



La Dulce Vida y la amarga muerte de Pancho Mojado

The Sweet Life and the Bitter Death of Pancho Mojado

by Arturo Gómez. 2007

(Death enters singing, dressed as a corporate executive woman)

Catrina:

I am Catrina,
The skinny death, that's me.
I bring you sweet diabetes,
It is certain that I am your death.

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Let me introduce myself. My name is Catrina, but some call me Death, Skinny, the Skeleton, the Grim Reaper, the Bony One, the one that has no raw meat. And you know what, my business is to take lives. Eat lives! *(sarcastic laugh)* That's my business!

But don't be afraid! I'm not going to take you.... At least, not for now, but maybe later!
(laughs)

Right now I have a wonderful business in the immigrant community. It's easy. They don't have access to health care, healthy food, safe places to exercise, or time – they work so hard! I inject them with depression, nostalgia, sadness, stress. When they get stressed or sad, they eat and eat, get fat and obese, then I inject them with diabetes and high blood pressure.

© Somos Mayfair 2007

I just love diabetes because there is no cure for it! Is a chronic illness, silent, invisible, like cancer, it slowly kills you from the inside! At first, you start to have symptoms of thirst, you have to go pee pee all of the time, you walk around like you have a cold, and you feel very have strange sensations in your hands and feet.

There are some individuals that take care of themselves and escape me, but for the ones who don't – many of them become blind, their kidneys fail, and their lungs stop working. They have to go through dialysis, get blood transfusions, and even have to amputate their legs and arms. Oh, how I do enjoy diabetes!

Now, I have an excellent family health plan, especially for you ...

“Parents with bad eating and exercise habits who pass these bad habits onto their children, especially during the first five years of their lives, I guarantee, that their children will continue with those bad habits for the rest of their lives, so that one of every two children I can take with diabetes”.

Moms and dads, keep doing what you're doing because, your children are sooo delicious Oh, the children! They are so very tender!

Singing Cha cha cha

But don't make me waste my time, and let's get down to business.
(Clapping, Pancho, Pancha and Panchito come in)

Pancho:

(Singing)

I am going to build a garden for Pancha,
with yellow flowers,
Even if all the blond women get mad
It is only for Pancha to see

Catrina: (rings a bell and they freeze)

This is the Family Mojado! This is “Pancho Mojado” and his family: Pancha, Panchita y and Panchito who is inside the belly!(*Indicating Pancho's belly, then notices her mistake*)
Oops, wrong belly! Panchito is in *this* belly (*running around and pointing to Pancha's belly*)

Oh, and I always forget, there is also Panchisca, who right now is at school, in the 6th grade. This beautiful immigrant family, I am helping to carry to “the other side”.

No, no my friends , I am not a “coyote”. To “the other side” means: to the grave!
(*laughs at her own joke*)

© Somos Mayfair 2007

Pancho:

Oh Pancha, what a big belly you have!

Pancha:

It's true, Pancho. But this belly will go away because I am pregnant. But look at you, you're the one who has a big belly. I've told you that you have to take care of yourself. *(Pancho struggles to respond. Catrina rings a bell, they freeze.)*

Catrina *(whispers in his ear):*

Everyone has to die of something! Life isn't worth it!

(Rings bell, they move).

Pancho:

Everyone has to die of something! Life isn't worth it!

Pancha:

Don't be irresponsible. You have to take care of yourself. If you die, what are your kids going to do? Come on, love yourself, Pancho. Don't you want to see your grandkids?

Pancho:

Woman, my sugar is just a little high, it will go down soon. Besides we don't have money to buy medicine. I barely have enough money to pay the rent! Most people here don't have money to pay for health insurance.

Pancha:

Look Pancho, you are drinking more than 10 sodas a day, that is not good for you.

Pancho:

It gives me energy for work so that I don't fall asleep.

Pancha:

Pancho, have you thought what is going to happen if you don't take care of your diabetes? Look at your father, for example. He is dying in the hospital – he's blind and can't walk, he has to have blood transfusions and he suffers so much.

Catrina:

Sooooooooooooooooo much!

Pancho:

I just got the chills! And you see, it's hereditary. There is nothing I can do!

I inherited it from my father! *(proudly)*

© Somos Mayfair 2007

Pancha:

But you can fight against the disease, you can take care of yourself and control it!

