

HOLA MARTÍN EP.1

Pilot

Written by

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<BEGIN FLASH-FORWARD>

INT. SMALL SOUND STAGE - LOS ANGELES

A production crew sets up to begin filming an interview for a documentary. The focus is on MARTIN, a slender 30-year old man from Mexico. He's dressed in fashionable attire and acts like an egocentric celebrity.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
Are we ready to go? What's the hold-up?

CAMERA PERSON (O.S.)
All set here.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
Make-up, we done yet?

A makeup artist finishes the final touches on Martin.

DIRECTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Alright everyone, let's get this thing going. We're already behind.

Crew members take their respective places for the shoot. The director walks up to Martin who we don't see yet.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
This will be a piece of cake. Just be yourself.

The director walks away.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Here we go people.

INT. SMALL SOUND STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

There's a clapperboard along with a beep sound effect.

A title appears on screen which reads, 'Hola Martin, Grammy nominated artist'. Martin speaks to the camera with a heavy accent.

MARTIN
If you told me a year ago that I would be here today, I could believe that. It may sound crazy, but I always knew I'd be like, this big star, you know?

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
 (barely audible)
 In such a niche genre?

MARTIN
 Kindie music is the next big thing,
 trust me.

DIRECTOR
 But why do you think you've had so
 much success when others before you
 haven't?

MARTIN
 (laughing)
 Oh, you're serious?
 (beat)
 Ok, well first of all, I
 practically invented kindie music.
 Second, have you even heard the
 other music kids are watching?

DIRECTOR
 You mean listening.

MARTIN
 Nobody just listens to music now.
 Anyways, they hear all these grown-
 up songs with sexy dances about,
 you know, doing it. The secret is,
 you have to trick these little guys
 into thinking it's the same, but
 really you sing like about, I don't
 know, climate change or something.
 (beat)
 Then you have these people singing
 the same old nursery rhymes, which
 are by the way, very offensive. You
 probably don't know that.
 (beat)
 I actually think this is why today,
 there are like so many children
 with these psychology problems.

Martin grabs a giant mug and faces the "TikTok For Kids" logo
 towards the camera before taking a sip.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 (looking at camera person)
 You're getting this, no?
 Ok, good.

Martin puts the cup down.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Writing music for the children is a lot of fun, but it's a lot responsibility. Because they are like these little, how do you say...

Martin looks off camera and makes an odd squeezing motion with both hands. Production crew members share a confused look.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

...lo que usan las mujeres para limpiar...

Martin looks off camera. Someone says the answer.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Eso... 'esponges'.

Martin grabs the mug again and takes a sip.

<END FLASH-FORWARD>

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER ENTRANCE - LONG BEACH, CA - MORNING

ABOUT SIX MONTHS EARLIER

Martin, with nothing more than his guitar, steps out of an Uber. He looks up at a large banner that reads, "Welcome to Kindie-Verse, *Dreaming Today for the Children of Tomorrow*".

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Martin enters and gazes around the crowded lobby. As he wanders about, he notices a variety of acts warming up for their performances. Among them, a heavy metal duo practicing nursery rhymes, a creepy clown juggling, a puppeteer with raggedy puppets, magicians with unimpressive tricks and dancers in skimpy clothing. He sees the check-in sign.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Martin is in line. Live music can be heard from the showcase room. KAI, a soft-spoken, flamboyant, 40 year-old white man with a shaved head introduces himself. He's barefoot, wearing a designer shaman garment with matching tights and carrying a stack of papers.

KAI

Hi there, my name is Kai.

MARTIN

Hello. I am Martin.

KAI

Do you mind if I give you one of these?

Kai hands Martin a flyer that says, "For Your Grammy Consideration - Best New Age Album - *Rising Tide, My Gift to the World*". Martin flips it over, revealing a mostly-naked picture of Kai on the beach, eyes closed, playing a large indigenous flute.

KAI (CONT'D)

My album will be in the running for Best New Age next year.

MARTIN

Is that like for older children or something?

KAI

(chuckling)

No Martin, I write music that transcends the soul, but my work does tend to connect with kids that have a more sophisticated taste in music.

(beat)

Hey, I'm having a listening party in a couple of weeks. You should come.

MARTIN

I'd love to.

KAI

Great. And just to confirm, you are a voting member, right?

Martin looks puzzled.

KAI (CONT'D)

For the Recording Academy.

MARTIN

Oh, right, right.
No. I am not.

Kai casually takes back the brochure.

KAI

I'm sorry, the invitation is exclusively for Academy members. Most people here are, so I just assumed. Sorry to bother you.

Kai walks away. A female registration WORKER calls out.

WORKER

Next?... Next, please.

Martin walks up to the table.

WORKER (CONT'D)

Name?

MARTIN

Martin Rodriguez-Moreno-Castillo-Velez.

The worker looks up at him with her eyebrows raised.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Probably under Martin Rodriguez.

The worker finds his name and hands him some papers.

WORKER

Here you go. And are you familiar with how this works?

MARTIN

Actually, this is my first time here.

WORKER

Ok, so what you're gonna want to do is fill this out now, that way, you'll be ready to go when it's your turn. Just head up to the stage when you hear your name called, ok hun? Remember, you only get 7 minutes on stage, ok hun?

MARTIN

I'm sorry?

WORKER

That includes your set-up too. Don't go over. Any questions?

MARTIN

Uh, yes. Where is the bathroom please?

WORKER
Head down that main hall over
there. Right side.

MARTIN
Thank you.

WORKER (O.S.)
Next!

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Martin walks up to a urinal next to short rapper-type who goes by LIL' CHAINZ.

LIL' CHAINZ
What you supposed to be, Coca or
sump'n?

Martin looks confused. Lil' Chainz motions with his head towards the guitar on Martin's back.

MARTIN
Oh. You mean Coco, like from the
Disney movie.
(chuckling)
No, actually I have never seen...

