

**LuchaVirus**  
*(pronounced “Loo-cha-vee-roos”)*

**A One-Act Play**

By Mabelle Reynoso

In Collaboration with  
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## **Characters**

### **The Humans**

BENJAMIN (he/him), 19, agricultural worker

NANA (she/her), 73, Benjamin's grandmother

DR. JUAN (they/them), medical provider

### **The Objects**

CHANCLA\*\*

HAND SANITIZER\*\*\*

### **The Luchadores**

EL CRUEL CORONAVIRUS\*

LA CÉLULA SANA\*\*\*

LA VACUNA VALIENTE\*\*\*

\*To be played by actor playing BENJAMIN

\*\*To be played by actor playing NANA

\*\*\*To be played by actor playing DR. JUAN

## **Setting**

Present day; play begins in Benjamin and Nana's living room and eventually makes its way to the wrestling ring.

## SCENE 1 - THE HEART

*BENJAMIN and NANA's living room; afternoon. NANA is sitting in her recliner watching TV. Though we cannot see the TV, we definitely know NANA is watching Lucha Libre. She's really into it. She hears a car pull up. She hurriedly changes the channel to a telenovela and pretends she is asleep.*

*The front door opens and BENJAMIN enters. He sets his stuff down, washes his hands, and then goes to cover NANA with her blanket. She stirs. She opens one eye. BENJAMIN catches her.*

BENJAMIN

I knew it.

NANA

Ay mijo, ya llegaste.

BENJAMIN

Nana, you were not even sleeping.

NANA

Yes I was.

BENJAMIN

Did I hear wrestling on the TV?

NANA

No. I've been watching my telenovelas all day.

BENJAMIN

Oh yeah? Then what's happening in this one?

NANA

No sé. Me quedé dormida.

BENJAMIN

Oh did El Texican beat La Tormenta de Terror?

NANA

No, mijo. ¿Como crees? La Tormenta de Terror has not lost a match in six years.

BENJAMIN

A-ha! Busted. Nana, what did we say about lucha libre?

NANA

Ay mijo, I know I promised I wouldn't watch it but—

BENJAMIN

Nana, your heart. ¿Qué te dijo el doctor?

NANA

Que me cuidara. But this is my self-care.. Lucha libre brings me such joy.

BENJAMIN

I know you love it, Nana, but you get too worked up. Your heart can't handle the excitement. What happens when the day comes — because it will come — when La Tormenta de Terror finally loses?

NANA

Callate la boca — ni digas eso. (Maybe NANA does the sign of the cross.) La Tormenta de Terror is the greatest athlete to ever live.

BENJAMIN

Nana, he's a wrestler.

NANA

He's a *luchador*.

BENJAMIN

Okay.

NANA

I am a seventy-three-year-old woman. In this long lifetime, I have only truly loved two men. Tu abuelito, que en paz descansa. (Maybe another sign of the cross.) And La Tormenta de Terror.

*NANA pulls out a framed picture of La Tormenta de Terror.*

BENJAMIN

Ay no, Nana.

NANA

I'm sorry, mijo. But it's true. If La Tormenta were to knock on my doorstep and say, "Mayra, come with me. Let us run away together," you know what I would do?

BENJAMIN

You would say, "No thank you. I'm perfectly happy living here in Washington with my favorite grandson, Benjamin."

NANA

You are my only grandson. Pero no, mijo. Eres mi consentido, but I'm in love!

BENJAMIN

Nana, I cannot believe you. You would seriously leave me?

NANA

The heart wants what the heart wants.

BENJAMIN

Ay Nana. You better stay off the internet. I don't want you telling this guy where we live. Then I'll be all alone here.

NANA

And then you can really begin your life. You won't have to take care of this pobre viejita.

BENJAMIN

No digas eso, Nana. Anyway, I don't take care of you. We're roommates.

NANA

Sí, como no.

*NANA starts to cough.*

BENJAMIN

Are you okay? You want me to make you some tea?

NANA

No, I'm fine. Oye mijo, I spoke to Dr. Juan today.

BENJAMIN

Why? Were you feeling sick?

NANA

No, they called me.

BENJAMIN

Why? Did they say you needed an appointment?

