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The nahual

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(texto completo)

A spirit. He's able to turn into the different characters of his story, just like a "Nahual" does. He goes from one character to another with lightness and ease, and he can also go from the present to the past naturally, sharing his history with today's audience, meanwhile he can travel towards his past, moving from one dimension to another by himself.

The spirit is found in a pile of newspapers in some marginal place in Mexico City. He's wearing a Superman T-shirt. He's crouched around piles of tabloids. He's looking for something. He seems to have found a piece of news attracting his attention. He reads:

THE SPIRIT

"Sources at the prosecutor's office confirmed the discovery of six corpses that were already dead and whose bodies were found lifeless in one of the alleys in the barrio known as "The Hole." *(Directing himself towards the audience, naturally breaking the "fourth wall". Maybe the audience are interlocutors that he imagines, maybe the audience is the encounter of two dimensions, maybe it's just theatre:)* The Hole... yes, that was my neighborhood. Fucking scary going there. It doesn't take long when you're there to realize how it got its name... THE HOLE. But you know something? I don't know what type of devil's handiwork makes you keep on loving the place where you had the misfortune of being born, although it's deep in the fucking Hole. Even now, every time I remember it I say: Ahhh... my barrio's junkyard, there where dead bodies are usually scattered, there is where I spanked the monkey for the first time. Yes, I mean... well, forgive me if I tell you, but it's true. There was no privacy there where I lived. One fucking 3x4 room was all we had, and the whole family in it: the grandmother, the grandmother's friend, the sister, the son in law, the son in law's lover, and a whole slew of kids... and me one of them, of course. In total, together, we were so many that our family tree wasn't a tree anymore, but a whole forest. Really, a quiet jerk off was impossible. No, look, listen, I slept on the third level of a bunk bed and it was already nighttime, my mother had already sent us to bed... Well, I began to give it a try. Whenever I was in first gear, everything was ok. But I'd barely thought about putting it into second and all the fucking bunk beds started to squeak, like a death rattle, and my family started to cackle, "What's going on?" "What's shaking?" "What's happening?". Well, the thing is... me and my buddies had to go to the junkyard for our first experiences of pleasure, yes, there among the fucking car parts and a fearful silence, ohhh yes, it was scary. There, nobody could see us... or almost nobody, because sometimes you could find that... oh fuck! Yes, it wasn't just the vehicle carcasses but... ohh crap! But well the thing is... If I was speaking of... How it was that I got to... Pffff, listen *(he picks up the newspaper again.)* "...It is believed they were murdered to settle a score, but nobody knows who was responsible. Prosecutors are questioning the neighbors to find out what caused the deaths of those six bodies". *(Disappointed, he crumples the newspaper and throws it away. Again, to the audience:)* Do you know what I think about this, lady? The prosecutor's people are assholes. It's true, right? They arrive a day late at the crime scene and they don't even know what to look for. That day there weren't six dead, but seven. And the seventh? Where is he? Have you seen him, buddy? *(He laughs painfully.)* Don't mess around, it really pisses me off not to have the goddamn privilege of appearing in THE ALARM! THE ALARM! The one paper that's made so many dreams come true! Even mothers feel pride when they see their little one in its pages, their young'un at last is on the front page of a national newspaper, "You see my boy,