LIL' CHAINZ
Yeah whatever. You Spanish though,
right?

MARTIN
I *speak* Spanish, yes.

Both of them finish up and flush. Martin extends his hand.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
I am Martin. Nice to meet you.

Lil' Chainz looks down at Martin's hand, shoots him a concerned look, then walks over to the sink to wash up.

LIL' CHAINZ
I'm Lil' Chainz.

MARTIN
Little Chins? Like...

Martin points to his chin.

LIL' CHAINZ

What? No motherfucka! Lil' Chainz.
As in 'locked up for false
imprisonment Chains'!

(beat)

And just so you know, our agency
already got Spanish and they
tearin' it up out there. So I
wouldn't count on too many
bookings.

Lil' Chainz walks away.

MARTIN

Nice meeting you 'Chins'.

LIL' CHAINZ (O.S.)

Chainz!

Martin finishes washing his hands next to a clown shaving in
the mirror.

CLOWN

What are you lookin' at Coco?

Martin wastes little time in exiting.

INT. KINDIE-VERSE SHOWCASE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Martin is awe-struck when he walks into a large showcase
room. There's a stage in the middle and dozens of booths
around the perimeter featuring children's music artists,
talent agencies, record labels and more.

The 'Kindie Punks', a group of young teenaged girls, are
performing 'family punk rock' music on stage. The crowd loves
it.

Martin strolls around from booth to booth taking it all in.
He comes upon by 'Doug, Dave and Kenny', A folk trio in their
late 60s. They're playing banjos and singing, "I've Been
Working on the Railroad". Martin waves as he passes by.

He walks by 'The Science Chick', a nerdy solo act who sings
about science and math. Her booth is set up with crazy
science decor. The kids seem to be enjoying her interactive
exhibit. Her song about flatulence plays from a speaker.

Martin approaches a booth with CHASE and GRACE (AKA 'Chasin'
Grace'), an overly friendly couple in their 40s who enjoy
singing songs about traditional family values.

CHASE
Hey Martin!

Martin looks a little surprised. Chase points to his lanyard.

CHASE (CONT'D)
I see you're also a feature
presenter.

MARTIN
Oh yes. It's my first time here.

CHASE
Well welcome to America amigo!

MARTIN
No, I mean...

CHASE
We're Chasin' Grace.

Chase motions to his wife who waves.

CHASE (CONT'D)
What time do you go on?

MARTIN
11:15.

CHASE
We'll make sure to show you some
extra love.

MARTIN
Thanks.

CHASE
Would you like a pencil or some
stickers? We've also got some
guitar picks. Help yourself to
whatever.

MARTIN
But I'm not a member.

CHASE
Not sure what you mean but the
membership is always free over
here.

Martin grabs some swag labeled with WWJD. Chase grabs a
bigger plastic bag and fills it with more swag.

CHASE (CONT'D)

(discreetly)

There's some extra literature in there too if you're looking for something more fulfilling. God bless.

MARTIN

(awkwardly)

Thanks. You too.

Martin passes by other booths including NOAH LEVI, performing traditional Jewish songs on the clarinet, and DADDY BLANKEE, singing with an auto-tune setting to his reggaeton backing track.

Martin comes upon a larger crowded booth with CMB, the boy band from the 90s, who now go by "Color Me Rad". They're signing flyers, promoting their "new" kid-friendly album, "I Wanna Build You Up". Some children are pushed aside while the moms try to get closer.

Martin walks over to another crowded booth. He notices Lil' Chainz amongst a group of strange and eclectic performers that represent The Sugar Rush Talent Collective. 'The Super-Dupers', a group that dresses up as superheroes are lip-synching while performing acrobatics.

Martin makes his way to the front. Lil' Chainz nods in the direction of the band 'Los Burritos Bandidos', comprising of four members who resemble Mexican rancheros.

LIL' CHAINZ

See, I told you Coca, we got Spanish already!

Martin moves along. He walks up to a booth by 'The Little Justice Warriors', 4 white, mid 30s hipsters. Their anthem, "We Should All Be Sorry", plays in the background. Martin approaches KIM and TIMOTHY, two of the members.

KIM

Hi, I'm Kim and I identify as a she/her.

TIMOTHY

And I'm Timothy. I identify as a he/him.

MARTIN

Nice to meet you both, I am Martin.

There's a brief moment of silence.

TIMOTHY

And how would you like to be referred to?

MARTIN

Oh, just Martin is fine.

KIM

So what's your 'cause'?

MARTIN

My what?

KIM

We're the 'Little Justice Warriors'. Our songs focus on educating children about social injustices caused by oppression, systematic racism and white privilege.

TIMOTHY

We like to say that our music is as if Mr. Rogers and AOC had a baby.

Martin pretends to understand.

The Kindie Punks are still on stage finishing their last song.

KIM

They're just so talented, aren't they?

The teen power trio are hardly audible due to the volume of their instruments. It sounds like they are screaming and mumbling complete nonsense.

KIM (CONT'D)

Finally, nice to see the Asian community being represented in children's music.

The Kindie Punks are stretching out the last note with some punk rock theatrics. Finally, they end. The audience erupts with applause.

KIM (CONT'D)

We collab'd with them last year on a song. We like to join forces with other talents, especially minorities. It's a great way to show unity. Hey, we should do that sometime!

MARTIN

Sure!

A young boy and his mother approach. The boy grabs a Little Justice Warrior bracelet. Kim hunches down.

KIM

Hey buddy, how are you? I like your dinosaur shirt.

BOY

Thanks!

KIM

Just a heads up, those are only for members of the BIPOC community. We want to make sure that they get these before people who look like us do, ok? If you want to come back later, we may have some leftovers you can have.

The mother is appalled. They walk away.

MARTIN

Well, it was nice to meet you 'Tim' and 'Kimothy', maybe we can keep in touch.

KIM

Absolutely.

