

WHITTIER BOULEVARD

Written by

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OVER BLACK: We hear the voice of JOSÉ (17 years old).

JOSÉ (V.O.)
She ain't guitar. She's piano.

CELL PHONE CAMERA POV:

Shaky lo-fi video. Tight glimpses of a beautiful WOMAN (20s), fixing her hair and make-up while riding on a Metro train.

JOSÉ (V.O.)
She ain't my father's music. She's
my mother's. She's brown-eyed soul.

INT. EAST L.A. - METRO TRAIN - NIGHT

A gritty urban landscape rushes by outside the window, as the Beautiful Woman uses her train seat like a dressing room. She transforms from "girl next door" to "glamorous retro *chic*" in a series of JUMP CUTS:

She pulls a pin curler from her ebony hair. It falls in finger curls across one eye. Street lights bounce against her compact mirror as she steadies herself, deftly applying old-school WINGED EYELINER and gothic RUBY LIPSTICK.

JOSÉ (V.O.)
...But her man? This *vato* she's
dating? I seen him. And he's
bullshit. Doesn't appreciate her.

WIDEN OUT to more of the train car. Quiet. Almost empty.

JOSÉ sits a few rows back. Hunched -- watching her. He's a brooding CHICANO REBEL. Greased pompadour. Leather jacket. Cuffed jeans. And he sports a fresh, shiny BLACK EYE.

JOSÉ (V.O.)
Her *vato* doesn't celebrate her.
Treats her like shit. Doesn't give
a damn about what's inside her. But
I do. And one day I'm gonna know
her. Like he ain't never known her.

José is secretly FILMING the Beautiful Woman with his cell phone. A GUITAR CASE is propped beside him. His name is stitched into the case: *JOSÉ*. But black tape covers something just to the right of his name. He's hiding something.

As José rotates his camera, he notices BLOOD.

Trickling down his arm, dripping from his hand. Spilling onto his phone. He winces with pain, wipes it off onto his jeans.

EXT. METRO STATION - NIGHT

The train SQUEALS to a stop. Doors open. The Beautiful Woman steps out, like a vintage Hollywood fashion plate, sprung to life on the streets of East Los Angeles.

And José follows her. Out the train doors, a few steps behind. He takes a deep breath -- speeds up, intercepts her. Time freezes as she stops in her tracks, finally noticing José. She's unsure what to say. So is he. AWKWARD SILENCE.

JOSÉ

You... have never been in love.

She sees his black eye -- then notices the blood. She nervously dodges past him, walking off into the night.

Embarrassed, José trudges off in the other direction.

EXT. JOSÉ'S HOME - NIGHT

The house squats humbly on a block that has seen better days.

The garage door is open, revealing warm light and lots of clutter. A shiny 1960 IMPALA is parked among the mess.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

ARTURO (late 40s, Mexican-American) sits in the clutter, strumming a Stratocaster electric guitar on low volume. He hums along to the melody. Stops, shakes his head. Adjusts the tuning. Tries again... unhappy.

ARTURO

Chingada...

José sneaks into the garage and tries to tip-toe behind Arturo. It looks like he'll get away with it -- then:

ARTURO

Want to tell me where you've been?

JOSÉ

Out.

ARTURO

This audition is our last shot. If you don't learn the vocals, we don't have a song. Where were you!

JOSÉ

Out, Pops! I was out.

José steps out of the shadows, revealing his black eye. His father reaches for him, concerned -- but José jerks away.

ARTURO

Who did that to you? Tell me! What did I say you about you going to the Boulevard dressed like that?

JOSÉ

It's nothing! I handled it --

Arturo grabs José's guitar case, ripping away the black tape. José grabs the case back, protective.

ARTURO

And stop covering up your name! Walking around like you're some kind of mistake --

JOSÉ

Not a mistake! I'm just your son --

ARTURO

You are *not* my son!

Arturo turns away coldly. José takes this in, saddened.

INT. JOSÉ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MOONLIGHT casts a strong shadow on the wall behind José, as he sits alone on his bed. He stares at his cell phone, replaying his footage of the Beautiful Woman.

Then -- he grimaces with sudden pain. He slowly takes off his leather jacket. Underneath is a BLOOD-SOAKED t-shirt. He peels that off too, revealing a NASTY CUT on his arm.

A swath of thick FABRIC is bound tightly around José's chest. He begins to carefully unwrap the binding as WE MOVE AWAY --

-- To the GUITAR CASE across the room. With the tape ripped away, we now see José's full name. The name he was born with.

"JOSÉFINA"

The SHADOW of José's body is cast on the wall above the guitar case. As he unwraps the binding in silhouette, his biological gender is revealed.

A young woman's BREASTS... Feminine curves...

José BREATHES sharply, heavily -- Fighting layers of pain.