you had to die to make it big.” But not to even have the goddamn honor of an article... that really pisses me off. And I checked in all the papers. In THE RED JOURNAL, nothing. THE BLACK PRESS, neither. And finally I said to myself, “in THE ALARM”, how did I miss that? Surely an article will be there... not a motherfucking thing. *(Pause.)* And what happened to the Superman T-shirt guy, the one selling pistachios and cigarettes? Who knows. It’s like he’s never existed. *(Pause.)* I swear to you this has been the stupidest death The Hole has seen. No... wait. It’s not true... the stupidest, no. Really, Pipi’s death is hands down the stupidest death. Yes, that asshole... he was famous in The Hole because he was the one who could hold his piss the longest. To watch him holding it in was a big party. *(Evoking, embodying that moment:)* “Come on, everybody, gather round and watch Pipi’s bladder about to explode.” And everybody in The Hole came, even the women with their youngsters came to see Pipi’s show. That was the thing: me, a few friends and Pipis used to sit at a big table and start to drink. At five beers all of us had been to pee, but Pipis sat there still, so proud he was, that asshole, with a yellow face, yellow like a saint. I’m going to let you into a secret, I think that being able to hold his pee was a big source of personal pride, everybody knew him because of it, and he enjoyed looking at our unbelieving faces. And even though we shouted at him: “Come on, Pipis, that’s enough. Run to the head, asshole, otherwise you’re going to burst.” But the more you shouted at him, the more he held it, and held it, until one day... shooooosh. *(Pause.)* After that, everybody in The Hole saw Pipis as a saint, because only a saint’s bladder could have held so much. And some neighbors say that on the day he died, that day it rained yellow. *(The spirit talks to Pipis in heaven.)* At last, friend, you can pee all you like now that you’re in eternity. But, let’s see, then... if that wasn’t the stupidest death... I think this is the one that’s been the... the saddest... Yes it seems that... No, no, no wait... and all the youngsters who have been killed so stupidly? At least I already lived a bit... That’s like it has to be, you live your life in... but all those youngsters who have barely begun to taste life and... No, no, without a doubt those are the saddest. But then? If this hasn’t been the stupidest or the saddest... I think it’s been the... dirtiest, right. Because, you know, the one who should be dead is fucking Chuy. He was the guy they were looking for. I only... for me it was just one more early morning. I was getting up like I always do at dawn toasting my pistachios for the day. Why do I have to... no sorry, I forget we’re talking about the past. Why did I have to get up early in the morning to toast them? So the toasting tastes fresh, right. Nobody sold pistachios as tasty as mine, that’s the truth. I made them with a special touch... oh no, I’m not going to tell you, if I was fucked over, I’m taking my secret recipe to eternity with me. Now you aren’t going to taste the tastiest pistachios you never tasted. If you dare to go to The Hole now you are just going to find fucking bitter peanuts. But okay, I won’t make this drawn out, maybe it is the fucking fear of arriving at this part of my story that makes me scratch myself so I don’t get here, the fear of remembering because sometimes there’s more fear remembering what you lived through than living through what you are going to remember. In the end... the thing is that I was getting up, wearing my Superman T-shirt, the one I always wore. *(He begins to remember and, when he does so, the scene he evokes makes itself present.)* Outside... the same dogs always barking at the same hour. The same street lamps that threw the same shadows into my room. Everything a reflection of the day before and... of the day before that. It always seemed to be the same old same old when just at that moment I heard somebody shout. *(As the hitmen:)* “Open up fucking Chuy, we are bringing you a message from Lady Death, you bastard!” *(As himself, to the hitmen:)* “There’s no Chuy here, eh!” *(Silence.)* “I think Chuy is the one living opposite.” *(Silence. To the audience.)* That’s it. I was going to return to what I was doing when I heard some blows, some shots and... from one moment to the other, without realizing how, there were two assholes in my room turning everything upside down... but everything, really, including my underwear. I shouted at them: *(To the hitmen:)* “Listen, what’s going on?” I already

told you there's no Chuy here. What are you fucking looking for?" But they didn't hear me. They kept turning things upside down, again and again. I was listening to what one said to the other, "There's no product here, man, are you sure this is the place?" "Yes, on my mother's life. Look harder. They told me clearly it was number twenty-five." (*To the audience:*) Number 25? How is it twenty...? If my place is number two, not number 25. Twenty-five belonged to... sure, that's what I realized. Do you know what that fucking asshole Chuy did? He'd erased the five from his door and painted it on mine. Motherfucker! But the thing that pissed me off is that he didn't even do it well. I'm going to tell you something, and it's not because I'm arrogant, no, what would be the point of... well, never mind: the thing is my two was well painted, really. It was a two like... like... well it was really pretty, kind of like the woman over there. And the fucking five that asshole Chuy had painted looked like... well... I'm not going to say whom it looked like, but it was all like that (*The spirit imitates the five.*) And those assholes, didn't they even realize that that five looked nothing like the two. And didn't they look at the numerical order? But why would they look at the order of the houses! In The Hole anybody could put whatever number they chose. So now if you fancied living in one million two hundred thousand, well, that's easy: go get a bucket of paint and paint on the door all the fucking zeros you want. Like how you want your bank account to look. If you knew how many 69s there are on the block. But, well, as I was telling you... what was I telling you? Ahhh, yes, the thing is that those assholes finally realized I was not hiding anything. Well, I tell you, there isn't much space to hide anyway, my room was... it was like... well, what point is there to reminding oneself of damned misery. The thing is that finally they went, and still I heard one saying to the other as they left. "This pistachio man cracked like a nut." And me, still without realizing: what do you mean I cracked like a nut? Well, finally they left and I decided I was going to let fucking Chuy have it, when at that moment I stumbled over a body outside my room. (*He's transported to that moment, reacting to his own body thrown in front of him.*) His head was all crooked and he had a bullet in his belly. Fuck! But the strangest thing happened when I realized he had my clothes on: the same fucking worn out trousers! The same Superman T-shirt! But how? If that Superman T-shirt could only be mine, how is it that... if just a few moments ago I... (*Silence.*) Shit. And I always said that films like *Ghost* were pure bullshit. You remember that movie I'm telling you about, right? The one called *Ghost* with the subtitle *The Shadow of Love*. For fuck's sake, if even the name sounds like bullshit! Why are you looking at me like that? You don't know the one I'm talking about? The one where some son-of-a-bitch Chuy kills Demi Moore's boyfriend. The thing is that there are motherfucking Chuys everywhere. And, the thing is that I saw the film several times with my mother and she always used to bawl and wail when that damn song came on. You know the one, right? The thing is that it made me angry: "Ma, for fuck's sake stop crying over this film." Although I'm straight up, man: sometimes I cried, too. But I didn't like to see her cry with those lies they force feed you on television, that's what I thought before, because now I wander around realizing they weren't just lies. Yes, this is something like that. You think that somebody can turn up for whatever reason and shoot for no reason and that's the end of that. No, sir. When you're killed, at least when you're killed without warning, you aren't moving on suddenly, right? In The Hole the rumors spread like wildfire: they killed the guy who sold pistachios and cigarettes. And so everybody came to look, even my godmother, doña Eduvigis, who lived deep in The Hole. She had only just heard the news when she wrapped herself up in her blanket and went running, excited to see what had happened. (*The spirit brings that moment into the present, with various types of Hole residents that he incarnates.*) "Oh, compadre, what is that?" "Well, I think it's your godson, comadre." "Oh, don't say that. Oh but... yes it is him, that's his Superman T-shirt, compadre, look." (*As himself, to the audience.*) Oh, because I am going to tell you something: everybody in The Hole is the compadre and comadre of everybody else and everybody is godson and godfather and