Martin walks away.

EVENT MC

Let's give it up one more time for the Kindie Punks! Next up, we have Grandpa Jones.

There's a faint applause as GRANDPA JONES, a very old 'mountain man' is on stage.

EVENT MC (CONT'D)

And would Martin Rodriguez please come up to the check-in table? You're on deck.

INT. LARGE SHOWCASE ROOM - STAGE AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Martin walks up to the STAGE ATTENDANT and hands him his papers.

MARTIN

Hi, I am Martin Rodriguez.

STAGE ATTENDANT

Great. You're up after Grandpa Jones.

Grandpa Jones is on stage strumming his banjo and singing the Southern classic, "Are You From Dixie?". It's not going over well with attendees.

Martin tunes his guitar and looks at some notes on a crumpled paper. He's grows nervous.

Grandpa Jones finishes after and gets a couple of sporadic claps. He stands up and begins to pack up.

Martin turns to the stage attendant.

MARTIN

But he just started though.

The attendant shrugs. Grandpa Jones exits the stage. Martin begins to feel the pressure.

Martin is in disarray as he walks on stage. He plugs his guitar into an amp which creates a loud 'pop' sound, prompting some to cover their ears. He struggles with all of the cables on stage and has trouble getting sound out of the amp.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Carajo!

A seated spectator turns to her colleague.

SPECTATOR

(excitedly)

Oh, that was Spanish. I hope he plays 'La Bamba'.

Martin walks up to the mic, taps it and clears his throat.

MARTIN

(nervously)

Hello everyone, my name is Martin.
Wow, there's so many of you.
The first song I would like to present is a classic Latin American nursery rhyme, but I have translated it into English.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's called, "Arroz con Leche",
which means "Rice with Milk". I
hope you enjoy it.

Martin strums a chord but his guitar sounds out of tune. He quickly tunes then looks at the clock which is ticking down. He gathers himself and signals the MC, cueing a silly-sounding backing track. Martin begins to sing.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

*Rice and milk, I want to marry,
with a pretty lady from the
capital, she knows how to dance,
she knows how to sew, she opens the
door so I can go, with this one
yes, with this one no, with this
one I'll marry happily so...*

There's a short instrumental break.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Now I will do the girls' part!

Some audience members squirm in their seats. Martin sings in a high-pitch voice.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

*I am the little widow, of the
village of the king, I want to
marry, but I don't know with who,
with this one yes, with this one
no, with this one, I'll marry
happily so.*

There's another short instrumental break. Martin does a little dance move and tries to engage the audience. Martin sings in his normal voice.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

*Rice and milk, I want to marry,
with a pretty lady from the
capital, she knows how to cook, she
knows how to sew, she opens the
door so I can go, with this one
yes, with this one no, with this
one I'll marry happily so.*

Martin finishes the song. He looks up at the crowd and notices everyone staring at him in shock.

GRANDPA JONES

(clapping)

Hot damn that boy's good!

Martin takes a deep breath as the time continues to tick away.

<BEGIN FLASH-FORWARD>

INT. SMALL SOUND STAGE - LOS ANGELES

MARTIN

You know, in many ways it's a lot harder to write songs for children. Most people don't know that.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

Great stuff Martin. You think we could go back a little before that? I want to hear about your humble beginnings and how you ended up crossing the border, stuff like that.

MARTIN

(nervously)

I'd rather not talk that. It might, you know, trigger some trauma.

<END FLASH-FORWARD>

EXT. MEXICO - MANSION - NIGHT

ABOUT 1 YEAR EARLIER

A large outdoor concert is underway. Martin is on stage with his band performing for thousands of people at a luxurious mansion near the beach. They perform Spanish-language versions of recognizable western covers. The crowd loves it.

Martin falls back into the audience to crowd surf, allowing himself to be carried around. Looking up at the night sky amidst the chaos, Martin revels in the moment.

EXT. MANSION - NEXT MORNING

The property of the mansion is in shambles.

INT. MANSION - LARGE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The double doors to the bedroom aggressively swing open. ANTONIO and JOSEFINA, Martin's parents, have unexpectedly dropped by.

Martin is passed out naked in an oversized bed with several other people including his good friend and bandmate, CARLOS.

Josefina walks over to the window and aggressively opens the curtains. Martin squints his eyes, acknowledges his mother with a sleepy smile, then rolls over. Infuriated, she walks back to the doorway and motions for someone to come in. A large BODYGUARD enters.

INT. MANSION - DOWNSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Martin lets out a loud scream heard throughout the mansion. Everyone from the room scurries out. The bodyguard walks out carrying Martin, butt-naked, down the stairs over his shoulder.

In Spanish:

MARTIN

What are you doing?... Mom!...
Dad!... What did I do? Tell him to
put me down!

EXT. MANSION POOL - CONTINUOUS

The man throws Martin into the pool.

EXT. MANSION PATIO - LATER

Martin and his parents are having breakfast. Workers are in the distance cleaning up from the party. Martin acts like nothing happened as he casually eats cereal.

In Spanish:

JOSEFINA

So you have nothing to say for
yourself?

MARTIN

What do you want me to say? Look,
I'm just giving my fans what they
want.

JOSEFINA

Fans?

ANTONIO

I don't think they're your fans,
nor friends, son.

(MORE)

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

I'm pretty sure they're here for the party, free food, free booze, drugs...

JOSEFINA

God knows what else.

Martin rolls his eyes.

JOSEFINA (CONT'D)

Your father is up for re-election this year and the last thing we need to be doing is cleaning up your mess.

MARTIN

Here we go again.

ANTONIO

It's not just that Martin, it really is time you get your head out of the clouds and learn to do things on your own for once.

Antonio he leans back to allow a server to place a napkin in his lap.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

If it's music you want to do, then go do music, but not like this.

MARTIN

But the album is really starting to come along.

