

# Laura

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12.12.11

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FADE IN:

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

LAURA, dressed down in jeans and a frock is folding clothes on the perfectly made bed. JUNIOR, an adorable toddler child runs in and tugs on her shirt.

LAURA  
Yes, my love.

JUNIOR  
Boboch!

LALO (O.S.)  
What's he saying?

LAURA  
He want's a bubble bath.

Laura smiles brightly and lifts Junior up into her arms.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Laura sets Junior down in a bath full of BUBBLES. He's squeals in delight.

Laura and LALO, 20s, a Latino man's man, in bathing suits slip into the bathtub on either side of Junior. They settle back and smile at each other, then Junior, then each other again.

LAURA  
I love you. So much.

Lalo takes a breath to speak, but...

CUT TO:

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, HALL OUTSIDE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

A women's hand KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCKS on the door.

Joan, 30-40, the best friend leans in close to the door, listening for movement.

JOAN  
Laura, he's here.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Laura's eye's snap open. She is a bit confused to find herself lying on the middle of her perfectly made bed wearing a pristine black designer skirt suit and heels.

A beat.

JOAN (O.S.)

Laura?

LAURA

Yeah. Okay.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

JUNIOR (O.C.)

Papa, papa, papa, papa, papa...

Laura walks slowly down the stairs into the open living room.

Joan stands at the bottom of the stairs with a big, supportive, but somewhat doubtful smile on her face.

The room open up to us, and we can see that it is full of LATINO PEOPLE dressed in somber black. They all stand quietly looking at Laura. Then, they shift their focus to...

ISABELLA, 20s, a harried looking Latina woman in a black restaurant uniform, stands by the front door holding hands with Junior, who looks dirty and squirms to try to get free.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

Papa, papa, papa, papa, papa...

Laura reaches the bottom of the stairs and Joan hands her a slim STACK OF PAPERS. Laura takes them.

As Laura walks into the living room, the sea of people parts making a straight path to Isabella and Junior. Laura walks down it, stopping just feet from Isabella and Junior.

In the background, right between the two women is a MEMORIAL PICTURE OF LALO propped up, and surrounded by flowers.

Laura looks down to Junior and offers out her hand to him.

LAURA

My god, Isabella, he stinks.

ISABELLA  
 (thick accent)  
 I didn't come here for a lecture  
 from you.

LAURA  
 I know, I'm sorry, but, Jees, is  
 everything alright?

ISABELLA  
 Junior and I are perfectly fine. I  
 just came here to pick up our  
 check.

LAURA  
 You mean the papers?

Laura motions with the papers.

ISABELLA  
*El dinero.* Money.

JUNIOR  
 Papa, papa, papa, papa, papa...

ISABELLA  
 Shh, iho.

LAURA  
 Why don't you let me take him for a  
 while? You can sit down, take a  
 rest while I go clean him up?

ISABELLA  
 I don't need your charity. All I  
 came here for is to get what's  
 mine.

LAURA  
 I don't know what you mean. I  
 thought you were here to sign  
 these.

ISABELLA  
 I'm not going to sign any sticking  
 papers. You think I'd give up my  
 son to anyone let alone you?

LAURA  
 I, I don't know what to say, I  
 thought we had this all worked out.  
 You were ready to sign the papers  
 when...when Lalo died.

ISABELLA

Well, that was then. This is now,  
and now I'm not going to sign.

Junior starts tugging really hard away from Isabella. He wants to get to the picture of Lalo.

JUNIOR

Papa! Papa! Papa! Papa!

ISABELLA

Shh, iho! No, papa! Papa left you.  
He doesn't love you no more.

Laura gasps. Junior immediately beaks into sobs.

LAURA

Isabella! How can you say such a  
thing to him?

Isabella picks Junior up, but he wiggles him way out of her arms. He lays crying on the ground. Laura looks like she really wants to pick him up, but holds herself back.

ISABELLA

Because it's true. Lalo was up here  
spending all his time with you,  
where was he for his son?

LAURA

What are you talking about? Lalo  
and I did everything we could to  
provide the best for Junior.

ISABELLA

That's all just your fancy money  
talking. I'm the only one who truly  
loves Junior.

LAURA

I don't even know how to respond to  
you. Can't we just get Junior a  
bath, and then talk about this  
rationally?

ISABELLA

Shut up about giving him a bath!  
I'm his mother! I give him a bath!

Isabella's at her whit's end. She breaks down into sobs.

Laura reaches out to put a hand on Isabella's shoulder, but a MAN stays her with is own hand. He gently shakes his head "no" at Laura.

Junior gets up and runs to the picture of Lalo. He touches the picture, trying to activate it.

JUNIOR

Papa! Papa! Papa! Papa!

Laura can't take it anymore. She goes over to Junior and wraps him up in her arms. She kisses his head, and bounces him gently on her hip.

Isabella weakly motions to protest but let's it drop, tears still streaming down her face.

LAURA

Shh. It's okay. It's okay.