godmother to everybody... it's a kind of national incest. *(He turns again into the neighbors:)* Listen, compadre, and is he truly dead?" "Don't start talking crap to me, comadre, nobody can be untruly dead. Can't you see the gunshot that got him?" "No, compadre, it's not possible, and if we call an ambulance?" "An ambulance! Well, what for? He's already stiff as a... as a... board, oh yes." "And so... the police?" "The police, comadre, you gotta be shitting me. They're going to start asking questions and right now I don't want questions. I left my eggs half eaten and if I start answering questions they're going to get cold. I'm also going to tell you straight up: I think your godson was into strange things. That's why they killed him, right? *(As himself, to the audience:)* It took no time at all for the other neighbors to arrive and gossip. Like flies feasting on shit. *(He turns into other neighbor:)* "Yeah, I think Don Lupe's right. I saw that her godson was acting something strange, walking around like his feet were bent over. I'm going to tell you something, doña Eduvigis, but promise me that you aren't going to be offended, right? Promise me. For me, your godson was always a Nahual." "Oh, don't say my godson was a Nahual. No, no, no, anything but that, man! Listen, but what is this Nahual thing?" "Well, the nahuales are like... well, they are something like... well, I don't really know how to explain it, but they are bad. In my village we had one and you know how we rid ourselves of it? We cut him into pieces and then threw those pieces into the dump." "Ohh my God, really." "Ohh yeah, really." "Ohh, but my godson... and there's no other way to get rid of him?" "Mmmmm, yeah, there must be, but... that was fun." "Ohhh, my God." "Be calm, doña Eduvigis. We can just skip that first part and throw him into the dump." "Yes, it has to be like that, because he was a Nahual, I'm sure of that. You know how I'm sure: because his pistachios were too delicious to be human pistachios. They were bewitched. When I ate them I always had the cramps. Yeah. And I blame him for me never marrying, you motherfucker, it's good they killed you." "Ohhh, comadre, I'm really sorry, but I think this little guy is right, your godson was a Nahual." "Ohhh my God, how can that be possible. I always thought my godson was a nice person. But, ohh, now I remember that after my comadre showed me I saw he didn't seem human. He used to twist like a snake in his cot, right, I think he was a Nahual from birth." "Well, I'm sorry from the bottom of my heart that your godson was a Nahual, comadre. Now lend me your blanket and we will throw him in the trash, where he belongs. *(As himself:)* I only heard them and... *(Talking to the neighbors and trying to stop them from wrapping him in a sheet. They don't hear him:)* "What? The trash heap! No! Please the trash heap, no! Call an ambulance! Maybe there is still some life in me. I swear this is a mistake. It was Chuy that... No! Wait. Don't throw me in the trash. Let the blanket alone. WAIT!" *(He sees how they wrap his body up and carry him. To the audience:)* In the end they wrapped me in my godmother's blanket. They put me in Don Lupe's truck and they took me to the trash heap in the RATHOLE... Because that's what we call our neighborhoods: The Hole, the Rathole, the Shitheap... Those motherfuckers... and my godmother was the worst of them, the most excited to think I was a Nahual. Damn godmother who went to find my mother. You should all take care with the people who look after your kids... Those motherfuckers. Now I'm the one responsible for them never marrying, for fuck's sake! They took my body to the trash heap and that asshole don Lupe began to give them instructions. *(As the neighbors:)* "Now all the bad times are going to be over for The Hole, grab him right because we have to throw him far." "Yes, don Lupe, you tell us. Damn Nahual, you'll see that now I'm going to find my girl. Now, ready, get set, and a one, and a two, and a..." "Ay, no! No! Wait a moment compadre, I just want to say one thing: I want my blanket back." "But if the Nahual has already infected it, doña Eduvigis, why do you want it?" "Well... it's that... well, it's a good blanket, or are you going to give me a new one?" "But a blanket infected with Nahual is really serious, doña Eduvigis!" "Let's see, let's see, there's no need to argue. Me, as the compadre of doña... doña... what the hell is her name? Me, as the compadre of my comadre, I am responsible. Between all of us