Josefina laughs.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I don't expect either of you to understand the creative process. Inspiration just doesn't magically appear out of nowhere. It takes a lot of patience and hard work.

ANTONIO

No one is questioning your passion for music Martin, but you have to know when to move on.

The maid, about the same age as Josefina, serves coffee. She makes eye contact with Martin and flirtatiously smiles. Josefina, looks at her sternly, prompting the maid to lower her head in shame and walk away.

JOSEFINA

That's it! Are you going to tell him or should I?

ANTONIO

Martin, your mother and I believe it's best for you...

(looking at his wife)

...for all of us really, for you to move out and live on your own.

Martin unfazed, continues eating.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

We have arranged for you to live with a cousin in Los Angeles. She's agreed for you stay with her while you look for work. Her name is Gabriella- she's a musician too I believe.

MARTIN

No thanks. What about if I just take some art classes again like last year?

Josefina abruptly stands up and walks away.

ANTONIO

Martin, we acknowledge that this is not entirely your fault. We do bare some of the responsibility for you being a completely incompetent human.

Martin looks puzzled.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Which is why we mean it this time. You will go and learn to be independent. This is not a negotiation. Understood?

INT. MANSION - LARGE BEDROOM - LATER

Martin is throwing random items into a tiny suitcase. Carlos, his longtime friend and bandmate, casually strums an unplugged electric guitar.

In Spanish:

MARTIN

Can you believe it man? What do they think is possibly going to come from this? What do I even pack?

CARLOS

You could always just buy things when you get there.

MARTIN

Good idea.

Martin zips up his bag and takes out his phone.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I don't even know who this cousin is. All I could find was some old LinkedIn page.

Martin shows Carlos his phone.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

She's actually kind of cute.

Carlos shoots his friend a look.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

For you I mean.

CARLOS

Sucks we can't play anymore.

MARTIN

Hey, why don't you come with? We can start a band, finish the album, play shows, party...

CARLOS

I'm not sure my parents would be cool with me just walking out on the family business.

MARTIN

They groom dogs out of your house. Besides, what do you even do there anyways?

CARLOS

It's not just dogs.

MARTIN

Whatever. Tell them you're going to work and send money back or something.

CARLOS

Even if I could, I don't have, you know, the means like you.

MARTIN

Carlos, how long have we known each other for? Let *me* handle that. Plus, you can just stay with my cousin. She'll probably be happy to host us both. You know how women are.

INT. GABBY'S APARTMENT - LOS ANGELES, CA

GABBY, a plain but attractive woman in her late 20s, is chatting with her great-aunt, TIA, a tiny Mexican woman in her 70s.

In Spanish:

GABBY

Are they out of their mind!? I thought it was just for a couple of weeks.

TIA

He's family sweetheart.

GABBY

Barely. Besides, aren't they like filthy rich? Can't they just buy some swanky condo on the west side?

Tia shrugs.

EXT. - AIRPORT - DAYS LATER

Martin is dropped off by a chauffeur in front of the airport. Moments later, an old run down car pulls up with Carlos and his parents. His MOTHER is sobbing. She showers him with hugs and kisses while his father helps unload several pieces of luggage.

In Spanish:

MOTHER

Don't forget to call us when you arrive.

CARLOS

I won't.

Carlos' father whispers something in his sons ear then shoots Martin a dirty look. They get back in the car and drive away.

Carlos walks up to Martin

MARTIN

What was that about?

CARLOS

Oh, nothing. Just a little prayer.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Martin and Carlos are boarding the plane. Martin looks the first class passengers who all appear to be nice and relaxed. He looks down at his ticket and notices his seat number. He struggles to navigate through a crowded coach cabin until he finds his middle seat in the back. He stands there for a moment looking around to see where Carlos is seated. A FLIGHT ATTENDANT approaches.

In Spanish:

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

(to Martin)

Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to take your seat. Also, we'll need you to check that in.

MARTIN

Can't you just ask someone else to check their bag?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

I'm sorry sir. Airline policy.

Martin reluctantly hands over his guitar. He motions to the aisle passenger that he would like to sit, but the man simply leans back. He climbs over him pushing the seat in front, settling next to a woman with a baby. Martin notices the man reading a magazine article about his father, a prominent political figure.

MARTIN

(to the woman)

Do you think you could switch with my friend over there so we can sit together?

WOMAN

You're joking, right?

MARTIN

Just asking. Geez.

The baby begins to cry. Martin puts on his headphones and turns up the music.

EXT. AIRPORT - MOMENTS LATER

The plane takes off.

INT. LOS ANGELES AIRPORT - LATER

Martin walks out to the greeting location for arrivals. He looks around and sees Gabby.

In Spanish:

GABBY

Martin?

The two greet each other with a hug.

MARTIN

Gabby! Wow, you look great. How long has it been?

GABBY

Never, actually.

MARTIN

Oh, right. Nice to finally meet you.

GABBY

Likewise. How was the flight?

MARTIN

Don't get me started. If you've ever flown in the back then you know how terrible it is?

GABBY

Right. Well, where's the rest of your stuff?

Carlos, slightly disheveled, walks up with a cart full of bags.

MARTIN

Gabby, I want to introduce you to my best friend Carlos. Carlos, this is my...

(to Gabby)

We're like cousins, right?

GABBY

Something like that.

MARTIN

My cousin Gabby.

GABBY

Nice to meet you.

MARTIN

Carlos is also in my band.

GABBY

Awesome. So, you here visiting family?

Carlos looks at Martin for direction.

CUT TO:

INT. GABBY'S CAR - FREEWAY

There is complete silence in the car. Gabby drives stone-faced. The small sedan is packed to the max with bags. There's a bungee rope preventing the trunk from flying open.

Gabby is trying hard to keep her cool. Martin speaks to her in English.

MARTIN

I didn't think you would mind the extra company.

