

Carmen overhears and a knowing smile crosses her face as she leaves the room.

CUT TO:

8

INT STABLE SANCHEZ PROPERTY - EVENING

8

The image is blurred, but we know we are behind A BEATEN MAN breathing heavily with sweat glistening on his black hair. Manuel's calm face enters the frame looking at the fearful man. We go wide to reveal we are in a barn and with the TWO GONZALES BROTHERS looking on.

MANUEL

Has he said anything?

JAIME GONZALES

Nada. I don't think he knows anything.

MANUEL

You're too soft.

Manuel takes off his ceremonial jacket and places it carefully on a chair or barrel.

To the fearful man.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You have worked for me for a long time, Enrique. Why steal from me, my friend? Have I not been good to you?

ENRIQUE

I would never steal from you.

MANUEL

Where is the shipment of tequila, Enrique? Just tell me and we'll forgive and forget this time.

ENRIQUE

I don't know what you are talking about. I don't know anything about a tequila shipment. I promise you.

MANUEL

Who did you sell it too?

ENRIQUE

I never stole any tequila, Don Manuel. I would never -

Manuel whips out a white handkerchief and stuffs it down Enrique's mouth and holds his nose until he suffocates to death. The Gonzales brothers are shocked.

JAIME GONZALEZ

What are you doing?

MANUEL

No one lies to me and shames my good name.

The Gonzales brothers look at each other in disbelief.

ROBERTO GONZALEZ

Now we will never know what happened to our tequila!

(Beat)

MANUEL

I shall pay you for your loss. It was my employee who robbed you. And I will make it right. Your family and mine have been trading for years. And we will for many more to come.

JAIME GONZALEZ

And what about his body?

Manuel removes the handkerchief and grabs a nearby bottle of tequila. He pours it into Enrique's mouth and then over his face and hair.

MANUEL

Untie him and leave him behind the barn. When the stable hand finds him in the morning, it will look like he got into a drunken fight. I'll see you at the celebration.

The Gonzales brothers watch Manuel put on his elegant jacket.

JAIME GONZALEZ

You don't have to pay us for the lost tequila. It's the fact that you offered to pay us that makes you a respectable man. For that we are grateful. We are good, if you are good.

Jaime reaches his hand out to Manuel. He ponders their request, then shakes on it and leaves.