here we are going to pitch in for a new blanket for my comadre. Right?” “Yes don Lupe, yes. I myself will pick out a really nice one for doña Eduviges. To show the world that in The Hole we really support each other. But you are a worthless fucking Nahual, so no support for you, you can go to hell. Now, right, get set, and a one, and a two and a...” (*The spirit seeing his own body in the dump:*) Among the damned trash, that’s where I ended up. Shit. And it’s not for nothing they call this place a RATHOLE because in a flash all the rats in the neighborhood had a party with my corpse. (*To the rats:*) “Hey, shooo, get out of it, hey, fucking rats... don’t you know how to respect the dead!” And what a fucking fright I had when I saw a rat hear me. I think it was a rat who was a medium? Because it turned to look at me and began to laugh in my face. (*The rat laughs. The spirit tries to chase it away.*) Hey, shoo, learn to respect the dead, not just because they are in the trash... (*The rat laughs at him again.*) Oh, those rats from The Hole were so... so fucking rat-like, no? In the end I left there and I began to float like a spirit through the streets. And I see that I am not the only one, but the dead swarm all over, everywhere. They were the spirits of all the murdered people. That’s where they were walking, wandering around from one place to another, or some of them sat weighed down with their pain. And soon I realized that some sound was coming from them. It was like a whine. Yes, like a whine you could barely hear, like something you can hear and not hear at the same time because it can be confused with the sound air makes. And looking at their eyes I realized that... they were crying without being able to cry. Because we spirits are dry. We can’t even be consoled by tears, we have pain but no tears to wash things away, we just whine. And also I saw that... above... on the bridges... they went around and around. At first, I did not understand... (*to the spirits in the bridges:*) Hey... shhh... you... here... down below... you, too? (*The bridge spirit looks at him.*) That’s when... the penny dropped. Those were the spirits of the people from The Hole who had been hanged and... on seeing holes in their eyes, then... (*Silence.*) I didn’t realize they were so many, that so many from The Hole had been rubbed out. And suddenly, among all those whiners who do you think I found? Pipis! I found Pipis! There he was, sat on a bench, and his face was all scrunched up because he was still trying to hold the urge to piss. (*To Pipis.*) “Hey, Pipis, what are you doing here, man? (*Pipis replied in a voice certainly not audible to the living.*) And why are you holding it in so much, if you’re already dead, right? (*Pipi replies.*) Really? (*Pipis replies.*) Uff Pipis, and where is it? (*Pipis replies.*) With the knife that was used for the onion? And then he boiled him with innards? And then? (*Pipis replies.*) Uff, Pipis, really... and so who ate those tamales? (*Pipis responds.*) Really Pipis? And where is that? (*Pipis replies.*) Here among themselves, Pipis, don’t say that to me. (*Pipis replies.*) Uff, Pipis, if only the living knew... (*Replying to Pipis.*) Well, Pipis, well this is how things are. See you later, Pipis. Anyway, we will bump into each other forever. (*To the audience, now, in the present.*) If you could have heard what Pipis told me, what you living people sometimes eat without being aware. Okay, well, the thing is I kept going on my way. For God’s sake, so much whining all around! And so many living wandering all around us as if nothing happened, as if we were not there. Yes, suddenly I saw my godmother walking around to see who to piss off. And there he was the Roach hanging from the truck, just like he always was. And around here you can hear the scrap metal merchant. (*The spirit begins to chant the scrap metal song.*)¹ Fucking little truck that one, I’m going to tell you even in eternity you aren’t going to be free from that. Well, the thing is, the living were wandering around, and suddenly I started shouting at them as if desperate to see them walking among us through thin air, as if we were not there. (*Shouting at the living.*) “What? Can’t you hear us? Can’t you hear the eternal whining? How can

¹ There is an infamous canned announcement played by scrap metal merchants on loudspeakers on their trucks circulating through the streets of Mexico City. Every resident of Mexico City has heard the penetrating cry of the woman announcing scrap metal for purchase.

