

## Dreaming

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JULIA, a young Latina, dressed in a t-shirt and clean khakis, is speaking to her mother, ARINDA. Arinda is older, Mexican, flamboyant, vivid, heavy accent. They are talking to each other on the phone.

ARINDA

Mija, please-- reconsider.

JULIA

Do you want me to go back to Mexico?

ARINDA

Mija--

JULIA

I don't want to feel like a criminal anymore!

ARINDA

Do you consider me a criminal, bringing you to the US?

JULIA

No, Mami. Don't be such a drama queen!

ARINDA

I'm la drama queen? I brought you as a baby, when your dad walked out on us, so you could have a better life! And now you want to throw away all my hard work

JULIA

I had to find out I wasn't a citizen by applying at McDonalds.

ARINDA

I didn't want my daughter to work menial jobs.

JULIA

Why didn't you TELL me?

ARINDA

Because, you are so American, Mija. I thought you could get away with it. Ya pa'que talk about it? You got your DACA.

JULIA

And it could be gone at any minute. Maybe I need to live in Mexico, change the country from within.

ARINDA

Imagine! Going back to Mexico! No!

JULIA

I love you Mami. But be practical.

ARINDA

I am practical. I'm an artist but I learned to clean houses for you.

JULIA

For people who treated their dogs better than they treated you.

ARINDA

I always think about the time I found one of those water bottles full of pennies. It was tucked in the back of a closet in a bedroom. I showed it to the señora. She laughed and said, "Take it Monday!"

JULIA

Why did she call you Monday?

ARINDA

Because we say, "Mande" when we speak to them. It means "Command" in Spanish. The lady couldn't pronounce my name, so she called me Monday.

JULIA

Oh my god.

ARINDA

I couldn't carry the bottle home on the bus, so I started rolling the coins. They were all pennies. I bought the rolls at the dollar store. I rolled and rolled, during my breaks. I rolled \$346. They threw away \$346, like it was nothing. That's when I realized, I'll never fit in to the American way of life.

JULIA

And it had been sitting in this closet for YEARS.

ARINDA

That place was much better than the box factory I had to work at when your dad left me, cabron.

JULIA

I called him just before I left San Diego. He cried. I didn't buy it.

ARINDA

Que asco. He dropped me for a gringa, and he thought you were a mascota, a kitten he decided he didn't want to take care of.

JULIA

We made it work.

ARINDA

It made me feel like I was a terrible mother, going to the night shift at that box factory. You having to wake up in an empty house--

JULIA

--and walk the mile to school every day. But, you talked to me on the phone the whole time.

ARINDA

These putos at the factory. Not allowing us to have phones! I had to hide mine under my sweater, so I could talk to you--

JULIA

Listening to you in my ear made that walk bearable.

ARINDA

Remember how I used to sing to you? (Sings) "Where have all the flowers gone--"

JULIA

Mami. Sometimes I wonder if I should have let you go back to Mexico--

ARINDA

Mija! It was for my own dignity. I teach singing instead of cleaning houses. I'm the only singing teacher in D.F.!

JULIA

There is no money in it. Not really.

ARINDA

I'm saving, I'm saving for a little ranchito.

JULIA

Ay, Mami.

ARINDA

A yoga retreat! 40 minutes from the border! With an outdoor bath, que lujo!

JULIA

Mami, you're the dreamer. Not me.

ARINDA

Pos Si. No one's more practical than Julia. Que dreamer, ni que nada. Mija's gonna be a lawyer and make una bola de money!

JULIA

I thought you wanted me to be an artist, like you??

ARINDA

Or find a rich Gringo!

JULIA

(Laughs.)

You're crazy!

ARINDA

Loca yo? Mas loca tu!

JULIA

I had to make the decision. Stay here and risk being deported, or leaving of my own free will, or--

ARINDA

No Mija! You can't do that!

JULIA

Why not!? Maybe I could do something to help my country.

ARINDA

Mujeres mueren!

JULIA

More drama.

ARINDA

They do. They die. Especially smart women, who want to change the world.Mija--

JULIA

Mama. The president doesn't think I belong here, why not show him that I'm willing to die for this country?

ARINDA

Ay Dios, mijita. Asi no se hace!

