

**Scene One: Monday Afternoon**

**PABLO.** Tania! There you are!

**TANIA.** Pablo, you're home early.

**PABLO.** Should you be doing that?

**TANIA.** It's fine. I'm so sick of unpacking. I hate being inside on such a beautiful day!

**PABLO.** You should take it easy.

**TANIA.** Gardening relaxes me. You're the one that's been working so hard.

**PABLO.** I have to. This firm is so intense... So intensely...

**TANIA.** Competitive?

**PABLO.** – American.

**TANIA.** American...

**PABLO.** American.

**TANIA.** You're just the new guy.

**PABLO.** No. I'm the foreign guy. And that's different.

**TANIA.** That's why they want you, because you are different.

**PABLO.** Tania, I think I've done something I might regret.

**TANIA.** Really? What?

**PABLO.** I invited the entire firm to our house.

**TANIA.** You did what?

**PABLO.** The senior partners were joking about me being the "new guy." And Mr. Krause, as in SMITH, KRAUSE, and WILSON, said he barely thinks you exist –

**TANIA.** – But, you told him I'm finishing my dissertation... and the baby – right?

**PABLO.** Before I knew it, I channeled my father and invited all of them over to our house.

**TANIA.** You didn't!

**PABLO.** It gets better: the party is this weekend.

**TANIA.** Puta madre!!!

**PABLO.** Breathe. Breathe. Remember the Lamaze...

**TANIA.** Maldita sea. Are you crazy?! How did that happen?

**PABLO.** I'll tell you how: The Letterhead Partner, Mr. Krause, says, "Pablo! That's a generous offer. When would you like us ALL over?" And I say, "Sir, mi casa es su casa." And we all laugh. And he says, "I'd love to see where you live. Tell you what, I'm free this Saturday -"

**TANIA.** Saturday! -

**PABLO.** "- Does that work for you?" It was a test. A Total Test. He was watching me with this gleam in his eye.

**TANIA.** This is where you say NO...it doesn't work for me or my beloved pregnant wife!

**PABLO.** I didn't skip a beat. Looked him straight in the eye and said: "YES! Mr. Krause, this Saturday is perfect." And he said: "I like that. You have cojones, son."

**TANIA.** Mr. Krause actually said "cojones"?

**PABLO.** He even did the quotation marks.

**TANIA.** Oh God.

**PABLO.** I see it as his form of cultural outreach. Which could be a good sign to becoming partner

**TANIA.** No! Nothing about this ballsy, machista law firm party-planning is good!

**PABLO.** I know. But Tania: this could be bigger than Steven Johnson's Martini Happy Hour. Because the only living, letterhead boss said he would come. I could become the first Latino to make partner in this place. Maybe one day, they'll add DEL VALLE to the letterhead. That would be a first, huh?

**TANIA.** Pablo!

**PABLO.** It was fight or flight, Tania. And you've taught me to never run away from a fight.

**TANIA.** Sixty strangers here in six days? We don't have enough furniture. Our walls are half-painted. Our plaster is cracked. And I have my own research to do before the baby comes. It's just too much. You are trying too hard.

PABLO. I know! I know. It's too much. I'm so stressed. I don't want to let you down. I don't want to let the baby down. I want to fix up the house for us. I need to make partner -

TANIA. So an impromptu party for the whole firm?

PABLO. I don't know what I was thinking. We can't fix-up a fixer-upper in six days.

*(Beat.)*

I'll tell Mr. Krause that I can't deliver.

TANIA. Wait! So let's be up front, confident. Show them we are do-it-yourselfers in the best way. We have the party outside.

PABLO. Outside.

TANIA. In this beautiful yard. With our gorgeous tree.

PABLO. Tania, our yard is not beautiful.

TANIA. Not yet. But it can be.

PABLO. Your Native Garden.

TANIA. I've had the design in my head since we bought the place. If we pull away some of that patched grass...get rid of those plants and that gnome and allow those there to get some light. Plant some ferns, bushes and wildflowers. Add some filtered water in the bird bath. And the oak looks so majestic. Oh my God, this could be very exciting.

PABLO. But we agreed to fix the house first and then you could start thinking of the garden.

TANIA. Pablo, do you want your party or not?

PABLO. I was thinking barbecue.

TANIA. Yeah!

PABLO. Americans love "B-B-Q." It puts everyone at ease. Cool and casual. Show them we comfortably fit in the landscape that they know. We can do American Wasp Success...or at least imitate it...

TANIA. Effortless looking effort.

PABLO. They will love my scholarly and vibrant wife. They will see this fine historic neighborhood and the potential

of this unfinished place and say, "Here is a man that understands smart risk.

*(Maybe he grabs the rake and stands next to TANIA à la American Gothic.)*

He is the American Dream - incarnate."

TANIA. And maybe we can get someone to pull out that ugly sagging chain-link fence. It's horrible.

PABLO. And put up the kind of stately wood fence a law firm would appreciate.

TANIA. We make sure people relax and open up. We win them over.

PABLO. You are incredible. Thank you.

TANIA. Don't thank me yet. We only have six days.

PABLO. Can we pull this off?

TANIA. First, we need to talk to the neighbors. Frank and Virginia need to be okay with us changing the fence.

PABLO. Who would fight us for changing this ugly fence?

TANIA. Their English ivy is draping the fence. And believe it or not...people can get very weird about their plants.