

Return of Las Maris

By Diana Burbano

LA - At the Intersection 2019

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Characters:

LULU	A young girl of mixed ethnicity.	F
TOÑA	A younger person of mixed ethnicity	Nonbinary
BUTTERFLY	A butterfly puppeteer.	

The play takes place across the border from the The United Monolith, formerly Texas. It hasn't rained for 20 years.

The butterfly is probably a puppet on a stick.

Note:

Before the show, please acknowledge the Native Peoples upon whose land the play is being performed.

The wasteland. A barren place. The sun beats hot and strong. An impression of sand and rock and dust surrounded by a barrier of concrete and steel. TOÑA, young, small, dust colored person enters, carrying something in their hands.

TOÑA

Pssst, LULU, ¡ven acá!

LULU wears a dusty dress, her black hair a riot on her head.

LULU

¿Qué quieres?

TOÑA opens her hands. She is holding a butterfly. It looks dead.

TOÑA

Should I crush it? It's probably a spy.

The butterfly starts moving. This startles TOÑA. She almost crushes the creature.

LULU

Let it go.

TOÑA

No! It's mine.

LULU

It's La Mari. You have to let it go.

TOÑA

¿Qué?

LULU

La Mari. My grandmami told me about them. Once upon a time Las Maris traveled across Nuevo Aztlan to El Norte Blanco. They brought happiness across el Borde.

TOÑA

Don't be silly. Nothing can cross el Borde.

LULU

Once it was just a tiny fence, not an electrical forcefield that reached to the old moon and covered the United Monolith. Things could fly over it. Like las Maris.

TOÑA

Oh.

LULU

And things grew over it, under it, around it. Through it!

TOÑA

Grew?

LULU

Yes!

TOÑA

What things?

Flowers.

LULU

Flowers aren't real.

TOÑA

If this little creature exists, then there must be flowers somewhere, because that is what they eat and how they live.

LULU

What do flowers look like?

TOÑA

Like this!

LULU
(Gesturing at the little creature in TOÑA's hand)

This thing isn't very efficient is it? I mean, one swipe of my hand and SAS, it's dead?

TOÑA
(Gently, as the butterfly flaps its wings.)

Yes.

LULU

Maybe I should kill it. We are supposed to get rid of things that don't work.

TOÑA

You could kill it, yes. Do you want to?

LULU

No.

TOÑA

Look.

LULU

The butterfly is about to take off. It flaps its wings more vigorously.

Why does it keep doing that?

TOÑA

Keep watching.

LULU

The butterfly takes off and flies, around and around.

TOÑA

Oh!

She is frightened.

LULU

It's OK. That's what it does.

TOÑA

Oh! But it's so fragile, and so colorful, and it is--

LULU

Free.

TOÑA

Free?

LULU

Free to fly on currents of wind, free to seek the flowers.

TOÑA

Why aren't there any flowers here?

LULU

We haven't had enough water for flowers since the Great All Consuming Fires. We need all the water to keep us alive.

TOÑA

But before the fire—

LULU

Water came from the sky. It dropped on your skin.

TOÑA

No.

LULU

Oh yes, and all the hills turned a color they called "Green".

TOÑA

Green isn't real, and flowers aren't real and there is no such thing as rain. That's what they tell us in the factory school. They also say people who tell us different are bad and should be reported.

LULU

Are you going to report me?

TOÑA

I don't know. I'm going to kill the creature and turn it in.

She chases the butterfly, but it doesn't let itself be caught.

LULU

I know where it's going. Somewhere with flowers, somewhere far from El Borde, where the rain still falls. It's a sign of hope. If you let it go, I'll follow it.

TOÑA

How will you cross El Borde?

LULU

Nature will find a way.

The butterfly flutters. Lands on LULU's shoulder. Looks back at TOÑA and seems to gesture, "Come." TOÑA is scared and confused.

LULU

Can you wait an hour before you turn me in?

TOÑA nods. The butterfly flaps off LULU and starts to lead her.

LULU

I want to know what flowers smell like.

They walk off, Leaving TOÑA alone. The butterfly comes back for a second. TOÑA, scared, runs out in the other direction.