

Excerpt from a bilingual play with music, *Perfectamente Loca/Perfectly Insane*.
3W, 1M (male optional)

Act Three, Scene Two

MALKRIADA, HYSTERIKA sit with huge laundry baskets holding only women's lingerie. They sit and fold compulsively, try to make perfect creases. They smile at each other from time to time, pretending to be happy. They are in the Bronx, LOCA/NARRATOR does the same. She is in El Fanguito; in her basket is the clothing of infants and male laborers.

LOCA/NARRATOR

The happiest two hours of Mami's life were the ones she spent in school. It was there she saw her first pencil, breathed in deeply the first smell of writing paper. The little shack of a school house, a mile's distance, was worlds away from El Fanguito.

HYSTERIKA

Shorter than going to get water, Mami knew she could get there on foot...

MALKRIADA

...El Cuko offered to take her on his burrito.

LOCA/NARRATOR

It was her *special day* and she should arrive in what he called his "taxi."

MALKRIADA

An old lady at birth; perched with Doña airs on beast so weary his ears had folded. El Cuko promised to bring her home at the end of the day.

HYSTERIKA

No one would have to know.

LOCA/NARRATOR

Mami waved goodbye to him and El Burrito with a hand so small I can't even imagine it.

MALKRIADA

A few children still knew how to laugh; Mami wasn't one of them. She sat next to the blackest of all the boys.

LOCA/NARRATOR

Mami called him "Negrito" and touched his hand. He wore the left side of a white shirt, hanging from the collar clean and starched. Mami had never seen anyone so handsome. She thought that maybe now she could just wear the one shoe she'd found by the mangrove. She and Negrito could....

HYSTERIKA

La Maestra Linda, (The Pretty Teacher) touched Mami's face, gently lifting her chin to look into those eyes, those little gray nail heads...guided her to sit with the girls.

MALKRIADA

No one had ever touched Mami's face except to slap it, push a tongue or penis into it, squeeze it, or push it away. The Americanos paid her with fruit.

LOCA/NARRATOR

Mami said Maestra Linda looked like her mother. She had never known her mother, except for one faded photograph.

HYSTERIKA

Emilio kept it in an old tin. He would let Mami look at it for a few fast seconds on holidays.

MALKRIADA

He was terrified that the intensity of her loca eyes would make it burn. (Beat) Mami said that holding a pencil to paper for the first time was the most exciting moment of her life.

LOCA

Nothing, not even giving birth to me, had even come close.