GABBY

I live in a 900-square-foot apartment. It just would have been nice to have the heads up.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, you're right, my parents should have mentioned it. I promise, he's a very nice guy. A little, how do you say, clingy, but completely harmless.

Gabby shoots Martin a look.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

It's ok, he does not speak English.

GABBY

He better clean up after himself. And you too! It's not like I have maids and shit.

Martin smiles in amusement but looks at Gabby who remains serious. A look of concern suddenly appears on his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES

Images highlight Los Angeles and Hollywood landmarks as they drive.

Martin sticks his head out of the window. A motorcycle quickly zooms by nearly taking his head off.

EXT. GABBY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

They pull up to a modest two-story apartment building. Carlos opens his door and some belongings spill onto the street.

INT. GABBY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Gabby opens the front door and enters with Martin. Carlos follows behind carrying several bags.

In Spanish:

GABBY

Tia, we're home.

CARLOS

Oh my god, what's that beautiful aroma?

GABBY

Tia?

Tia comes walking out from the hallway to greet everyone. She reaches out to hug and kiss Martin.

TIA

Hello my love, it's been years.

MARTIN

Oh good, we've met before.

TIA

Stand back and let me take a look at you. Is something wrong? Are you sick or something? Why are you so skinny?

MARTIN

Well, I haven't eaten in several hours.

TIA

Good, because I have made enough food for an army.

Without saying a word, Carlos drops his bags and embraces Tia as if he had known her for years.

GABBY

(to Tia)

And this is Carlos. Martin's friend... who I just found out is also staying with us.

Martin presents a concerned look.

TIA

Well, the more the merrier.

He arrogantly smirks at his cousin.

TIA (CONT'D)

Well, stop standing around. Bring your stuff in and let's get you all fed.

INT. - GABBY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone is gathered around the table eating.

In Spanish:

MARTIN

I can't remember the last time I had food like this.

TIA

I am glad. We need to put some meat on those bones Martin. Carlos, you are doing just fine.

GABBY

So, what's the deal? You guys have work lined up or something?

MARTIN

Not yet, but Carlos and I have a plan.

GABBY

Music stuff?

MARTIN

Yeah.

GABBY

I know it's probably not ideal but I could probably hook you two up where I teach.

Martin and Carlos share a look and snicker.

MARTIN

I appreciate it, but Carlos and I something bigger in mind. No offense.

GABBY

All good.

MARTIN

Plus, I really don't like being around children very much.

A cry comes from the back room. Martin gazes around and notices baby items scattered about.

GABBY

Right on cue.

MARTIN

Wait, you have a baby?

GABBY

No, it's Tia's.

Martin looks wide-eyed at Tia. Gabby walks away to tend to the baby in the other room.

CARLOS
(to Martin)
Why else would she have a car seat?

Gabby returns with 1 year-old ALEX and sits him in the highchair. Martin tries to interact.

MARTIN
(awkwardly waving)
Uh, hello little guy.

Alex begins to cry.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Did I do something?

GABBY
New faces. Give him a day or two.

MARTIN
So who's the father?

CARLOS
Dude.

MARTIN
What?

GABBY
It's fine. Let's just say he didn't want to be inconvenienced.

MARTIN
Oh, yeah, I get that.

EXT. - GABBY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Martin and Carlos are just outside the front door trying to keep their voices down.

MARTIN
Man, I can't believe she has a kid.
I hope she doesn't ask us to
babysit or change diapers or, I
don't know, walk him.

CARLOS
He's not a dog.

MARTIN

You know what I mean. But you *have* seen those hyper kids on leashes before, right?

Carlos nods in agreement.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Let's just make the best of it.
It's only temporary.

INT. GABBY'S APARTMENT - TIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Martin and Carlos are sharing a bed in Tia's room. Above them hangs a large picture of Jesus. The bed squeaks with the slightest movement.

Martin, restless and annoyed, listens to baby Alex cry from the other room. He looks over at Carlos who is sound asleep and snoring.

<BEGIN FLASH-FORWARD>

INT. SMALL SOUND STAGE - LOS ANGELES

MARTIN

After I crossed the border, I was worried about trying to fit in. Life was just so different in the US. Luckily, I met some musician-friends who I hired to join my band.

DIRECTOR

So you found work?

MARTIN

Uh, kind of, yeah. I was selling the salchichas.

DIRECTOR

Selling the salchichas?

MARTIN

Yeah, like in the street.

<END FLASH-FORWARD>

INT. GUITAR CENTER - SHOWCASE ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Martin and Carlos walk into a huge Guitar Center in Hollywood. They pass by a SECURITY EMPLOYEE who doesn't even look up from his phone.

SECURITY EMPLOYEE
Welcome to Guitar Center.

Martin and Carlos enter the vast music store. They look around mesmerized at all of the gear.

In Spanish:

CARLOS
Sweet Jesus.

MARTIN
Never gets old.
(beat)
I'll catch up with you in a bit.

Martin slowly works his way through the store. There are a handful of people trying out guitars and showing off their skills.

INT. GUITAR CENTER - KEYBOARD DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Carlos sits down at a keyboard and begins to mess around with the different sounds.

NIKKI, a music teacher in her late 20's comes out from the hallway. Carlos stops playing and turns his attention towards her. She calls out to her student.

NIKKI
Hey Kevin, ready for your lesson?

She locks eyes with Carlos and gives him a friendly smile. Her student follows her back to the lesson room. Carlos leans back to see where they go.

INT. - GUITAR CENTER - GUITAR DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Martin walks up to the front desk. An employee name RICK is chatting with a COLLEAGUE.

RICK
I'm just saying there's no one who can touch Metheny in terms of versatility.

COLLEAGUE

Bro, I completely understand but if we're talking about someone who's the best at one particular style, Steve Vai has to be at the top of the list for sure.

Rick acknowledges Martin.

RICK

Hey what's up man? Something I can help you with?

COLLEAGUE

(to Rick)

I'll catch you later.

The colleague leaves.

