE: Not a younger woman, you were with....

(with distaste)

... your mother!

(to the audience)

Don't look at me like that. You don't know his mother....

(again growling)

This is the woman who...when me and Mateo were dating...slammed doors in my face, saying things like...

(spotlight on JULIA from somewhere in the past.)

Mateo, *la puta* is here to see you.

ZOE: (to the audience) *La puta*. Loosely translated—*la puta* means bitch. She didn't even know me like that. She was so mean to me. Whenever I called, she wouldn't give him the phone.

(spotlight on JULIA, picks up a phone from sometime in the past.)

JULIA: *Bueno*.

(also in the past)

ZOE: Good evening, Mrs. Chavez. May I speak with Mateo?

JULIA: (distasteful) Who this?

ZOE: It's Zoe, Ma'am.

JULIA

Get lost, *la puta*.

(hangs up phone)

ZOE:

(to the audience)

She was like this to any girl Mateo dated. But I was persistent, and Mateo was so sweet and cute. I won his heart—at least for a little while. He asked me to marry him, and on our wedding day, Julia not only wore white, she wore a veil.

JULIA: (dons wedding veil) I have to wear this. (defensive) The sun gets in my eyes. Tell whats-her-face to get over it.

ZOE: (to the audience) Note that from this day on, I graduated from *la puta* to whats-her-face. When I went into labor the first time, obviously getting too much attention for Julia's comfort, she calls and demands we stop by her place on our way to the hospital.

(ZOE holds contracting belly and takes Lamaze breaths in background.)

JULIA: (by phone) Before you're stuck in the hospital with whats-her-face, I need you to come by, okay?

ZOE: (yells towards the phone) The name is Zoe.

JULIA: Whatever. Come first. It's urgent, Papi!

ZOE: (to audience) Mateo doesn't even think twice. He straightway tells his mom....

MATEO: I'll be right there.

ZOE: (sarcastic) But to be fair, when we got to his mother's house, it was urgent.

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