

LA LLORONA DIDN'T DO IT

A One Act Play

By

Raul Flores

600 S Promenade Blvd Apt 409
Rogers, Arkansas 72758
(479) 458-4338
raul_flores15@hotmail.com

Cast of Characters

La Llorona/Dolores: A Woman in her late 20s. 150 year old Ghost.

Paco: A Teenage boy. Aspiring vlogger.

Don Javi: A man in his 50s. The town historian. Well respected.

PACO's parents: Middle aged couple.

Man 1 and Man 2/Two Men: Middle aged men. Campesinos.

Townsman: A man in his 30s.

Townswoman: A woman in her 30s.

Scene

All of this takes place in a small town in Mexico, near a river. Everyone in the village is terrified of the river because they believe it is haunted by a ghost named La Llorona.

Time

The present.

NOTE:

Don and Doña are common ways to greet people in Mexico. Typically it's a sign of respect. Either to an elder or to someone in the community of good standing.

ACT I
Scene 1

SETTING: The river bank outside of town.

AT RISE: It's a dark and dreary night. Fog. Two men happen to be going along the banks of the river. They're fearful.

MAN 1:

I told you we shouldn't have stayed out in the fields so long. Now it's night time, and...

MAN 2:

And what?

MAN 1:

Well, we're next to the river. And this is where...La Llorona
(makes a cross sign)
comes out to haunt people.

MAN 2:

What? You're worried she's gonna come out to haunt us?

MAN 1:

Oh! You know what I mean!

MAN 2:

Have you ever seen her?

MAN 1:

Well, no, but... Do you remember what Don Javi said?

(At that moment we hear a shriek in the distance.)

MAN 2:

What was that?

MAN 1:

I told you! Don Javi warned us about this! It's La Llorona!
She's going to drown us like she drowned her kids!

MAN 2:

Stop saying that! It's not true!

(A clear "HELP ME!" scream sounds
nearby.)

TWO MEN:

Ay mamacita! Run for your lives!

(The TWO MEN run away and exit. A boy
enters the stage muttering to himself
carrying a camera. This is **PACO**, a
teenager and aspiring "vlogger" who
just wants to make his parents proud.
He is upset.)

PACO:

(Mockingly) "You should be studying instead of playing with that
camera!" They'll see! When I find La Llorona I'm gonna make so
much money! And then...then they'll see that I'm not wasting my
time!

(The TWO MEN re-enter the stage and
they are running and shouting and
pouting and screaming. As they are
doing this they pass PACO on his way
out of town. The TWO MEN bump into him
so that he almost drops his camera, so
he tries to protect it.)

TWO MEN:

La Llorona! La Llorona!

PACO:

Hey! Watch it! My camera!

MAN 1:

Chamaco! Run! La Llorona is out there!

PACO:

She's out there?

MAN 2:

She's coming to get you! She's coming to kill us!

TWO MEN:

Run for your lives!

(The Two Men exit. PACO is left alone to reconsider.)

PACO:

OK. I guess I have to go find her now... I'm not afraid of her. I mean. What's the worst that can happen? She's a ghost! Ghosts can't do anything! They're see-through. They're like... like a jelly fish... Although, jelly fish can sting you to death. Can ghosts sting? Maybe I should have done more research before coming out here... Nah. I'm gonna be OK. I just need to record, and I just need to catch her. And maybe she'll be nice. Maybe she'll even take a selfie with me! Although... I've never heard of a nice ghost. All the stories are that they just scare you. But how? What makes a ghost scary? I mean, she did drown her kids... Gulp... maybe she will try to drown me? What did she do to those Two men? Oh man. Oh man. OK. I can do this. Hi Mrs. Llorona. Please don't drown me. Please don't drown me. Oh. Please. Oh... Please. Oh. I don't wanna die. I don't wanna die. I don't wanna die.

(**LA LLORONA** appears. Paco sees her and drops his camera in fear. He takes off running, and then he realizes that he doesn't have his camera.)

PACO:

No! My camera! Ah! I have to go back! Ah!

