

THE SHARK TANK

By Edward Berber and Julie Gutierrez

Setting

NOT DURING THE PANDEMIC - pre pandemic
Chicago
The Shedd Aquarium

Characters:

Lupe - hispanic, 21, no college, smart, VERY smart, genius is the super power. She's lonely because her family is deported

Jesus - 20 y/o man, hispanic, Lupe's best friend

Diego – boss, we don't like him

Victims:

Agent Matthew Johnson: Person who took her parents: ICE Agent, white man, 55 yo

Karen - A white person on the tour who said not to speak Spanish, 40 yo

Nancy C.- Social worker, 30 yo white person

Scene I

Setting: The Shedd Aquarium, Jesus and Lupe in the back area behind the shark tank,
chopping up fish to feed the sharks, 8AM

Jesus:

Oh my god, wasn't dinner at Nueva Leon delicious?

Lupe:

How can you think about food with these fish guts everywhere?

Jesus:

It's not so bad, if you just add seasoning!
(Jesus shakes fish guts in her face, Lupe recoils)

Diego enters just walking through the back room.

Deigo:
Get back to work, these sharks aren't gonna feed themselves.

Diego Exits.

Lupe:
I wish we could feed *him* to the sharks.

Jesus:
Pretty violent for 8AM, Lupe.

Lupe:
Whatever, I'm just in a bad mood, I haven't talked to my parents in a month.

Jesus:
If I were you I wouldn't worry about it.

Lupe:
It's not that easy, Jesus.

Jesus:
Yeah, I'm sorry, I don't know what it's like.

Lupe:
Yeah, you don't.

Diego runs back in, shaken.

Diego:
Lupe, you HAVE TO HIDE!

Lupe:
Why?

Jesus:
What's going on?

Diego:
It's ICE.

Diego and Jesus run off SR. Lupe hides behind the shark tank. An ICE Agent Matthew Johnson enters looking for people, tiptoeing.

Agent Matthew Johnson:
(singsong)

I know you're in here. Come out, come out, wherever you are.

Lupe sneaks up behind him and pushes him into the shark tank as he is peering over. We hear a big splash and thrashing. Lupe reaches for his hand but she can't pull him out.

Agent Matthew Johnson:
(screaming)
HeeeeeeeIIIIppppp!

Diego and Jesus run on SR.

Diego:
What's going on in here?

Lupe:
(upset and lying)
He was running up to me and he slipped on the fish guts and fell. I tried to grab him but the shark had him already.

Diego:
Well, he was hungry because you two were dilly dally-ing and NEVER fed them breakfast!

Jesus:
OK, we get it, but what do you want us to do about it now?

Diego:
(pacing, talking to himself, thinking)
What did we do? What did you do? Ok. Ok. Ok, let me think straight. First we need to bring in the extra filters. Make sure you no one knows why you're getting them. I'll lock the entrance.

(Diego exits SL)

Jesus:
Why are you so calm about this?

Lupe:
He got what he was looking for, even if it took a little push.

Jesus:
What are you trying to say?

Lupe:

I don't know what happened, I let my anger get the best of me.

Jesus:

Are you CRAZY?! I have to get to security to erase the cameras.

Lupe:

Sorry, I don't deserve a friend like you.

Jesus:

Yeah, I know you don't. We keep this between us.

Jesus exits SR. Lights down.

SCENE II

At the Shedd, in front of the shark tank. Lupe and Jesus are tour leaders today. They are in front of the tank speaking a group 3 people are on the tour listening. Lupe is in a very good mood today.

Lupe:

Hello, what are you doing after work?

Jesus:

Nothing.

Lupe:

Wanna go grab lunch today?

Jesus:

Why are you so happy? And how come you are hungry this morning?

Lupe:

I talked to my parents today, they are at my abuelos house in Mexico.

Jesus:

That's awesome! I'm so glad to hear that they're ok.

Lupe:

Sooooooooo, yes to lunch, or no?

Jesus:

Yes, yes yes!

Diego walks in with a tour group of 3, Karen is one of the 3.

Diego:

Here we are at the shark tank. This is a really popular exhibit on the tour, The Great White Shark!

Lupe and Jesus are talking off to the side.

Lupe:

Donde quieres comer?

