

(The DUENDE runs off with his money. MIGUEL's still reeling. When he checks his money, it's gone. He tries to shout after the DUENDE, but has no voice for his rage. He cries calling his voice, summoning it with his guitar. An old WOMAN enters, making tortillas. We do not see her face. MIGUEL goes to her. Suddenly she turns, rising to her full height—ten feet tall. It's...)

LA LLORONA (wails). ¡Ay, mis hijijos! ¡Corre!

(MIGUEL is too scared to move.)

VOICES (offstage). La Llorona ... La Llorona ...!

LA LLORONA. ¡Ay, mis hijijos! Run hoosoo!

(MIGUEL looks back towards home. He can't go there!)

LA LLORONA. ¡Ay, mis hijijos! ¡CORREEEE!

(MIGUEL gathers all his strength and shakes his head 'no.' LA LLORONA tears off her mask, incredulous. No one has ever refused to run from her. She's completely thrown. In fact, she sounds just like a regular woman.)

LA LLORONA. ¿Oye, tonto, qué te pasa a ti? What's the matter with you? Crazy kid—ay, ay, ay, ay, ay ...

(MIGUEL can't believe his eyes and ears.)

LA LLORONA. What does it take to send you home?

(He starts to explain without words.)

LA LLORONA. You can't go home? (Responding to his gestures.) You'll die if you go home? (Responding to more gestures.) The soldiers took your parents? (She bursts into tears. They don't call her "The Weeping Woman" for nothing. There's an elaborate ritual to her crying—a beginning, a build, then an explosion, so that each time we hear it, we know exactly what's coming, and it's increasingly comical. Sputtering through tears.) I try to scare you kids home, so you'll be safe from the soldiers. (Incredulous.) Now you're too scared to go home— cause there are soldiers there too!

(MIGUEL gestures, "Please stop crying.")

LA LLORONA. ¿Qué? You think it's easy going all over the world crying— (Wails.) "¡Ay, mis hijijos!" (Beat; regular gal.) Ay, it hurts. My throat's been killing me for a century. I'm up all night scaring children into their houses— I haven't had a good night's sleep in four hundred years! Not since the Conquistadores. Well, who else is gonna do it, eh? (Wails.) Oye, say something already or— (This usually gets 'em.) I'll drown you in the river!

(MIGUEL mimes "I've lost my voice!")

LA LLORONA. You've lost your voice?

(He gestures about the soldiers.)

LA LLORONA. The soldiers ... scared it away?