you walk around us just like that? But nobody heard a thing... everybody was just following his own path and... *(To somebody in the audience.)* Look, man, can I tell you something? Every time you feel something strange, something like... how can I say? Well, as if somebody is coming up behind you and gives you a jolt, it is because there's a spirit of a dead person whining right beside you. Because it's the only thing the dead can do, sometimes, to jolt the living, because there is so much fucking anger built up inside us that sometimes whaaap, it turns into a jolt. *(To another person in the audience.)* Don't you believe me? Do you want to test me? *(The spirit heads towards someone as if about to gibe them or jolt them, but he stops.)* Well, honestly, I'm not so pissed now to jolt you, but you better not make me angry because... *(it looks like something is running across his body.)* Or... sometimes... you just have to stand still and listen. And then you realize that on the other side of silence there is something, that all the murdered haven't departed, that we are still here, among you, listen! *(Silence.)* Well, but I was telling you about... about what? Oh yes, I was telling you about oh, time is already a mess... Arcelia? I was telling you about Arcelia... no, no, Arcelia, it's still not your turn, wait a moment. I'm telling you... oh yes, the thing is I started wandering the streets as a spirit and there were fucking whiny dead people everywhere I looked. And me too, the need to whine was rising up. But no. Still not yet. It had all been really nasty, yes, but... I decided to do all the things I couldn't do when I was alive. I got into the subway and I went in the first car, the driver's car. Since I was a kid it was always my dream... one of those stupid dreams you have when you're a kid, you know? I once even told my mother, may she rest in peace – I hope she is – I told her: “Ma, when I'm grown up I'd like to drive the subway.” Then her eyes widened with fright... *(The mother:)* “Ay, son, but what are you saying? So much pain and worrying just for that? For you to tell me you want to be a subway driver. Do you know what doña Eduvigis' son wants to be? The pilot of the plane used by the U.S. president. Why can't you be more like him, eh? Subway train driver indeed...” And when she saw what I became: “Oh, son, why didn't I let you follow your dream? If I had, right now you would be driving The Hole super-train. Ohhh, 'cause we've got a new super-train in The Hole, it goes from the Station of the Damned to the Station of the Well-and-Truly-Fucked. Well, anyway, I got to the subway and jumped into the driver's cab, at last. Me, like a well-behaved spirit, right? Nothing of those jolts or anything... no, no, a well-behaved spirit, really. But soon the bitterness punched me in my ghostly heart and it made me start jabbering and jabbering, I told him how everything was so fucked up, I told him about Chuy and all those assholes and how my own godmother threw me in the trash, I jabbered and jabbered and then I realized he didn't hear a damn of what I was saying, and how was he going to hear, if I was dead, but that made me feel so angry, of him being alive and I being dead that I couldn't help it and whaaap, I jolted him, and what a jolt it was! He turned, really concerned. *(The spirit sits and turns the place where he sits into the driver's cab. Then he moves from one side to the other as he embodies the driver and himself at that moment. As the driver.)* “What the hell...!” *(As himself:)* “Hey you idiot, don't you hear what I'm telling you.” *(As the driver.)* A window must be open or... *(As himself:)* No you idiot, it's not a window, it's me... *(To the audience:)* And then suddenly I see that... *(To the driver:)* “Hey, stop! Can't you see! There's somebody there! You're going to... brake! Brake! You asshole, brake! *(The spirit closes his eyes before the imminent disaster. Pause. He opens his eyes again. Now he's out of the subway.)* Yeah, in the subway, too, all those bastards who threw themselves on the tracks, were grieving right where they'd done themselves in. But now I was wandering in the streets again. *(He's in the middle of the street without knowing where, nor what to do.)* And now? What the fuck? I was there for a bit, floating around. I still didn't want to belong to the dead, no, still I didn't want to give myself over to it. Something occurs to me: to go to TEMPTATION. You don't know about Temptation, that's where the girls with the sexiest holes girls go. No, sorry, I mean that's where the Hole's sexiest girls