Jesus:

Que quieres comer?

Karen:

We're in America and you should speak English.

Diego:

Excuse me, you don't talk to my employees like that.

Karen:

Well, they shouldn't speak Spanish.

Lupe:

Who are you to tell us what language to speak in?

Karen:

I paid for this and you should treat me right, after all, the customer is always right.

Lupe:

Oh I'm so sorry. Let me make it up to you. I can give you a backstage look at the shark tank.

Jesus:

Lupe, que estas haciendo?

Lupe:

(to Jesus) Ya Callate! (To Karen) Please follow me.

Karen:

I hope this is worth it after that attitude you gave me.

Karen and Lupe walk off SR.

Diego:

As you can see, this Great White Shark -

Karen screams OS and a loud splash as Karen falls into view inside the shark tank.

Lupe (OS):

HELP! Someone, this woman fell in the shark tank!

Diego and Jesus look at each other. Beat. Run off SR.

Jesus:

That's way too many accidents in a week.

Blackout.

SCENE III

At lunch, Lupe and Jesus sitting at a table.

Jesus:

Are you crazy?

Lupe:

It was an accident. I swear it was an accident.

Jesus:

Two accidents in two days? What a coincidence.

Lupe:

I promise.

Jesus:

Do you think I'm stupid?

Lupe:

That Karen got what she was looking for.

Jesus:

You can't keep doing this Lupe.

Lupe:

Those people pushed me to my breaking point.

Jesus:

I get it, I'm fed up too, but we can't go around killing people. You have to PROMISE me this won't happen again.

Lupe:
I promise.

Jesus:
Good, because you can get in big trouble. And with that trouble you might not get to see your family again. AND don't forget it's a wrong to kill people.

Lupe:
It won't happen again, I promise.

Jesus:
Keep it that way.

Scene IV

In the backroom at the Shedd aquarium. Jesus and Lupe are prepping fish for the sharks. Nancy Carter, a social worker and a white woman, enters SL.

Lupe:
Why are you here?

Jesus:
Calm down, be nice Lupe.

Nancy:
I know the past few months have been hard.

Lupe:
Says the person who has NEVER felt this way.

Nancy:
I'm not the enemy. I'm here to help.

Lupe:
Help? Where was your help when they took my parents away?

Jesus:
Lupe, we talked about this yesterday.

Lupe:

I know I made a promise but this is too much.

Jesus:

What are you gonna do? You can't feed everyone to the sharks. You need to deal with your problems.

Nancy:

(laughs uncomfortably)

Ha, ha, sharks, ha.

Lupe:

Unless you're here to tell me my parents are coming back, I don't want to hear it.

Nancy:

That's the thing! We're still finalizing some paperwork, but my team is flying them back.

Lupe hugs Jesus.

Lupe:

Thank you, I can finally be calm. I'm gonna see them. It's over.

Nancy:

What's over?

Jesus:

Oh, just this new diet we tried out for the sharks this week.

Lupe:

So when do you think they're coming back?

Nancy:

They should land tomorrow.

Lupe:

Jesus, we have so much to do. We need to clean the apartment. Go to the supermercado. Nevermind, there's no time to spare, we'll just pick something up. Can you buy balloons? I need to iron my dress.

Diego enters SR.

Lupe:

Diego, Diego.

Diego:

Oh no. Why are you so happy? What did you do now?

Lupe:

Nancy told me my parents are coming back tomorrow. I was wondering, if we could all have the day off. You and Jesus can meet my parents!

Diego:

Absolutely not!

Jesus:

If I were you, I wouldn't make Lupe angry.

Diego:

I'm joking. Of course you can have the day off! What should I bring?

Lupe:

Soda, ice, chips, what about a band?

Diego:

A band? Don't you know I'm broke?

Jesus:

Lupe, get out of here. We can figure everything else out.

Lupe is running frantically and hugs Nancy on her way out SR.

Lupe:

Thank you again.

Lupe exits SR

Nancy:

I wish I could give out news like this more often.

Jesus:

Something is better than nothing.

Diego:

Ok, we need to get to the stores before they close. Nancy, what are you bringing to the party?

Nancy, Diego, and Jesus wlk off SL together.

Lights down except in the shark tank. We see the shark swim around and fade to black.