MARTIN

Hi, yes, I have a question. I'm new in town and looking to meet other musicians to form a band with. What would you suggest?

RICK

Uh, online?

MARTIN

Right.

RICK

For what it's worth, there's a bulletin board out front with a ton of flyers. Some scary shit if you ask me but maybe you'll have some luck.

MARTIN

Ok, well, thanks for your help.

RICK

What kind of stuff you into anyways?

MARTIN

Oh, uh, a lot stuff but mostly rock I guess. What about you?

RICK

I play jazz. I could have gone to music school but chose to learn the real way. I usually gig most nights. This is just my day job.

MARTIN

Cool. Where do you play?

RICK

These days I'm more into making art, so I'm pretty selective with what I take.

MARTIN

Do you mind if I give you my number, incase you come across anyone who might be interested?

RICK

Sure.

Martin writes his number down on a business card.

MARTIN

Let them know that I can pay for the rehearsals.

Rick perks up. TODD, a regular customer browsing in the background, overhears Martin. He moves closer to do some eavesdropping. Rick leans in towards Martin.

RICK

(quieter)

I wouldn't exactly go around broadcasting the pay thing too loud. Might attract the wrong kind of attention. Know what I mean?

MARTIN

(quiet)

Oh, right.

RICK

Hey Todd?

TODD

Yeah?

Todd walks over.

RICK

Fuck off!

TODD

Ok.

Todd leaves.

RICK
 Besides, I might be able to help
 you out. Tell me, what exactly are
 you looking for?

INT. GUITAR CENTER - LESSON ROOM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Carlos slowly walks down a hallway that has several small
 rooms for music lessons. He peaks through each door window.

In one room he sees an rocker-type teacher shredding in front
 of his young student. In another room, there's an old lady
 piano instructor asleep while her student plays 'Mary Had a
 Little Lamb'. Next, there's a stoner-type drummer teaching
 stick twirling. In another room, an overachieving prodigy
 performing on violin.

Finally Carlos peeks into the room where Nikki is giving a
 bass lesson. She smiles in acknowledgment. He continues
 staring, prompting Nikki to stand up. Carlos scurries away.
 She opens the door.

NIKKI
 Can I help you with something?

Carlos slowly turns around.

CARLOS
 Sorry. No English.

In Spanish:

NIKKI
 Are you looking for someone?

CARLOS
 I was just checking out the lesson.

NIKKI
 Well, it gets a little distracting
 for students when someone's at the
 door like that staring in.

CARLOS
 I'm really sorry.

NIKKI
 All good.

Nikki begins to close the door.

CARLOS
 I'm Carlos.

NIKKI

I'm Nikki. Nice to meet you Carlos.

Martin comes around the corner.

MARTIN

There you are! I've been looking for you. God, these kids sound terrible.

Nikki shoots Martin a look.

NIKKI

See you around Carlos.

Nikki closes the door.

MARTIN

You'll never guess what happened. I just met this guy who works here. He agreed to jam with us next week. He said we could even practice here after the store closes. Isn't that great?

CARLOS

Dude, that's awesome.

MARTIN

Come on, let's go celebrate.

INT. JINGLE JANGLE MUSIC - CLASSROOM

Gabby is teaching her last 'mommy and me' music class of the day to toddlers and parents. Everyone sings and dances along. She finishes the song and everyone cheers.

INT. JINGLE JANGLE MUSIC - CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Parents trickle out of the class as Gabby packs everything up. She's approached by the Jingle Jangle Music owner, MR. JINGLES, a goofball in his 50's. He wears a brightly-colored vest embroidered with the company name and logo.

MR. JINGLES

Well hello there Ms. Gabby. It looks like you had another great turnout today. That's exactly what we like to see here at Jingle Jangle.

GABBY

Thanks Mark.
 (catching herself)
 I mean, "Mr. Jingles".

MR. JINGLES

Just a couple of things, if I
 may...

Gabby takes a slow deep breath.

MR. JINGLES (CONT'D)

It's just that we *really* need you
 to stick to the Jingle Jangle
 curriculum.

GABBY

But the parents like what I'm
 doing.

MR. JINGLES

I can see that, but please
 understand that all of our songs
 and activities have gone through a
 rigorous screening and approval
 process. If you would like your
 songs to be considered for our
 program, we would need have some
 sort of contract transferring
 ownership to Jingle Jangle.

Mr. Jingles walks away. Gabby rolls her eyes as she turns to
 leave.

MR. JINGLES (CONT'D)

Oh, and Ms. Gabby...

Gabby pauses.

MR. JINGLES (CONT'D)

Please don't forget to wear your
 Jingle Jangle vest, alrighty?

Gabby takes a deep breath and walks out the door.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - LATER

Martin and Carlos stroll along the beach observing the
 culture. There are surfers, dog walkers, skaters, street
 musicians, sunbathers, muscle men and more.

In Spanish:

CARLOS

I can't believe we're actually here. Hey, how far are we from Disney?

MARTIN

You know Carlos, this might be exactly what we needed. Just think of all the stars that were born right here. Like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Hannah Montana.

Martin's phone rings.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(answering)

Dad!

EXT. MEXICO

Martin's dad is at a political campaign event.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

In Spanish:

ANTONIO

I assume your travels went smoothly yesterday?

MARTIN

Yes, sorry, I meant to check in but I was so tired when I arrived.

ANTONIO

Look, I made some calls yesterday and was able to arrange interviews at a couple major labels out there.

MARTIN

Really?

ANTONIO

There might be an internship or entry-level opportunity to take advantage of. Got to start somewhere, right?

MARTIN

Oh. Yeah, I guess.

ANTONIO

Just giving you the heads-up should they call.

Martin stops in his tracks. He motions for Carlos to look up. They're standing directly in front of a marijuana dispensary.

MARTIN

Ok, sounds good dad, thanks. Hey, I have to go now. We're about to go grocery shopping. I'll call you later. Bye.