NANA

They're worried about me.

BENJAMIN

Do they need to run more tests? Is there something else going on with your heart?

NANA

No, mijo. Dr. Juan is worried about me because of you.

BENJAMIN

Me?

NANA

Benjamin, me pregunto si ya te habías puesto la vacuna.

BENJAMIN

That is none of their business.

NANA

You know how Dr. Juan is. They're kind and nice but when their patients don't listen, pues tu sabes como se pone.

BENJAMIN

I'm not their patient.

NANA

Benjamin, Dr. Juan says la coronavirus es algo serio. Que la gente se está muriendo.

BENJAMIN

I'm not going to catch it, Nana. I'm super careful. I wear a mask. I'm always washing my hands. Check out my bottle of hand sanitizer.

*BENJAMIN reveals a giant bottle of hand sanitizer.*

NANA

I think you should get vaccinated.

BENJAMIN

Nana, I'm tired. I've been working all day. I don't want to talk about this.

NANA

Pero mijo, escucha.

BENJAMIN

I'm gonna go take a shower. Please, Nana. No Covid talk. I hear about it all day at work. I'm sick of it. After I take my shower I'll come out and watch lucha libre with you *if* you promise to not get too worked up.

NANA

I promise.

BENJAMIN

Okay. Maybe you can show me what all the fuss is about with La Tormenta de Terror. In the meantime, can you please try to take a little nap?

NANA

I will, mijo.

*BENJAMIN gives NANA a kiss on the forehead and exits. NANA watches him go and coughs.*

## SCENE 2 - THE RECLINER

*Later. The recliner is empty. The blanket is neatly folded. BENJAMIN enters, freshly showered.*

BENJAMIN

Nana, where did you go?

*BENJAMIN takes a peek, offstage.*

BENJAMIN

Oh good, she made it to her bed. (beat) That means I get to sit in her chair! I never get to sit in her chair. (BENJAMIN gets comfy in the recliner.) No wonder Nana sits here all day. This is the most comfortable chair in the world. I could just fall asleep here.

*BENJAMIN begins to doze off. He snores, first softly, then a little louder. HAND SANITIZER emerges next to him.*

HAND SANITIZER

Hey! Hey, Benjamin! Wake up! I need you to help me. Come on man! Wake up.

*HAND SANITIZER nudges BENJAMIN. A few times gently. Then harder to really get results. BENJAMIN wakes up.*

BENJAMIN

¿Qué pasa? ¿Qué pasa?

HAND SANITIZER

Hey, a little help.

BENJAMIN

With what?

HAND SANITIZER

Can you please turn the TV on? The fight's about to start.

BENJAMIN

You woke me up for that? Man, I'm tired. I've been harvesting brussel sprouts all day.

HAND SANITIZER

Please. I gotta watch the fight. It's gonna be a good one.

BENJAMIN

Who's fighting?

HAND SANITIZER

La Valiente is going on tonight. Taking on the champ.

BENJAMIN

I don't know La Valiente.

HAND SANITIZER

La Vacuna Valiente! They're kind of new on the scene but they don't mess around. It should be a good fight.

BENJAMIN

You're joking, right? A vacuna? No way a vaccine can beat the champ.

HAND SANITIZER

I heard the champ was nervous. I heard they were scared.

BENJAMIN

Scared? La Valiente is not even a worthy opponent. There's nothing to be scared about.

*CHANCLA emerges.*

CHANCLA

That's funny coming from you.

BENJAMIN

What's that supposed to mean?

CHANCLA

I heard you were pretty scared of vacunas.

BENJAMIN

I'm not scared of vaccines.

CHANCLA

That's not what your Nana said.

BENJAMIN

What did she say?

CHANCLA

She said you didn't want to get the vaccine because of all sorts of things. Like it'll implant a microchip, or make you magnetic, or infect you with Covid-19.

HAND SANITIZER

Benjamin, you really think that?

BENJAMIN

People are saying all kinds of stuff. And let me tell you something. I don't want to be microchipped.

HAND SANITIZER

Not possible.

BENJAMIN

I definitely don't want to be magnetic.

HAND SANITIZER

Not gonna happen.