(Paco pauses. Makes up his mind to go back and get the camera. When he runs back to the spot where he was he starts looking for the camera on the ground. **DOLORES** clears her throat.)

DOLORES:

Ehem.

(Paco looks up to find Dolores holding the camera in her hand. Paco is paralyzed with fear and gasps. She doesn't move. He gasps again. She still doesn't move. He looks at the camera in her hand. Dolores just raises an eyebrow.)

PACO:

Are you gonna... hurt me?

DOLORES:

No.

PACO:

You're not?

DOLORES:

Did you not hear what I just said?

PACO:

Well, can I have my camera back?

DOLORES:

No.

PACO:

Are you gonna eat my tongue so that I can't scream? Are you gonna drown me in the river like you did with...?

DOLORES:

Ugh.

PACO:

Then what's the deal? Give me back my camera!

DOLORES:

What's your name *muchacho*?

PACO:

(Hesitant)

My name is Paco.

DOLORES:

Sit down Paco. I wanna talk to you.

(PACO sits down.)

DOLORES:

Do you know who I am?

PACO:

You're... La Llorona... right?

DOLORES:

Right. Does that sound like a real name to you?

PACO:

...I mean, that's what everyone calls you.

DOLORES:

My name is Maria de Dolores Fuentes. It used to be longer when I was married, but I decided to only keep my maiden name in the afterlife. Now, Llorona. It's a great song, but a terrible name for me. I don't like it at all. I never cried as a little girl, and I never cried as a married woman. That is until the day that I found out my ex husband cheated on me. But that was cut short, and now I cannot cry even if I wanted to.

PACO:

Do you normally trauma dump this hard?

DOLORES:

Hush! What do people say about me, Paco?

PACO:

Well, they say that you killed your husband, and that you drowned your two children, and that you kill people, and that you steal children, and that you're ugly, and that you...

DOLORES:

Alright, alright. I get it. I get it. Now, do you believe them?

PACO:

I... I don't know. ...Should I?

DOLORES:

No. Not at all. Listen to me, Paco. Everything you've heard about me is a lie. I didn't kill anyone. I never had any children. My marriage ended as quickly as it started. I was murdered. I am innocent and I need you to help me prove it.

PACO:

You didn't kill your children?

DOLORES:

No. I was trying to save them. Everything you've heard is a lie from my ex husband to cover up for himself. I can prove it. And that's where I need your help.

PACO:

Wait. My help? Why do you need my help?

DOLORES:

I am a ghost, you see? There are things that only a human can do. I have tried for 150 years to get someone to talk to me, and you're the only one who has stopped to listen.

PACO:

Well you really should work on your social skills...

DOLORES:

Zip it! I am innocent! And I can prove it, but I need your help.

PACO:

And why should I help you? How do I know you're not gonna hurt me?

DOLORES:

Paco, I have your camera. I heard you muttering to yourself that you want to be famous on the TubeTube, right? You want to record ghosts and things of the sort. But I have your camera. If you want your camera back, you will have to help me. If you help me I can scream for you. I can look as scary as you want me to. I can even help you scare away anyone who bothers you. But only if you help me.

PACO:

(Hesitant)

Oh. Alright, then.

DOLORES:

(Delighted)

Really?! You will help me?

PACO:

I guess so.

DOLORES:

Oh! Thank you!!! Thank you, Paco!

(Dolores goes for a hug, but since she is a ghost, she goes right through Paco. As she goes for the hug, Paco screams. When he finds out it was just a hug he is embarrassed.)

PACO:

So... what is it that you need?

DOLORES:

OK. I have a plan. I will tell you. But first we need to go into town. I will tell you everything along the way.

PACO:

Into town?! Oh! I'm being blackmailed by a ghost!

DOLORES:

EEK! I'm so excited!

(END OF SCENE)

ACT I
Scene 2

SETTING: The outskirts of town. We see a Mexican town gate with candles either resting on the ledges of windows, or on the ground.

AT RISE: **DON JAVI** enters. He looks like a campesino, wearing a straw hat. He is lighting up candles on the windows. A woman appears and greets him cheerfully.