Martin and Carlos smile at one another and walk in.

INT. CAFE - AFTERNOON

Gabby and her friend LIZ are having coffee together.

LIZ

Did he really say that? What an ass. I feel bad referring you to that place.

GABBY

It's all good. I need the work.

LIZ

Girl, you need to just open up your own place already and do things the way you want.

GABBY

Right.

LIZ

So how long is your cousin staying with you?

GABBY

I don't know. Couple of months maybe.

LIZ

A couple of months?! Damn, I have a tough enough time getting through a week with my mom here. And she doesn't even stay with me.

GABBY

Yeah well, it's a Latin thing I guess.

LIZ

I guess. Hey, I thought you said he comes from all this money and shit.

GABBY

I don't know what the situation is. I think his parents insist on him trying to make it on his own or something. Whatever.

LIZ

Oh. Cute.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - AFTERNOON

Carlos and Martin wander slowly along the beachfront stores. They're sharing some gummies from the dispensary.

In Spanish:

MARTIN

You feeling anything yet?

CARLOS

No, you?

MARTIN

Let's try one of these other ones.

They grab another bag and open it. Martin suddenly stops and alerts Carlos to a sign that says 'Venice Beach Psychic'.

INT. GABBY'S APARTMENT

Gabby walks in exhausted with her hands full of instruments.

She picks up Alex from the Pack 'n Play and walks over to the kitchen counter. She sifts through the mail and notices a large envelope that says, "Return to Sender". She appears disappointed.

In Spanish:

TIA

What's wrong?

GABBY

Nothing.

TIA

Why don't you just try calling?

Gabby shrugs.

TIA (CONT'D)

I don't understand your generation.
Nobody wants to talk anymore. Just
call.

EXT. GABBY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Gabby steps outside the front door to make a call.

INT. SUGAR RUSH TALENT COLLECTIVE - FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

HOLLY, a ditzy young receptionist is watching TikTok videos.
She answers the phone.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

HOLLY

Sugar Rush Talent, how may I direct
your call?

GABBY

(nervously)
Hi, can I speak with Mindy please?

HOLLY

May I ask who's calling?

GABBY

Yes, this is Gabby.

HOLLY

Hey Waggy! Sure, one second, I'll
see if she's around.

Gabby makes a confused face. Holly presses the hold button to
transfer the call.

INT. SUGAR RUSH TALENT COLLECTIVE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MINDY, a distinguished woman in her 50s, is the founder of
the Sugar Rush Talent Collective. Her office is decorated
with photos of "high-profile" children's entertainers
including the Wiggles, Raffi, and Lisa Loeb.

Mindy sits at her desk when the call comes in.

MINDY

Yes Holly, who is it now?
(beat)

(MORE)

MINDY (CONT'D)

Waggy? Who the fuck is Waggy?

You mean Shaggy?

(beat)

Alright, yeah it's fine, put him through.

MINDY (CONT'D)

Hey Shag, pretty late over there, what's up?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

GABBY

(nervously)

Hi, is this Mindy?

MINDY

Yes, I'm sorry, who's this?

GABBY

My name is Gabriella. I'm a children's songwriter. I had emailed you a couple weeks ago and just wanted to follow up with the agency.

MINDY

Hi Gabby, I apologize for the delay. As you can imagine, we get a lot of submissions. Remind me of what your artist name is again?

GABBY

Oh, I just go by Gabby.

MINDY

What about your Insta or TikTok handle?

GABBY

Actually, I'm not very active on those.

MINDY

Can you send us a Spotify link something?

GABBY

I actually don't have anything out just yet, just the demos I sent over.

MINDY

I see. Well, there's no easy way to put this but it's really hard for us to gauge if you're a good fit here at Sugar Rush if we can't listen to a fully produced album.

GABBY

I'm actually in the process of having them recorded. My songs are actually in English and Spanish.

MINDY

Let me stop you right there. We actually have a Latin band on our roster already. Maybe you've heard of them, 'Los Burritos Bandidos'.

GABBY

Uh, no.

MINDY

Well, you should check them out. They're fantastic.

(beat)

Look, why don't we circle back after you get that album done.

GABBY

Sure.

MINDY

Oh, make sure you have at least ten thousand followers on Insta.

GABBY

Ten thousand?

MINDY

And music videos. One for each song.

GABBY

(defeated)

Each song?

MINDY

Alright, talk soon Gabby. Bye.

Gabby hangs up. She looks dejected.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - BACK ROOM

Martin takes a seat across from a PSYCHIC LADY. The room is dimly lit with ethereal music playing. She applies hand sanitizer before asking for Martin's hands. The woman speaks with a fake Gypsy accent.

PSYCHIC LADY

Gently close your eyes to connect with your higher self. Take a couple of deep breaths.

(beat)

I will now contact your spirit guides to help with our journey.

(beat)

It looks like you have traveled a great distance to be here today.

MARTIN

I have.

PSYCHIC LADY

Your travels were very difficult I see.

MARTIN

Oh my god, were they ever.

PSYCHIC LADY

And you have come seeking fame and fortune?

MARTIN

Why else?

PSYCHIC LADY

(breaking character)

I'll do the asking.

MARTIN

Sorry.

PSYCHIC LADY

But there is something getting in the way. I'm seeing a female figure.

MARTIN

My mother, yes!

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - CONTINUOUS

Carlos, clearly stoned out of his mind, is seated on a couch in the front room. As he becomes more aware of his surroundings, he grabs the crucifix around his neck for comfort and kisses it.

In Spanish:

CARLOS
I'm so sorry Jesus.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PSYCHIC LADY
And I see that you have an immense amount of talent that has not yet been discovered.

Martin, still with his eyes closed, smiles and nods with confidence. The psychic peaks open one eye and looks down at Martin's arm which reveals a small guitar tattoo.