BENJAMIN

And I absolutely, most definitely, cannot get sick with Covid-19. I have to work. And more importantly, I have to take care of my Nana. If anything happens to me, she won't have anybody to look out for her.

CHANCLA

You know without the vaccine it's easier for you to get it, right? The virus?

BENJAMIN

I'm not gonna get it. I'm careful. (to HAND SANITIZER) I have you.

HAND SANITIZER

Thank you, I'm flattered. But I'm not enough.

CHANCLA

Hand sanitizer and a mask are a good start, but they're just a start. You could still get it.

BENJAMIN

I'm young. I'm healthy.

CHANCLA

But your Nana isn't. And it's a virus. So you could get it, not even know you have it, and then give it to her.

HAND SANITIZER

You're putting your Nana at risk.

BENJAMIN

Oh you two are so dramatic.

CHANCLA

What's it going to take for you to get the vaccine? What kind of proof do you need? You need science? We'll give you science.

HAND SANITIZER

The vaccines can lower your chances of getting COVID-19. And if you do get it, the vaccine can reduce your chances of getting severely sick, avoiding hospitalization or, worse—

BENJAMIN

Yeah, yeah, whatever. *Show* me proof.

CHANCLA

Actual proof?

HAND SANITIZER

You want to see proof?

BENJAMIN

Yeah. You show me proof that the vaccine can fight off the virus and then I'll *think* about getting vaccinated.

HAND SANITIZER

You will?

CHANCLA

Do you promise?

BENJAMIN

Yeah. I promise.

CHANCLA

Well, it's your lucky day. Turn on the TV. We've got a lucha to watch.

BENJAMIN

Right now?

CHANCLA

Right now.

BENJAMIN

Fine.

*BENJAMIN points the remote at the TV.*

## HAND SANITIZER

This is gonna be great.

*Lights down.*

### SCENE 3 - THE RING

*Lucha Libre scene. DR. JUAN is in the ring, microphone in hand. They wear a lab coat over a referee jersey.*

DR. JUAN

Bienvenidos, todos, a la LuchaVirus! My name is Dr. Juan and I will be your announcer, referee, and epidemiologist for this exciting match. Tonight's highly anticipated lucha is for the most coveted prize: Life.

*The crowd goes wild.*

DR. JUAN cont.

Tonight's match features the reigning champion of LuchaVirus. Ruthless. Heartless. Deadly. El Cruel Coronavirus!

*EL CRUEL emerges. The crowd boos. EL CRUEL eats it all up.*

EL CRUEL

I'm coming for you. I'm coming for all of you. (points to the audience). You and you and you and you! I'm taking all of you down!

DR. JUAN

And taking him on tonight, coming straight from a healthy human body, eager to do battle, for you, for me, for all of humanity, La Célula Sana!

*LA CÉLULA SANA emerges. The crowd cheers. LA CÉLULA SANA enjoys the attention, losing focus. Before LA CÉLULA can get their bearings, EL CRUEL is already making moves. DR. JUAN almost gets knocked out as a bystander so they drop their mic and take off. EL CRUEL is laying down the hurt on LA CÉLULA. It's brutal. LA CÉLULA SANA runs out of the ring, coughing. EL CRUEL picks up the mic.*

EL CRUEL

Is this some kind of joke? La Célula Sana is no match for me. And La Célula Sana is from a healthy human body. You should see what I do to the cells from the bodies with preexisting conditions. Nevermind what I can do to viejitos! Dr. Juan put it best. I am Ruthless. Heartless. Deadly. (maniacal laughter)

*The crowd boos. EL CRUEL is fueled by the negative energy, so they aren't paying attention when LA VALIENTE jumps in the ring. The crowd goes wild again, chanting "Vacuna! Vacuna! Vacuna!" Acrobatics and good solid wrestling lead LA VALIENTE to victory. DR. JUAN re-enters, picking up the mic as EL CRUEL exits, defeated.*

DR. JUAN

Hopelessness no more! In a stunning upset, the vacuna has thwarted the virus! La Valiente, what do you want to say to the people?

LA VALIENTE

It was a tough battle. I know I had doubters out there. But I fought El Cruel, and I won. Victory for La Vacuna!