Laura looks over to Isabella, then takes a few steps toward the stairs.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's not do this here.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Laura turns the knob, releasing a heavy stream of WATER. She tosses the papers onto the toilet, then turns to Junior, who is still crying.

Isabella steps into the doorway, also still crying.

JUNIOR

Papa! Papa! Papa! Papa!

ISABELLA

*Silencio, iho!* I can't take your screaming like that anymore!

Laura, sitting on the lip of the tub, tenderly stokes Junior's back.

LAURA

Shh, it's okay, it's okay.

(then)

Do you want bubbles?

Junior almost immediately stops crying.

JUNIOR

Si. Boboch.

LAURA

Come on. Let's take a bath.

She lifts Junior's shirt off over his head.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
Isabella, why don't you sit down?

ISABELLA  
I'm telling you, we're leaving  
right now.

But she makes no move to go. Just continues sobbing to herself.

Laura finishes getting Junior undressed, then picks up a bottle of BUBBLE BATH.

LAURA  
Oooo.

JUNIOR  
Boboch!

LAURA  
*Si*, boboch.

She drizzles the syrup into the water. Bubbles start forming.

Isabella's sobbing gets louder.

Laura lifts Junior up and sticks him in the bath.

ISABELLA  
We're leaving! We're leaving right  
now!

But instead of leaving, she sags against the door frame.

Laura carries on about her business.

LAURA  
Just relax, okay? Nothing's going  
on right now except I'm giving  
Junior a bath.

ISABELLA  
And you're judging me. You're  
judging me a bad mother.

LAURA  
Isabella, you have to stop putting  
words in my mouth.

JUNIOR  
(baby gibberish)

LAURA  
 (baby voice)  
 That's right, Junior. Mama has to  
 stop putting words in Laura's  
 mouth.

Isabella snuffles, and wipes her nose on her sleeve.

LAURA (CONT'D)  
 (to Junior)  
 I think I know what mama needs. I  
 think mama needs to come over here  
 and put her tired, aching feet in  
 this nice warm bath water, don't  
 you?

JUNIOR  
*Si! Mama! Boboch!*

Isabella softens and smiles at Junior's innocent request.

Laura turns back to Junior, her face clearly reading that she  
 isn't expecting Isabella to budge.

But then Isabella does. She moves to stand next to the tub,  
 behind Laura.

Laura looks up at her.

The two women lock eyes for a moment, then Laura gestures for  
 Isabella to sit down.

ANGLE ON: UNDER THE WATER, Isabella's feet submerging in the  
 water one at a time.

Laura looks shocked. She shrugs, kicks off her heels and dips  
 her feet in to the water too.

Junior smiles at them, and splashes in the water.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)  
 Mama! Boboch!

ISABELLA  
 What's he saying?

LAURA  
 Bubbles.

Isabella nods, then hangs her head forlorn.

ISABELLA  
 I am a terrible mother.

Laura doesn't say anything, just shakes her head.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I used to understand everything he says. Now, with you, I'm like a stranger to my own son.

(then)

And you'll win. I have to sign those papers because if you take me to court, I'll be deported and you'll get my son.

Laura nods. She then reaches behind her and picks up the papers off the toilet. We can now read what they say:

CHILD CUSTODY FORMS

Isabella catches a glance of them, and her face scrunches up in anguish.

LAURA

But you can see why Lalo and I wanted it this way. Junior deserves the best life has to offer.

Isabella nods.

LAURA (CONT'D)

And I can give him that.

Isabella nods.

LAURA (CONT'D)

But...

She holds up the papers and waits until Isabella is looking at her and then before continuing.

LAURA (CONT'D)

But.

Laura drops the papers in the tub.

ISABELLA

What are you doing?

LAURA

Isabella, I never meant to cause you any pain. Lalo and I just wanted what's best for Junior, but not to hurt you. And I can see now that trying to take Junior away from you is wrong. You're his mother.

With their back to us, Laura and Isabella sit on the tub in silence.

ISABELLA

I'm not mother to him. I'm a burden.

Laura looks sympathetically at Isabella, then lifts Junior out of the tub. She hold shim out to Isabella.

LAURA

(to Junior)  
Bath time over.  
(to Isabella)  
Take him.

Isabella reaches out but redraws her hand.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Take him. He's yours.

Isabella reaches out and takes Junior. She looks into his sweet innocent eyes. He claps his hands on her face and gives her a kiss.

JUNIOR

Mama, Laura, boboch!

ISABELLA

He's so happy.

Isabella looks at Laura, and we're not sure what she's going to do. What she does is sit Junior back down in the tub.

Laura's jaw almost drops. Isabella coughs and fidgets uncomfortably.

LAURA

You did a brave thing.

Laura tentatively reaches over and gently lays her hand on top of Isabella's. Isabella retracts her hand.

ISABELLA

No. Not yet. But maybe some day.

ANGLE ON: at the bottom of the tub, the custody papers lie limply in front of Junior's bouncing little body.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.