Remember in our town in Mexico, we used to eat our traditional food: chicken soup with vegetables, cactus salad, beans, lentils, steamed vegetables. We also used to go every afternoon for walks and pick fruit and vegetables in the orchards and gardens. We used to walk a lot, and you did not have a belly. Here you don't want to eat healthy.

Think, if you don't take care of yourself, while you die, your kids are also going to suffer with your illness. Without work or money, we will just be watching you die little by little. You still have two good legs and feet, well, your legs are a little bowlegged and your feet a little stinky but you can still walk! And you still have your vision, well, more or less you wear glasses, but you can still see Pancho! Pancho, please take care of yourself. Think about your children. What are we going to do as a family without you? I hate to say it, but you confront life like a coward!

Pancho:

Pancha, don't speak to me like that! (*turns on the television*) I am tired. Since I have to work so hard, I don't have time to exercise or to eat at set times. It's impossible! It's impossible!

Pancha:

Oh dear! Yes, you can! Yes, you can! We have to make the sacrifice, we have to find the money, your health comes first. Look at you, sitting down watching television and eating junk food, you better get up and exercise with Panchita ...

(*Rings bell, they freeze. Catrina performs with the television*)

Catrina: (*whispers in his ear*)

Oh, she is such an old fart!

(*rings bell, they unfreeze.*)

Pancho:

Oh, you are such an old fart!

Be quiet, you don't let me hear anything!

That is why we came to the United States, to enjoy the good life!

Catrina: (*acting like sports commentator*)

And Hernandez passes the ball to Gomez, and Gomez passes to Rodriguez and.....

Goooooooooooooal! (*long*) Goal!!! Ladies and gentlemen!

We will continue with the transmission of this game after a few brief messages from our sponsors:

Hey little boy, do you want your Negro Modelo? Forget it all. Drink, drink, drink!
(*Pancho falls asleep and the little girl puppet comes to life.*)

Panchita:

Mommy, Mommy, Daddy fell asleep again!

Pancha:

(*Ironing clothes*)

Well, start playing something. Get up and exercise.

Panchita:

Mommy, I exercise when I watch soccer on television.

Catrina: (*Ringing bell, they freeze – she comes out and whispers confidentially to the audience*)

Television is one of my most powerful weapons. People watch thousands of hours, with millions of commercials. Children are the easiest ones to manipulate. You don't believe me? Just watch...

“Cockroach Man, in your favorite theaters! Cockroach Man, the least nutritious cereal with the most sugar! Cockroach Man, the toy that all the children want! You can get a Cockroach Man when you buy a plastic hamburger, a drug cola drink and supersize french fries with lots of oil! This is a limited offer by Dirty King.”

Panchita: (*like a robot, as if hypnotized*)

I want one of those. I want one of those. Buy it for me. Buy it for me. I want one of those. I want one of those.

(*Ring bell, she speak normal*)

Mommy, mommy, buy me a bag of potato chips and a soda!

Pancha:

No. You have to eat nutritious food. Do you want a fruit salad?

Panchita:

Gross!

How come my sister Panchisca gets to eat french fries everyday at school?

She gets to eat hot dogs, hamburgers, pizza, chips and soda and ...

Pancha:

Yes, and that is why Panchisca is gaining so much weight. I am afraid she also will get diabetes. And you, from watching TV, the only thing you want to eat is junk, nothing nutritious.

(*Catrina rings the bell, they freeze*).

© Somos Mayfair 2007

Catrina: *(whispers to audience)*

This is the other tool that I use for children, in the schools, with the big junk food corporations that make a lot of money and don't give the children food that has nutritious value for brain development. Malnutrition equals bad students. Slaves forever! Starving to death for sure!

Oh, the sweet American life! What's important is profit! *(Rings bell, they move)*

Pancha:

Panchita, stop watching television! Let's pick up your sister at school. But you have to walk.

Panchita:

No! No! You have to carry me. Carry me, carry me...

Pancha:

Carry you! Carry you, no! You have to walk and exercise. *(Facing the audience.)*
We have to teach our children the value of nutritious food, fruits and vegetables, fresh organic food which is healthier. Mothers and fathers, we have the solution in our hands, don't continue letting the big corporations manipulate us with their markets full of pesticides, poison, and junk food. They are only interested in increasing their profit without taking into consideration my baby or yours. They are destroying our families, the human race and the planet. We have to return to the way that of our ancestors who revered life and had respect for the earth. Let's go Panchita, but let's skip together ok? One, two three, up! One two three down!
(Leaves the stage with Panchita skipping and singing)

Catrina slowly comes out from behind the television and beckons Pancho as if he were sleepwalking. She wakes him up into his dream.