The crowd cheers.

LA VALIENTE

Dr. Juan, how is La Célula Sana doing?

DR. JUAN

They're a little battered and bruised, but they'll make it through. They were vaccinated.

LA VALIENTE

You mean to say I saved a life tonight?

DR. JUAN

You better believe it, La Valiente. For all those watching and wondering, with La Vacuna's help, La Célula Sana will live to fight another day. You know why? Because La Vacuna saves lives!

*LA VACUNA takes a victory lap. The crowd goes wild.*

*Lights down.*

#### **SCENE 4 - THE DEBRIEF**

*Back in the living room.*

BENJAMIN

That was unbelievable. Did you see those moves? I've never seen anything like it. La Valiente was on fire.

HAND SANITIZER

I know, but I feel bad for La Célula Sana.

BENJAMIN

Yeah. La Célula took a big beating. And they came from a healthy body. (beat) Did you hear what El Cruel said about those with preexisting conditions and viejitos?

HAND SANITIZER

Man, the name fits. Coronavirus is really cruel.

BENJAMIN

I can't imagine what El Cruel would do to my Nana's cells.

*A moment.*

CHANCLA

Fortunately, La Valiente came to the rescue. La Célula will be okay.

HAND SANITIZER

I knew La Valiente would be victorious. I just knew it!

CHANCLA

La Valiente really showed El Cruel who's boss. (beat) So what's it gonna be, Benjamin? Now you've *seen* the proof.

BENJAMIN

I promised I would *think* about it. So I'm thinking about it.

## SCENE 5 - THE DEBATE

A spotlight on BENJAMIN, alone on stage.

BENJAMIN

I'm not gonna lie. I'm scared. Of this virus. Of not being able to work. Of needles. Of dying instantly. What if the shot kills me right on the spot? Dr. Juan says it won't, but you never know. But I'm walking around terrified. Every time someone coughs at the grocery store or the gas station, it freaks me out, but what can I do? (beat) I cannot risk getting sick. I cannot risk getting Nana sick. If anything happens to Nana because of me — I can't even think about it. (a moment) Dr. Juan has always taken good care of Nana, and me. They say I should get the vaccine, because it'll protect Nana, and me. But I don't know. I just don't know.

## SCENE 6 - THE VERDICT

*BENJAMIN is asleep on the recliner. NANA enters.*

NANA

Mijo, wake up. Mijo, I love you but you're in my chair.

*BENJAMIN wakes up.*

NANA

Good morning, Sleepy Head.

*NANA starts to cough.*

BENJAMIN

Hey, what's wrong? Are you feeling sick?

NANA

No, mijo. It's just my allergies. You know how I get in the mornings.

BENJAMIN

Nana, do you really think I should get the vaccine?

NANA

Yes, mijo.

BENJAMIN

I'm scared.

NANA

That's okay. That just means you're human.

BENJAMIN

Aren't *you* scared?

NANA

Claro. But I believe in science. I believe in the people that are helping me stay healthy. I believe in Dr. Juan, even if they are trying to restrict my *lucha libre*.

*NANA coughs.*

BENJAMIN

We should call Dr. Juan.

NANA

Te digo que son mis alergias.

BENJAMIN

I know. But we should still call Dr. Juan.

NANA

Why?

BENJAMIN

Nana. I had the weirdest dream. I made a deal with your chancla.

NANA

Huh. Are you feeling okay?

*BENJAMIN stands up.*

BENJAMIN

I'm gonna go take care of something real quick. And then I'll stop by the store and get some pan dulce.

NANA

¿Que te pasa, mijo?

BENJAMIN

I'm gonna go get vaccinated, Nana. Call Dr. Juan and tell them so they don't keep bugging you about it.

NANA

¿Y eso?

BENJAMIN

Blame it on the luchadores, Nana.

NANA

No entiendo nada, but I don't care. I'm so happy, mijo. You're making the right decision.

*NANA hugs BENJAMIN.*

BENJAMIN

And I'm going to buy you some new chancas because now I just have this weird thing with your old ones. I'll be back in a bit. We can watch Lucha Virus — I mean lucha libre together. If you promise to not get worked up.

*One final hug.*

END OF PLAY