TOWNSWOMAN:

Buenas noches, Don Javi!

DON JAVI:

Buenas Noches, Doña!

(The Townswoman exits. A man enters.)

TOWNSMAN:

Don Javi! Are you almost done for the day?

DON JAVI:

Don! Just a few more candles and I'll be done. Have a good night!

TOWNSMAN:

Good night to you too!

(The Townsman exits. A man and a woman enter. These are Paco's parents.)

PACO'S MOM:

Buenas noches, Don Javi.

DON JAVI:

Buenas noches, doña. Don. What is the matter?

PACO'S MOM:

Have you seen Paco? He hasn't been home yet and it's late.

DON JAVI:

I have not seen him. Do you suspect that something happened?

PACO'S DAD:

We had an argument with him at dinner time. He left the house without eating anything. He left with his camera and he said he was going to the river to catch... La Llorona.

PACO'S MOM:

And on a school night!

PACO'S DAD:

He's never done this before.

PACO'S MOM:

Ay, my poor baby. We shouldn't have been so harsh with him.

DON JAVI:

Don't worry. I will keep an eye out. I'm sure he is just fine. If I see him I will send him straight home. If you need anything you know where to find me.

PACO'S DAD:

Thank you, Don Javi. Good night.

(Paco's parents exit. Don Javi is left alone lighting some more candles when the Two Men who were out in the fields come in hooting and hollering.)

MAN 1:

Don Javi! La Llorona! She's out there!

DON JAVI:

What are you saying?

MAN 2:

La Llorona! We heard her!

MAN 1:

She's coming to get us!

TWO MEN:

Run for your lives!

(The Two Men exit. Don Javi is left confused and then he exits. Paco and Dolores enter.)

PACO:

Mrs. Llorona.

DOLORES:

Please, call me Dolores.

PACO:

OK. Mrs. Llorona. I mean, Dolores. So all we need to do is go and find this journal of the eye witness who saw what happened?

DOLORES:

Yes.

PACO:

And you are sure this journal is in the town?

DOLORES:

Yes.

PACO:

OK. Where do we need to go?

DOLORES:

Well, it's sort of buried.

PACO:

Buried?

DOLORES:

Yes.

PACO:

Buried, like in a treasure chest?

DOLORES:

Sort of.

PACO:

What do you mean?

DOLORES:

Well it's... it's in the eye witness' coffin.

PACO:

In the co-... You want me to go and dig out Mr. Thomas's body?

DOLORES:

Yes.

PACO:

I can't believe this! I can't believe this is happening! What is so important about this journal anyway? How can you be so sure that this is going to make everything right?

DOLORES:

Mr. Thomas saw everything that happened that night.

PACO:

How do you know?

DOLORES:

I know he did because right after I died I became a ghost, and I saw him standing there with the stupid "I don't know what to do" kind of face. Then he ran away. So I followed him to his house. And I watched as my ex husband threatened to kill him if he ever opened his mouth about it. Mr. Thomas wrote it all in his journal that night. That journal is the very same one that he requested to be buried with. Believe me Paco, this journal is the only hope that I have to make things right.

PACO:

So, that means your husband framed you.

DOLORES:

He put me in a painting? I hate just the thought of that!

PACO:

No! Framing. It means that he made up a story to make you look bad.

DOLORES:

Yes! Exactly.

PACO:

Hmph. Well, that's a good reason for justice. Let's go get that journal then.

DOLORES:

Thank you Paco. Now. First, you see those charms that Don Javi lit up? These charms actually work. It feels like a wall for me. I can't go past them. I need you to turn them off and create a path for me.

PACO:

All the way to the cemetery?

DOLORES:

Yes. All the way to Mr. Thomas' tomb.

(Paco then sneakily starts turning off the candles on the floor and the window ledges. As he is turning off the candles Don Javi enters and finds him doing this. Meanwhile, Dolores is hiding.)

DON JAVI:

Paco! *Que haces, muchacho?* What are you doing turning off those candles?