go, yes. *(To a man in the audience.)* You've got to see them, folks, now that you're still alive... Temptation! Right there in the middle of The Hole! Just like that tower named after the architect Mr. Babel. Honestly, I always wanted to go but... it's true they charged for drinks like they were the elixir of eternal life, and if they brought you a spiked drink, they charged extra for that, too. But once, yes, I earned enough money to enter. I was out selling pistachios and cigarettes from dawn to dusk and I managed to earn 500 pesos. Oh! You don't know what it was like to pull together 500 pesos in such a short space of time. I even had the urge to frame the 500 pesos bill and give it to my mother. But no. It was for TEMPTATION. I changed out of my Superman T-shirt and put on my Captain America one. I got there, clutching my 500 pesos but the bastard bouncer saw me and blocked me, saying to his buddy: *(At the entrance to TEMPTATION. One bouncer to another:)* "Don't let this one through, Mike," *(The spirit:)* "Oh you fuckers, how come I can't go in, I've got 500 pesos." *(The bouncer:)* "No, you aren't going in. He's the one who sells pumpkin seeds right there. No, we can't let him in, Mike." *(The spirit to the bouncer:)* "Listen, look, in the first place, I don't sell seeds, I sell pistachios, don't confuse them. And number two, if I'm carrying my 500 pesos bill, eh, listen, what gives..." *(The bouncer on the line:)* What! Are you deaf or what? The hell with you! Get out of here! Beat it, Mike. *(The spirit.)* "Ohhh, so I can't go in, ok, you'll see..." *(To the audience:)* That situation really pissed me off, and I got on, man, and pfffff *(He tries to hit the bouncer but ends up getting hit.)* I was really beaten bad, and the punch was such that I even hallucinated pistachios floating like birds around my head. But now, yes, now that I was dead, I could take advantage of them not seeing me, and at last I entered TEMPTATION! And I've barely arrived before I come across Natas and Chanclas. They were right there. Sat there with their gold chains and their fingers weighted with gems, surrounded by girls, laughing and laughing. How many lives were owed those bastards! So many lives that they only could pay with more lives. That's what was going on, smiles and smiles. Well I went to the room at the back where Ruby's show was on. And she was there. Damn, what a show, man! She made her moves, lighting us up with her rubies, shaking it and shaking it like that! *(The spirit, as Ruby, dances in front of the audience.)* That's where I was for a short time, trying to imitate the laughter of the living, when something occurred to me. If nobody is looking at you, man, do it. That's what I told myself, and I got up on the stage and I got up under Ruby to catch a better look. Wow, what a view! There she was, with the pole above her and below her, wagging her ass without realizing she was really wagging at a dead person. Ufff, and soon I see that... *(Looking at his trousers, at his groin.)* Something was happening, it didn't... *(Talking to his groin.)* "Hey, dude, what's going on? Why can't you get into it? Can't you see Ruby dancing? It's what you've always wanted, isn't it?" *(To the audience:)* But it wasn't responding, it looked like a forlorn ghostly banana skin. And that's when I discovered, lady, when life leaves so does desire. That's what life is, right? Going about wanting all the time, desiring and desiring all the time, and when time runs out the only thing that remains is the fucking sadness. And I tried to get my dude going, I tried... and tried... and tried... until after a long time, but a really long time, just to stop fucking around, a kind of ghostly liquid sprung up. It made me feel ashamed to see it, actually. Well, I left TEMPTATION more wound up than when I went in. But now? Now what? You think I was really going to resign myself to despair? No, not a fucking chance. Not yet. I went to The Hole's *Megacinema*, taking advantage of... well... now that I could stay there as long as I liked, maybe until the end of time, right? And perhaps even a little longer. I was there awhile, moving from one theatre to another. But what nonsense they show now. I remember, they were about to show fucking *Avatar*. What is that? Anybody seen it? Who wants to see those fucking high-tech Smurfs with their scrunched up faces? Nothing like the ones I used to see as a kid, with my mother, when they really knew how to make them. When Pedro Infante and Jorge Negrete battle it out by song, ohhh... that was cool. Those things were great, not the nonsense