PSYCHIC LADY (CONT'D)
(with enthusiasm)
And what's this? I am hearing music. Such beautiful music!

MARTIN
Wait, how do you know that?

Martin gets distracted by the sound of bells from the front door. The psychic grabs his hands tighter. Martin closes his eyes again to focus.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - CONTINUOUS

A couple walks into the store. Carlos is one step away from having a full-blown panic attack. He puts his head down hoping that he won't be acknowledged by the newcomers.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PSYCHIC LADY
And what's this? I see you with a music trophy, in front of a thousand... No wait, a million people!

Martin is pleasantly surprised. He has a brief daydream of himself holding an Oscar and a bouquet on stage waving to the audience.

The psychic releases his hands and they both open their eyes. Martin is completely elated.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - CONTINUOUS

Carlos is turning pale and begins to sweat.

CUSTOMER
(to Carlos)
You ok buddy? You don't look so good.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martin stands up to leave. The psychic takes out some tarot cards.

PSYCHIC LADY
Wait! Sometimes our spirit guides speak through these cards. It will give us even more information about future events. Come, let's have a look.

CARLOS (O.S.)
(in Spanish)
Martin! Can we go please?

MARTIN
(in Spanish to Carlos)
Be right there!

PSYCHIC LADY
But you may only pick one.

The suspense builds as Martin goes to flip over the card. He suddenly pauses.

MARTIN
Wait a minute, I know what you're trying to do here. A similar thing happened to me at a sexy-girl club once. Very clever. I am going to leave now.

Martin hears Carlos whimpering.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Besides, I have what I need. Thanks for everything psychic lady. I promise not to forget you when I am famous.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - CONTINUOUS

Martin comes out from the back with a big smile. Carlos is in distress.

CUSTOMER

Is he alright?

MARTIN

Yes, he'll be fine. He has just been stung by a bee. That is why his body is swelling. It will go away soon.

Martin drags Carlos out of the store.

INT. PSYCHIC STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The psychic hovers around the card Martin was going to pick. She flips it over, revealing the Five of Pentacles. She instantly looks concerned.

PSYCHIC LADY

(to herself)

Oh dear.

(shouting out)

Wait!

EXT. VENICE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Martin is full of bliss as he walks out from the store.

MARTIN (V.O)

For some people, there's a split second when they realize that every single event from the past has led to "that" single present moment. Such a moment, when seized upon, could result in having the most profound and meaningful life experience.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Martin and Carlos are completely oblivious to the joggers and cyclists on the beachfront.

MARTIN (V.O.)
That day, I chose to follow my
destiny. And nothing was going to
get in my way.

JOGGER
Out of the way beaners!

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - KINDIE-VERSE SHOWCASE ROOM

SEVERAL MONTHS LATER

Martin has just finished the song 'Rice and Milk' to an audience with blank stares. Martin, grows anxious. Suddenly, his eyes widen with confidence.

He gives the guitar a single dramatic strum before performing a catchy bilingual song. The audience lightens up and begins to clap along. As Martin continues to play with passion and vigor. The audience becomes intoxicated by the performance.

Martin finishes big and everyone erupts with applause. 'Los Burritos Bandidos', comprised of frontman JERRY, along with bandmates MARCUS, LUIS and DOM, look at each other with concern.

MARCUS
There goes our piece of the market.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER ENTRANCE - LATER

The Bandidos come out of the convention center and spot Martin chatting with a woman in the parking lot.

MARCUS
There he is!

MARTIN (V.O.)
If you thought the hip hop rivalry
in the 90s was bad, then you
haven't experienced the world of
kindie music.

LUIS
What should we should do Jer?
(beat)
Jerry?

Jerry contemplates with a look of determination as he glances at Martin from afar. He squints his eyes, presenting a sinister look.

JERRY

Don't you boys worry. I know just what to do.

<BEGIN FLASH-FORWARD>

INT. SMALL SOUND STAGE - LOS ANGELES

DIRECTOR

(surprised)

Really? How so?

MARTIN

It's not really safe for me to get into details at the moment.

A production assistant interrupts and hands the director an iPad. The director's eyes widen.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

What?

DIRECTOR

(to production assistant)

Has this been fact-checked?

The assistant nods. The director continues reading before looking up at Martin.

MARTIN

What is it?

DIRECTOR

I don't mean to blindside you here but is your father Antonio Rodriguez?

MARTIN

(nervously)

This is a very common name. Why?

DIRECTOR

Is he in politics?

MARTIN

Well, sometimes.

DIRECTOR

So not a dog groomer?

MARTIN
Of course he was. What is that?

The director turns device over to show Martin an article about his father publicly denouncing the success of 'Hola Martin', calling him a phony.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Those are just tabloids.

DIRECTOR
It says you stole every song on your album. From your cousin.

MARTIN
That is completely untrue. She taught them to me.

Martin tries to recover.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
But then I made them different.
Very different.

Martin grows nervous.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
I wouldn't pay attention to that article.

DIRECTOR
Martin, you're up for 'Songwriter of the Year' AND 'Best Album'. Don't you think this is just a little bit relevant to the conversation?

MARTIN
You can't be serious. You know what, I don't have to put up with this interrogation anymore. We're done here. Vamos.

Martin gets up and walks out of the room. Members of his entourage follow.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martin is distressed as enters the dressing room by himself. He takes off his jacket, hat and sunglasses. He leans to get a good look at himself in the mirror.

INT. SMALL SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

A pair of headphones are on the sound cart. A computer indicates sound in still rolling. Martin's voice is heard.

In Spanish:

MARTIN (O.S.)
There it is Martin. Finally caught
you.
(beat)
Why do they always have to ruin
everything for me?!

Martin takes a deep breath.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Pull it together. You know who you
are.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martin puts his hat and sunglasses back on. He takes one last look in the mirror and gets back into character.

MARTIN
(to himself)
Hola Martin.

FADE TO BLACK