

Side 1

START >>>

009 ALICIA'S GUARD

We should really inspect that food for you, Miss.

010 ALICIA

Ugh, don't be such an alarmist, Seba. If you want to try my chocolate, just say so.

011 ALICIA'S GUARD

Your father insists we do our duty. The Cristero spies are notorious.

012 ALICIA

Fine. Do what you must. But I quite like it up in this car. So much livelier. If I'm going to survive this long trip, I'd like to make some new friends.

013 ALICIA'S GUARD

Miss --

014 ALICIA

Oooh, there! I'd like to sit with those ladies!

THE THREE SISTERS SHUFFLE IN THEIR SEATS, NERVOUS.

015 SISTER MARGARITA MARIA

Is the president's daughter coming over to us?

016 SISTER TERESA

What?! Why? Sister Margarita Maria scoot over, take up more room --

ALICIA PLOPS DOWN NEXT TO SISTER MARGARITA MARIA, ACROSS FROM MOTHER LUISITA AND SISTER TERESA.

017 ALICIA

Hello! My name's Alicia. Would you three like some chocolate?

018 SISTER TERESA

Oh, my...

019 ALICIA'S GUARD

Miss... please --

020 ALICIA

I'm fine, Seba. These old ladies are not Cristero spies.

021 SISTER MARGARITA MARIA

Old? I'm twenty-three.

022 ALICIA

Go stand guard over there with Leo, if you must. You two can attack them if they try to poison me.

023 ALICIA'S GUARD

Fine, Miss. We will be right over here. Watching.

024 ALICIA

Yes, yes, goodbye.

ALICIA BEGINS TO UNWRAP HER PASTELITOS. THE
THREE NUNS WATCH HER WITH BAITED BREATH.

025 ALICIA

Mmm I do love chocolate. Do any of you have any handkerchiefs? We could split this pastelito four ways.

026 MOTHER LUISITA

I believe I have some in my bag dear, let me just look.

027 ALICIA

Ah, I knew you would! My abuelita is the same way -- always prepared. I didn't get your names, by the way?

028 SISTER MARGARITA MARIA

Umm, I'm Margie.

029 SISTER TERESA

Tita.

030 MOTHER LUISITA

You can call me Doña Maria, dear.

031 ALICIA

Doña Maria. You have very kind eyes. I hope the nuns in California are half as lovely.

032 SISTER TERESA

Nuns?! What nuns?

033 ALICIA

At Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School in San Diego. It's where I'm headed to study. My father wants me to perfect my English.

(mimicking an accent)

"Hello. Goodbye. How much are your tomatoes?"

034 MOTHER LUISITA

Learning English is an important skill.

035 ALICIA

Plus, it's not safe for me to stay in Mexico with so much Cristero violence going on. You heard Seba. Those Catholic rebels are deviants.

<<< END

036 SISTER MARGARITA MARIA

Right.

037 SISTER TERESA

Darn those Cristeros!

038 ALICIA

They've driven this country to madness, haven't they? My father's poor soldiers can barely keep up.

039 MOTHER LUISITA

Violence is always a tragedy. Every soldier was once their mother's answered prayer.

*
*
*
*

040 ALICIA

Hmm... My mother used to say something similar: Every life is someone's whole world.

*
*
*
*

041 SISTER TERESA

That's lovely.

*
*

042 ALICIA

I guess. So where are you all headed, then?

*
*
*

043 MOTHER LUISITA

On vacation. To California.

044 ALICIA

Anywhere specific?

ALICIA REACHES UNDER HER SHIRT, PULLING OUT A
MEDAL TIED AROUND HER NECK.

074 MOTHER LUISITA

What's that around your neck, dear?
It's quite beautiful.

Side 2

START >>>

075 ALICIA

Oh! It's a Miraculous Medal. I wear
it all the time now. It used to be
my mother's. She died earlier this
year.

076 MOTHER LUISITA

I believe I read that in the
newspapers. I'm so sorry. A
mother's love knows no equal.

077 ALICIA

Life without her sometimes feels
impossible. It makes me glad to
leave Mexico. Maybe in a new place
the pain won't know how to find me.

078 MOTHER LUISITA

Loss chases us wherever we go, my
dearest. But so does love. In a
way, they are mirrors.

079 ALICIA

Maybe you are right, Doña Maria...
Thank you.

080 MOTHER LUISITA

May I ask what your family thinks
of you wearing a Medal of the
Virgen and going to Catholic
school?

081 ALICIA

Oh, my father thinks this medal is
a ridiculous superstition. He hates
religion. Thinks it turns wise men
into sheep. But my mother was very
religious. She remained devout
despite the war. And my father
loved her, so...

082 MOTHER LUISITA

Hopefully having faith brought her
peace in the end.

083 ALICIA

I think so. Still, while my father will allow me to attend Our Lady of the Rosary to learn English, he doesn't want me to end up like her. Father wants his children to grow up strong, and he believes that you can never be both respected and loved.

084 MOTHER LUISITA

And what is it that you believe, my dear?

085 ALICIA

Oh. I don't know. I haven't thought about it that much.

086 MOTHER LUISITA

Oh, my! --

MOTHER LUISITA TRIPS, TAKING A TUMBLE. HER LUGGAGE FLIES OPEN, SCATTERING AROUND THEM.

087 ALICIA

Doña Maria, are you okay?!

088 MOTHER LUISITA

Yes, dear, yes -- where is my bag?

089 ALICIA

Are you sure? That was quite the fall? Seba! Come help Doña Maria!

090 MOTHER LUISITA

No! I am fine. Please -- where is my bag?

091 ALICIA

Everything has come spilling out. What is this?

092 MOTHER LUISITA

Please, leave it be. I've got it.

093 ALICIA

This wooden box -- it's quite beautiful. And the design -- I've seen it before.

094 MOTHER LUISITA

I'm sure you haven't, dear. It's an old family crest.

095 ALICIA

Yes, I have -- it's the Sacred Heart! Like those nuns in Mexico City. The ones helping the Cristeros...

REALIZING WHAT SHE'S JUST SEEN, ALICIA, FOR ONCE, IS LEFT SPEECHLESS. THE SILENCE BETWEEN THEM HANGS IN THE AIR. FINALLY, MOTHER LUISITA SPEAKS.

096 MOTHER LUISITA

I promise, Alicia, I am no spy. I am just an old woman desperate to get to California.

ALICIA DOESN'T ANSWER. SHE BEGINS PICKING UP MOTHER LUISITA'S SPILLED LUGGAGE, DROPPING THEM BACK IN HER BAG.

097 MOTHER LUISITA

Alicia?

098 ALICIA

We need to keep going. It will be dark soon. And these hills are dangerous enough in the daylight.

<<< END

5

INT. NEW TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

WALLA (ADDENDUM 3): BACKGROUND MURMURS FROM A BUSY RUN-DOWN TRAIN CAR. SISTER MARGARITA AND SISTER TERESA CLOSE THE DOOR TO THEIR COMPARTMENT, PLOPPING THEIR LUGGAGE NEXT TO MOTHER LUISITA.

099 SISTER TERESA

Can you believe that hike up, Mother? I thought I was going to faint.

100 SISTER MARGARITA MARIA

Always so dramatic, Sister Teresa. This journey is showing us that you are stronger than you think -- by the time we reach California, you will be outrunning us all!

101 MOTHER LUISITA

My daughters, I must relay some distressing news.