JULIA

I wish I spoke better Spanish. It would actually be an asset here.

ARINDA

Spanish is a language of oppression in the US.

JULIA

Yeah. All people see when they look at me is a dirty Mexican. These guys really seemed to care--

ARINDA

Were they white?

JULIA

Who?

ARINDA

The recruiters?

JULIA

Well, yeah.

ARINDA

I hate white people

JULIA

Mama, that's racist.

ARINDA

How can I be racist? I like Middle Eastern men. Did I tell you? I met an Egyptian man and decided I would try his gods because mine had abandoned me. He treats me like a queen, but his family doesn't like how loud I am.

JULIA

Mami. Ya. I don't wanna hear about your boyfriends.

ARINDA

Un boyfriend, Mija, mi Arabe.

JULIA

I thought he was from Egypt?

ARINDA

It's the same thing!

JULIA

Mami, don't let him take advantage of you.

ARINDA

Never mind me. You have to be more than these people expect you to be. You have to be smarter, work harder, push and push and push. Superar.

JULIA

How can I do it without you?

ARINDA

Mi amor.

JULIA

I'm never going to see you again.

ARINDA

No, mi Diosito, Amon-Re says we will.

JULIA

I haven't hugged you in so long.

ARINDA

Stay mi amor. Stay con tu DACA, and your dreams. The Mango loco in the White house won't be there forever! Although, I miss el Negrito.

JULIA

Mama!

ARINDA

Que?

JULIA

You don't SAY that!

ARINDA

Pero mi amor! Es Negrito o no?

JULIA

He's AFRICAN-AMERICAN.

ARINDA

A Negrito presidente. No wonder the gringos are so pissed off.

JULIA

Ma, please!

ARINDA

Hmmm, tan fina. You'd never survive in Mexico. You have a gringo sense of humor.

JULIA

I have to go Ma--

ARINDA

Let's go to Canada!

JULIA

Refugees a Canada?

ARINDA

Si, that little Primer Ministro is so much cuter than either of the other idiotas running Norte America.

JULIA

Justin Trudeau is a hottie.

ARINDA

Si. Chulito. The France guy isn't bad either.

JULIA

(Laughs)

Ay Mama. It's always about men--

ARINDA

Just looking! I have to stay interested or I'll dry out like a cactus.

JULIA

I miss you so much.

ARINDA

One of these days. We will be together again.

JULIA

Maybe.

ARINDA

Come que maybe?

JULIA

Mami-- They are calling for all enlisted to get ready to move out.

ARINDA

Niña mia--



JULIA

This is the last call I can make until after basic is over. I'm sorry Mama-- as soon as I can, I'll call, and I'll send money.

ARINDA

I don't want the pinche money! Vengate a Mexico.

JULIA

I can't. I'm already in Oklahoma. We are waiting for the bus. I'm supposed to give my D.I. my phone. I love you.

ARINDA

Mija--

JULIA

This is the best way! They have to make me a citizen if I fight for them, right?

ARINDA

No Mija! No they don't-- They're going to use you, get you killed--

JULIA

Mama. Give me your blessing.

ARINDA

Ay, mi Niña.

JULIA

Please Mama.

ARINDA

Bendiciones.

JULIA

You don't mean it.

ARINDA

I do. Cuidate mijita. Que dios the bendiga.

JULIA

Which dios?

ARINDA

Whichever one actually exists.

JULIA

Si.

Cuidate. I love you.

ARINDA

I have to go, Mami.

JULIA

Mija--

ARINDA

I have to go now-- I love you.

JULIA

Julia hangs up.

ARINDA

(Sings "Where have All the Flowers  
Gone? ")

A dónde se han ido todas las flores, tanto tiempo ha pasado?

A dónde se han ido todas las flores, hace tanto tiempo?

A dónde se han ido todas las flores?

Las niñas jóvenes las han cortado, cada una.

O, cuando van a aprender?

O, cuando van a aprender?

Lights out on Arinda. Julia stands at attention.

VO

"The U.S. Army will continue to welcome noncitizen recruits. Concerning naturalization, the decision to become a U.S. citizen is a voluntary individual decision and each service provides some assistance to service members seeking citizenship. The list of immigrants who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their new country is long and distinguished--"

The sound fades. Lights out.