PACO:

Eh? Um. Nothing.

DON JAVI:

Are you alright, son?

PACO:

Yup! Just, uh, trying to prevent wildfires.

DON JAVI:

Wildfires, huh?

PACO:

Yes! There hasn't been much rain lately, so... it's important to keep things safe.

DON JAVI:

Right. Do I look like a dummy to you?

PACO:

No sir. It's only that if we leave the candles on all night one of the houses could catch on fire!

DON JAVI:

These candles are ghost charms to protect the people from La Llorona and other ghosts. If you turn these off it opens the door for the ghosts to come into the town. That's not going to happen under my watch. I heard you talking with someone earlier. Who else is with you?

PACO:

No one! There's no one else, just me, Paco.

DON JAVI:

I know who you are, Paco. Your parents are looking for you and they are worried. You should go home. I don't know what you're up to, but you better not be doing something stupid.

PACO:

Stupid? Nothing stupid! Just me, trying to prevent wildfires.

DON JAVI:

Get out of here! Go home!

(Paco then pretends to go away. He hides and then waits for Don Javi to exit so that he can resume turning off candles and making a path to the cemetery. Dolores follows and they both exit the stage.)

(END OF SCENE)

ACT I
Scene 3

SETTING: The Town Cemetery. A typical Mexican cemetery with lots of ornate tombstones and mementos. In the middle we have Mr. Thomas' grave. Maybe it reads something like "*Aqui descansa el alma del Señor Tomas Rivera.*"

AT RISE: Paco and Dolores make it to Mr. Tomas's grave. Paco is carrying a shovel and he looks tired.

DOLORES:

Aha! There it is!

PACO:

Finally!

DOLORES:

What? You're the one who forgot the shovel.

PACO:

I didn't think about needing a shovel. This isn't the kind of thing that I do on a school night.

DOLORES:

Well the longer you stand there the longer this is going to take.

PACO:

Are you going to help me?

DOLORES:

I'm afraid I'm already using all my ghost energy to hold your camera. I cannot pick up any other objects.

PACO:

How convenient.

DOLORES:

Don't you worry, Paco. As soon as we have that journal and the townspeople know the truth, I will leave you alone. So, start digging.

PACO:

Oh. Come on.

(Paco begins digging and Dolores sits nearby on a tombstone. After a few seconds Paco breaks the ice.)

PACO:

Mrs. Llorona.

DOLORES:

Call me Dolores, please.

PACO:

OK. Mrs. Llorona. I mean, Dolores, I have a question for you.

DOLORES:

Yes?

(Paco continues to dig while this conversation happens. As they are talking, Don Javi appears. He's trying to figure out what Paco is up to, grave digging in the middle of the night. He sees the lady in white robes and reacts. Then he disappears. Paco continues digging.)

PACO:

Are there... are there... gulp... other ghosts?

DOLORES:

Oh, Yes. There's lots of us. Everyone who is dead has the ability to wander around, but almost everyone chooses to sleep.

Why would you be awake when it's night time? I of course can't sleep. It's like insomnia but for dead people. You know when you wake up because you have this feeling that something is not right? That's how I feel every night.

PACO:

So why do you wail? Like, why do you make all those weird scary sounds?

DOLORES:

Ah. We don't have vocal cords, see? We kind of have to warm up before we can talk normally. So we all wail. It's the default way of ghosts.

PACO:

Ah, like a banshee!

DOLORES:

What's a banshee?

PACO:

You don't know what a banshee is? Didn't you ever play *Fable*?

DOLORES:

Play *Fable*? I wasn't much of a theatre girl. I only ever told and heard fables, no need to play them. Anyway, it also depends on the weather conditions, like fog, humidity, moonlight, etc. That's mostly why on a dark eerie night you are more likely to see and hear us.

PACO:

Ah. I see

(Suddenly Paco shovels out a skull.
Both he and DOLORES react to the flying skull.)

DOLORES:

Paco! That's it! That's the skull of Mr. Thomas. You are so close. Oh! We are so close to finding that journal! Quick! Keep digging.