from nowadays. *AVATAR*? But the worst thing wasn't fucking *Avatar*. The worst thing was I went to a show where a bunch of fans were dressed like Avatars. No shit, I tell you! Those things are an offense to the senses. They ruined the whole show. And again, I felt so angry, that they were all laughing like that, so alive were those fuckers, and meanwhile I was behind them with all the pain we dead carry, it made me so angry to see them laughing with the laughs of the living that whaaaap, I jolted one of them. (*He brings to the present that moment with a certain pleasure, the ghostly pleasure of the dead.*) FUCKER! I managed to give him such a... whaaaap, and he turns at me angrily, "Hey you bastard did you just hit me..." And what a fright he got when he saw there was nobody behind him. Ohhh yeaaaah, haha, It was so frightening that I even managed to wipe the blue color from the real Avatar's faces on the screen and they went all yellow, too. But... well, at the end I left Megacinemas more pissed off than when I'd gone in. And to top it all off, I'd barely left when I bumped into other spirits hanging around the entrance to the cinema, whining and whining. Immediately I recognized them. It was the *quinceañera* with her escorts. (*The aforementioned spirits appear before him.*) These ones were killed in the dancehall that used to be where the cinema now is. What a fucking drag of a story that one. A day before her fifteenth birthday, miss, they were rehearsing the waltz, the one by Chayanne of course, when some motherfuckers came in and pah-pah-pah... everybody got it just the same. I think they were after one of the escorts, but since they all had the bad luck of being dressed in black, the killers made them all move to the dance of the dead. There they all were, in the place where they were executed, and meanwhile all those fucking stupid avatars exiting the cinema laughing and laughing, and here whining and whining, and there laughing and laughing, and whining and whining and laughing and laughing and... how could the quinceañera not have whined? Everything was ready, everything! They'd already bought the dress, and what a dress, eh, pistachio color, bur real pistachio color, almost like mine. They'd ordered the tallest cake I'd ever seen in The Hole, they'd even rented the limo to show off the quinceañera all the way down Reforma Avenue and... (*Looking into the eyes of the quinceañera's spirit.*) I think she recognized me, because she turned to look at me, and she saw that... (*Speaking to the quinceañera's spirit.*) Yes girl, it's me, I was the pistachio and cigarettes seller, from a few blocks from here, and they got me too. (*To the audience:*) Her face was a mess from so much whining, and when she saw me with those eyes of hers like dry wells then I again had that tremendous urge... a tremendous urge to sit down beside them and begin to whine along with them too. (*Doing everything possible to contain himself.*) But no, whining wasn't going to win this battle for me, I still had things to do. One thing only, in fact. In truth I only had to fulfill what had been my only real longing, the only thing I had left to do in life. I went to Arcelia's house. Arcelia... ohh... I think she was the one that got me closer to... (*Silence.*) Yes, I will say it, to love. (*Silence.*) She lived across Bones Avenue, in a pretty nice house, ohh yes! Sometimes I stopped a few meters from it and waited around to watch her leave. Why didn't I dare to get closer to...? No, I was just there, waiting, and waiting, and waiting for so long I even managed to compose some poems. Do you want to hear them? No? Well, as a matter of fact, I'm already dead, so I don't give a shit if you want to or not, so here you go: "Arcelia, Arcelia, I love you with all my wounded heart and all my art! Arcelia, Arcelia, I love you so much for you I would go to Australia!" Did you notice how it rhymes, lady? 'Cause a poem must rhyme, and if it doesn't it's not a poem, I tell you. And mine rhyme, so they're real poems, right? I really did this, I was serious about the profession of making true poems. Once I even crossed the city to buy a dictionary, and I pored through it until I found rhyming words. Oh, the rhymes I managed to find. Listen to this one: "My nuts are hot nuts" You got that one? That's mine! That was my best one! I wrote it one day when I didn't sell a single fucking pack of pistachios. And once I wrote one to my mother, but she looked at me again with those wide frightened eyes (*As the mother:*) "What is this?" (*As himself:*) "It's a poem I wrote for

you, ma. And it rhymes, see!” “Oh son, how did you end up like this? You better make money and not this fag shit. And if you are a fag, let me know so I can find some stud to make another child while there’s still time.” My mother... ohh, I’m going to tell you about my mother, a great woman, and the thing that pains me most about this is when she at last went to her resting place, I hoped that she would, well, then... but no, why wallow in bitterness. Better... what was I telling you about? Oh, right, the thing is I went to Arcelia’s house, and now I could really get in, miss, without asking anyone for permission. And everything was silent there inside. She was in her room, singing. I’m not so sure she sang so well, to be honest, but for me it sounded like... well, like the sound of the living that I missed. She sang, beautifully with the voice of the living. I stopped a moment at the door, as if it was a concert just for me, then suddenly without warning I became a chatterbox again. *(Speaking to Arcelia:)* “Arcelia! It’s me! The pistachio sel... the small business man who worked a few blocks from here! They killed me, Arcelia. Goddamn Chuy fucked up the numbering and some bastards shot me, right here, look! I swear to you... I swear to you that I... you know, I didn’t mess with anybody, I just...” I was there for quite a while, speaking to her, stopped in the doorway, and then, sir, something occurred to me, and I said to myself: “Look, she isn’t even able to see you, dude.” *(Silence. He reacts to something Arcelia does that the audience can’t see, of course.)* “Arcelia, come, don’t be afraid, it’s me. Don’t be scared. Why did I have to wait until now to... If only I’d been able to...” *(Silence. The spirit tries to take the invisible presence of the living Arcelia in his arms, but suddenly she seems to vanish. He returns to the audience in the present:)* I was there for a bit, trying to kiss her neck to bring back the taste of desire, and then... I had that urge again... a tremendous urge and... and now I couldn’t hold it any longer and I sat beside her and burst, and became a kind of dry river for so many dry tears pouring out of me that day, next to her. I don’t know how long I was there, whining and whining. It must have been quite a while because I remember it was day and all of a sudden it was night and... Finally I understood something, yes... I understood that all the spirits always returned to whine just where they had been executed. I understood why all the men who had been hanged walked across the bridges, and why the tunnels in the subway were filled with the spirits who had killed themselves there, yes, I don’t know why... it’s like a dog’s instinct, the need to return and whine right there, at the place where we breathed our last. I said my last goodbye to Arcelia and returned to my street. *(The spirit is in the street near his former house.)* It was just like nothing had happened. Nothing had happened. Don Lupe was sat smoking, same as ever, the same guys were playing soccer, and fucking Chuy kept on with his goddamn business tricks. But the thing that really pissed me off was when I went to my room some asshole was there, sat on my sofa, looking at I don’t know what shit on TV, laughing and laughing, the bastard! *(Speaking to the man:)* “What are you doing here, motherfucker? This is my fucking place, get out of here right now”. But the dude just sat there laughing and laughing, and not just that, but also there was a dog there, right where I had fallen. “Motherfucker... can’t you hear me? Get away from here! Son of a bitch, let me be somewhere I can whine in peace, right? *(Talking to the dog:)* And you stupid dog, aren’t dogs supposed to have many senses? Don’t you feel somebody died there? *(To the audience:)* But the dog did nothing but wag his tail a moment and stayed lying down. And, yes, I understood what that dude was doing there because suddenly I saw my godmother all aglow, my goddamngodmother. *(The godmother:)* “What’s going on my little Chubby Cheeks, everything ok?” *(As himself, to the audience:)* CHUBBY CHEEKS! For Christ sake, I can’t believe it. *(Talking to his godmother:)* You, godmother, how could you... now that your godson is dead you nab this place for your nasty Chubby Cheeks! *(To the audience:)* And not just that, madam, but can’t you see what she’s holding? My pistachios! Yes, the ones I prepared that same morning I... *(The godmother, to her Chubby Cheeks:)* “Look, my love, I brought you this snack.” This snack! Wasn’t I supposed to be a Nahual? Wasn’t my product bewitched or I don’t

