

Children Play

By

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INT. HALLWAY APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

PABLO, 10 years old, is running down the hallway breathing heavily. He carries a small golden box decorated with small glass mirrors, pearls and beads. His untied shoe laces hit the floor and bounce back going "tic-tac" with each stride.

PABLO
(pausing to catch air)
I got it. I have it. Lotti. I got
it!

He turns quickly around the corner but the hallway is empty.

PABLO
Lotti! Help me hide it...

The box twinkles reflecting the sun rays coming through the window as Pablo stands trying to decide which way to go.

PABLO (cont'd)
k, going down.

He stands still for a moment and then starts to run again down the stairs.

PABLO (cont'd)
(desperately)
He's coming, Lotti!

From behind him, LOTTI, a little girl dressed in a bright yellow shirt runs, her red pony tail moving from side to side. She laughs brightly.

INT. CLOSET - LATER

Pablo and Lotti hide in a closet, still holding the box between the two of them.

LOTTI
Scoot over! I don't fit.

PABLO
Ssshhh! quiet, he'll hear us.

LOTTI
If you don't move he'll see me.

PABLO
I'm trying. Stuck.

The two let out their laughs.

(CONTINUED)

LOTTI

Do you think he found out what we took?

PABLO

No. Not yet and when he does he will be mad but keep your voice down.

LOTTI

(whispering)

It doesn't belong to him anyway.

PABLO

(whispering very low)

You did a good job at distracting him-

LOTTI

I can't hear you.

PABLO

I said, you did a good job.

LOTTI

(whispering loudly)

What?

PABLO

You did a good job!

LOTTI

Ssshhh!

Pablo sits back and crosses his arms in front of his chest.

LOTTI (cont'd)

Thanks. I discovered that I like pink Starbursts the best.

She smiles.

PABLO

yeah?

LOTTI

Great, ha. I won't have to chew on an entire bag and keep spitting balls out.

PABLO

Gross. You did that every time.

(CONTINUED)

LOTTI

At least I'm not as bad as you.

Lotti sits back with her legs bent over in front of her to rest her head atop of her knees. She starts braiding her hair.

LOTTI (cont'd)

Your allergies to sugar, eggs,
milk, your mom's hair, the lead on
your pencils-

PABLO

-fluorescent lights and cold water.

He starts messing around with the box.

LOTTI

Open it with this.

PABLO

Its just stuck. We forgot the key.
Maybe if I turn it this way...

LOTTI

Listen! listen.

They freeze.

Creeping noises are heard from outside. The room drops a few degrees. The two start to breathe louder and faster.

PABLO

(alert and whispering)
He knows.

LOTTI

(following Pablo's exmple)
Maybe we shouldn't have but we had
to, right.

PABLO

No one else would've done it if we
didn't.

A loud bang is heard. Lotti lets out a yell and Pablo holds her, his hand covering her mouth. She's breathing heavily.

They continue to sit still for a few moments longer until it seems like it is calm outside.

Pablo lets Lotti go as she is more relaxed now.

(CONTINUED)

PABLO (cont'd)
I think that was him falling over
the tied up shoe laces.

They laugh.

LOTTI
I say we hide it under Doña Norma's
cupboard that you fixed last week.

PABLO
Right. So if we want to do that
this is a good time to move.

INT. DOÑA NORMA'S APARTMENT - LATER

Pablo stands alone holding the box in his hands. DOÑA NORMA,
70 years old round lady, sits in the room next door.

PABLO
I'm just gonna take a look to see
how its holdin' up.

Pablo crawls under the cupboard and runs his fingers over
the nails and screws that he himself fixed into the wood.

DOÑA NORMA O.C.
Pablito, you should be going to
school now, not staying at home
with that old drunken father.

PABLO
...mhmm.

DOÑA NORMA O.C.
Your mother was so beautiful. I'm
glad she left him. That man had to
hold his balls up with one hand
while beg with the other. But she
did one thing right: not stand him
a second longer. She left you
behind and that was a mistake...

LOTTI
Hurry!

Lotti is kneeling down with her head on the floor peaking
underneath. Pablo lays on his back.

PABLO
Hold on. I wanna make sure no one
can take it out but me.

(CONTINUED)

The door bell rings in a lower insect-buzz.

DOÑA NORMA O.C.

Pablo!

LOTTI

That's him!

He finishes up and quickly gets up to fix his clothes and dust himself off.

DOÑA NORMA

Your father is here for you.

PABLO

Si, gracias, doña Norma.

DOÑA NORMA

Pinch him where it hurts if he tries something or better yet, set them on fire...

She reaches for a bottle of Tabasco and hands it to him. Pablo smiles and leaves the kitchen.

INT. HALLWAY APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Pablo walks behind his stumbling father.

LOTTI

(whispering into his ear)

She gave us a good idea. I won't be scared this time.

Pablo and Lotti smile at each other and hold hands.

Finally, as Pablo and his father are about to walk into the apartment, we see Pablo imaginatively holding someone's hand. It's just air.