

**Martin:** Sodas for everyone. Big Gulps with lots of ice!

*(They shake hands and all four depart, strutting off the stage. Lights dim as music plays, then darken. Lights come up on Susana and Lupe.)*

**Lupe:** You think there's something wrong with Ceci?

**Susana:** I don't know. She's sure different, huh? Different from before.

**Lupe:** When I went to her house, she had a bird feeder, an aquarium, a pet turtle, a butterfly net, and that microscope from the store. She was on her bed and instead of *Lowrider* magazine, she was reading *National Geographic*.

**Susana:** Ceci has really changed.

**Lupe:** But you know, maybe she's right about school. We got to study a little more. Maybe we can be nurses.

**Susana:** Not nurses, doctors!

**Lupe:** I like that—doctors. We can help our *gente* when they're sick.

**Susana:** Or maybe we can become veterina-

rians. Take care of the dogs and cats *en el barrio*.

**Lupe:** *Claro que sí!* They need help too.

**Susana:** (*reflecting*) Ceci is just going through a phase in her life. We've got to stick by her.

**Lupe:** Like peanut butter on a flour *tortilla*. We got to stick!

(*Enter Ceci, dressed in a nerdish skirt, with glasses and a calculator. She pushes a cart, which holds a microscope, a chess set, and other scientific props.*)

**Ceci:** (*in mispronounced Spanish*) *Hola! Cómo están mis amigas?*

(*Susana and Lupe look at one another, confused.*)

**Ceci:** How do I look?

**Lupe:** (*muttering to Susana*) Remember to stick by her. (*to Ceci*) You look really, really . . . different. But good different.

**Ceci:** I cut my fingernails, too.

**Lupe:** You didn't! (*examining them*) You did! You had the most beautiful fingernails in *el barrio*.

**Susana:** Your mascara. It's gone!

**Ceci:** *Y mi mariposa.*

*(She shows her once-tattooed ankle.)*

**Lupe:** You had your tattoo lasered?

**Ceci:** *(nodding her head)* It's gone. I'm going to snag my nerd. *(from the shopping cart, she brings out item after item)* I got my microscope, my Bunsen burner, my Erlenmeyer flasks, and my chessboard. And I even have a graphing calculator exactly like Martin's!

**Lupe:** I thought it was kind of big for a pager.

**Susana:** *(rolling her eyes at Lupe)* I'm sure he'll be impressed.

**Ceci:** *(taking up two chess pieces)* I'm excited. *(pause)* Did you know that you're not supposed to move your queen until you've made at least three moves? I read it in a book.

*(Susana and Lupe yawn at this information.)*

**Ceci:** *(continuing)* And did you know that the queen termite is a thousand times larger than her subjects? *(pause)* Do you think Martin will like me?

**Susana:** "Like" is not the word. You're a dream come true.

**Lupe:** Ceci, we're really worried about you. We love you. Why can't you be a homegirl like us no more?

*(Ceci looks into the microscope.)*

**Ceci:** If we didn't have the ozone layer in place, cosmic gases could reach earth.

**Susana:** Sounds *fuchi*.

**Lupe:** *(to Susana)* We're going to have to do something to bring her back. *(pause)* It's all Sleepy's fault. He treated her like dirt.

**Susana:** That's for sure.

**Lupe:** If Ceci goes crazy on us, we'll bring in a *curandera* to help her out.

**Susana:** Or a priest. Just like when that girl in *The Exorcist* was twisting her head around and around and acting all weird.

*(They twist their heads around.)*

**Lupe:** Stuff like that really happens.