(Paco keeps digging for a bit and then he stoops down to pick up a metal box. Paco slowly opens the box and pulls out a perfectly preserved journal. Then they flip through it until they find the date of Dolores' death.)

DOLORES:

Yes! This is it! Paco! You found it!

PACO:

Wow. So it is true.

DOLORES:

Paco. You found the record that will save me! Oh! Finally!

(Just then, Don Javi appears, and along with him is a crowd of townspeople including Paco's parents. Everyone is carrying candle charms that are not yet lit.)

DON JAVI:

Aha! Look! There he is! I told you before and now you see it with your own eyes. This boy is possessed! He has been taken over by the ghost of La Llorona and persuaded to go grave digging. And on a school night! Light your candles and let the power of the charms push this evil spirit out!

PACO:

No!

(The townspeople light their charms and DOLORES shrieks. She exits the scene, but she leaves the camera behind.)

PACO:

You don't understand!

DON JAVI:

You be quiet, boy! These Two Men told me that they saw you going out of the town right after they had seen her. You went out looking for her, didn't you? That's why you were turning off the candles. Whatever hex she placed on you to make you do these things. You brought this on yourself! Is this a spell book? Give me that! I'll get rid of this so that no more evil spirits can come and bother us!

(The Townspeople cheer!)

PACO:

No! This is not a spell book! That's Dolores's legacy.

DON JAVI:

Who the heck is Dolores?

PACO:

Please, you have to let me read it!

DON JAVI:

You are out of your mind boy! Go home to your parents!

(Paco feels defeated. He starts walking towards his parents and trips over his camera.)

PACO:

My camera!

(He picks it up, and continues walking, but then in a fit of determination he rushes back towards Don Javi and steals the journal out of his hands.)

PACO:

I have proof! I have proof that everything that I've said is true! I have my camera! I'm not possessed! I'm trying to help someone!

(Pointing to Don Javi)

You are selling charms to keep people safe from La Llorona, but La Llorona didn't do it! Maria de Dolores Fuentes is innocent

and I can prove it! This journal belonged to Mr. Tomas Rivera, and he was alive 150 years ago. Mr. Thomas saw everything and he wrote it down right here:

(PACO begins to read.)

"April 19th, 1879. I was outside of the town on an evening stroll by the river. Suddenly it started to rain. Heavy rain. I opened my umbrella and continued walking when I heard there was a commotion. The water in the river was already quite high and I saw a woman and two children struggling against the current. I followed along the edge of the bank and I saw on the opposite bank there was a horse drawn carriage following along as well. The woman seemed to be carrying the children with her and through her struggle she reached the shore of the far bank where she and the children were making every attempt to not be swept away. Slowly the woman and the children made it up the steep bank. Just then, through the light coming from the lamp hanging from the carriage, I saw the shape of a man approach the shore. I saw the man standing there watching the woman and the children. For a moment no one moved. Then a horrifying thing happened. I saw the man stoop down, the woman and the children fell, and in an instant they were swept away. Before I could so much as wink, the man had stood up and set his gaze firmly on me. I dropped my umbrella and made a dash for my house. Just before I could close the door it swung open. The man pushed me in and knocked me to the floor. He stood over me and shouted in a rage "You saw nothing Thomas! If you say anything to anyone about this matter then you too will join Dolores in the river." Just as quickly as he had come in he left. I knew who this man was and I knew two more things. The first, that I am greatly afraid for my life. But second, and most importantly, that Mrs. Maria de Dolores Diaz Fuentes was murdered, along with two children, by her husband Mr. Olivedo Diaz."

DON JAVI:

Wait. That's my great great grandfather.

(The Townspeople gasp!)

PACO:

I don't know who named her La Llorona, but Dolores is innocent. She didn't do anything wrong other than try to save those children. She just wanted to do things right.

(The town is silent as they realize they've been hating a hero for over a century. One by one the people start turning off their candles. When all the candles are off, Dolores appears. The people react, but Paco is not afraid. She approaches Paco.)

DOLORES:

Thank you, Paco.

END.