Catrina:

Hey, handsome!

Pancho: *(reacts)*

Who are you?

Catrina:

Catrina, the woman of your dreams! Your American dream!

The sweetest of all women.

Handsome, do you want a beer?

Pancho:

Oh, Miss, I am married ...

© Somos Mayfair 2007

Catrina:

Oh, I don't care! I'll give you everything - just tell me what you want.
Look over there (*indicating over the horizon*) - all the most delicious fast food in the world! See all the snacks, steaks, pork, pork rinds, hot dogs, hamburgers.
And look, look, look, over here (*to the right*) you have all the desserts you could ever want, ice cream, cakes, shakes, all the candy from different companies, like at Halloween, with all the sugar you want.

Take a seat here in this lazyboy, relax, and look in front of you, all of the comforts of the world, you can have the good life....

Here in Mayfair, there is a fast food place on every corner. See, I offer you all the abundance that you want!

Look, you also have all of these liquor stores that sell sodas, alcohol, cigarettes....
This is why you came from your dirty town, starving to death. To enjoy the good life, to live the American dream. Drink up, drink up, drink up! Eat, eat, eat to your hearts content, eat all the greasy food and all the carbohydrates! Drink up, drink up, drink up!

Pancho:

(*Drunk singing a Ranchera and hugging Catrina*)

"This sadness of mine, this pain so big,
here in my chest, because I am left all alone in the world"...
Ay, I am going to tell you blondie, since I left my country, I am down and all beat up!
My old woman doesn't understand me!
I don't know what life would bring me, God doesn't even remember me.
Ay, my poor eyes, I have cried because I wanted to immigrate"...
Ayyy! Chaparra how do I miss you!

Catrina:

Pancho, don't think about that.

Pancho:

Well you see, my wife keeps getting mad at me and telling me I am going to die of diabetes. What do you think? She says I'm fat - is it true?

Catrina:

Oh, Pancho, I think you're very handsome. I'm sorry (*giving him a hug*). She doesn't know anything about the good life. The crazy life!
Leave her, I will love you with lots of sweetness!
Give me your life.....

Pancho:

Leave her?

(Drums start to play and an indigenous Life character enters. Death is annoyed)

Life:

“I am Life,

My mother is the land, ¡Ay!

My land, mother of my grandparents with their hands full of rain, the rivers transparent. The sweet air, fertile mountains and the warmth from the sun, to grow and multiply the sacred corn that forms the bones of this granddaughter.

My land, mother of my grandparents, I would like to caress her beauty, admire her serenity and share her silence.

I would like to weep her tears, when I see her children dispersed all over the world, begging for shelter in far away lands, without happiness, without peace, without their mother land, with nothing....”

I am Life, the spirit of ¡Si se puede! Yes, we can!

No Francisco. Don't be fooled. She is Death! *(pointing to Catrina).*

(Life exits and drum stops playing)

Catrina:

No, don't listen to her Pancho. She doesn't know what she's talking about!

Pancho:

No madam! I won't leave Pancha!

It's true, I came to get out of misery, to have a little bit of what the corrupt politicians in my country take away from us. But we also have human rights. We don't want charity, we contribute to the richness of this country, we work hard. I want to open my own business, this is my American dream - not the one you want to offer me. No, Miss Catrina, I am not going to leave my children, my family, my roots or my culture...

Catrina:

No Pancho! If you want the good life, you have to pay with your life. You have to follow me. *She begins to lure him and pull him toward her, like a magnet, with the beer can.* The one thing she said that is true, is that.....**I am your bitter death!**

(Laughs out loud. Death and Pancho struggle).

Pancho:

No, no! I don't want to die!

Catrina:

Now it's your turn!

Pancho:

No, no!

© Somos Mayfair 2007

Pancha (*enters*):

Pancho, what's going on? Wake up, wake up! (*Pancha sees Death and gets horrified and makes the sign of the cross*). Oh my God, it's Death! Oh, no!

Catrina (*bell rings, Pancho and Pancha freeze*):

Oh shoot! She saw me!

Oh well, that's life, like a soap opera on television. Pure struggle, poison, pain and suffering, and I guess a little love. I'm not worried. With diabetes and obesity, I will get them, later. *Looking out at audience*. Hmmmm, who's next?

(*Singing cha-cha-cha. Rings bell and freezes.*)

THE END

© Somos Mayfair 2007