know what fucking nonsense! Fucking godmother was the one who went to get my mother. I already told you to watch out for who looks after your kids, right? Oh, because it's not just that, but soon they shift the dog to one side and she takes her new blanket out, very boastful (*The godmother to her lover:*) Look my sweet Chubby Cheeks, the pretty new blanket that they just gave me. (*The lover:*) And what happened with the other one, honey pie? (*The godmother:*) Ohhh! The other one, well, my godson is resting on it right now. (*As himself, to the audience.*) So, they lay out the blanket in front of me and begin to do it right there. Oh, that's what they did, going at it, and at it, and all the while I'm cursing them. (*The godmother:*) "Oh my Chubby cheeks, oh, how I like it when you spank me." Ohhh my godmother, she was not just mean, but stupid as well, it was not him that spanked her. But anyway, she seemed to enjoy it. What fucking rage! Really, you know what pisses the dead off most is not being able to exact revenge. Revenge gets stuck in the craw and... If I could have only... If I could I would piss on my godmother then remove Chuy's intestines and brains and that asshole don Lupe too and... But you know something? For all the stuff that pisses me off, the thing that really pisses me off the most was dying like this without even really having tried anything. Yes, really, I'm not shitting you, it's true. I'd hardly ever drunk a beer at Christmas with my mother, well, that yes, but beyond that... what a fucking, if I had known my end would be like this... I would have gone into the business, I would have become a tough guy, I would have seen Arcelia with my pockets all bursting with dough and if one day buuum, well, in the end the business I chose killed me, right? But to die in such a stupid way and not even... really I... it pisses me off. But you know what my revenge is? Nobody is going to taste nuts like mine again. That's my revenge. Now, I tell you that if you go to The Hole today the only thing you are going to find are bitter pistachios. And, well, life just went on as if I had never spent time on this planet. My godmother is still there, playing with her Chubby Cheeks, Chuy is still there hanging around with the same guys as if nothing had happened. The only thing to say is... fuck... well... that's what it was like. That's what happened to me. Some humans weren't born to see the light, damn it. The only good thing is that... my nuts were the fucking tops. And none of those assholes knows how I toasted them. (*Silence.*) I do remember that sometime some guys were talking: (*Some guys in The Hole:*) "And what happened to the pumpkin seed seller?" "Well, they say he cracked like a nut hahahaha! I heard he was a Nahual, you know something about that." "A Nahual? And what's that?" "You don't know! Nahuales are like... like... well they're like... I don't really know what the fuck they are like but when you find one you have to get rid of it." "Oh, well, yes. And what was his name, you remember? Well... who knows, it doesn't matter." (*To the audience:*) Oh, sons of bitches! They said pumpkin seed instead of pistachios, what a disgrace, my God! And then they ask what's my name. Oh God, what's my name? My name? Me... me... I'm going to tell you something, I have many names... the names of all the people who have died like this, for nothing. Yes, I have all the names of those for whom no one ever gave much of a fuck. Because you just have to open your eyes and you will see the air is filled with spirits, that it is poisoned with so much pent up pain. (*Long silence. The actor, not the spirit, speaks:*) Or not... perhaps not... perhaps just nothing of them remains. And maybe I am just an actor and the air is the same air as always and the sun is the same sun as always, and other kids keep getting born, keep playing and keep laughing where other people have died, and of those that have fallen there will just be... oblivion.

THE END