

FELIZ ANIVERSARIO

written by

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EXT. MALA SUERTE PUEBLO - DAY

Mala Suerte - bad luck in Spanish - is the small, fictional Mexican town where our protagonists live. We see a series of establishing shots - a sign saying *Welcome to Mala Suerte*, kids playing soccer in the street, etc. Then we come up on the exterior of the house of our protagonists.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

CARMEN, late 50s/early 60s, sneaks out of bed, where her husband ALBERTO, late 50s/early 60s, is sleeping. She quietly gets ready to leave the house.

As Carmen is getting ready, we see that she's definitely a girly girl. She puts on red lipstick, gold necklaces, a fancy red outfit, and slings a beat-up red purse over her shoulder. She slips into her flats and leaves the house.

EXT. PUEBLO STREET - DAY

Carmen leaves the house and makes the brief walk down cobblestone streets into town. She walks past old women chatting together on their porches.

OLD WOMAN
Buen dia, Carmen!

CARMEN
Good morning, my loves!

She continues down the street past young boys roughly ages 8 through 14 playing soccer in the street.

BOY
Miss Carmen, look!

A younger boy kicks the ball up in the air and juggles it for a few seconds before dropping it. Some of his friends laugh at him.

CARMEN
That's incredible! Keep up the good work.

EXT. PASTRY SHOP - DAY

She approaches her favorite daily breakfast spot for a quick pastry.

PASTRY SHOP OWNER
Morning, Miss Carmen! Only five minutes more until the empanadas are ready.

CARMEN
You know what, I'm feeling special. Let's try something new today.
(whispering)
It's my anniversary...

PASTRY SHOP OWNER
How could I forget? Happy anniversary! Here.

He grabs her a special pastry.

PASTRY SHOP OWNER (CONT'D)
It's on me.

CARMEN
Oh, God bless you.

PASTRY SHOP OWNER
Have a blessed day. Tell Alberto I say hello!

Carmen waves *adios* and continues on her way.

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE - DAY

Carmen enters the electronics store and greets the clerk, FERNANDO, 19. Fernando is sitting behind a glass case, with an assortment of gadgets on the wall behind him. He's scrolling on his phone.

CARMEN
Good morning, Fernando. How is your mom?

Fernando looks up from his phone and then sets it down.

FERNANDO
(flatly)
She's good.

CARMEN
(smiling)
Que bueno, que bueno. You wouldn't happen to know what day it is, would you?

FERNANDO
Uh... Wednesday?

CARMEN
(laughing)
No, *chico*!
(whispers)
It's my anniversary.

FERNANDO
Oh...

CARMEN
(flamboyantly)
Fourty-four years! Thank you God!

FERNANDO
Congratulations.

Carmen smiles, waiting for Fernando to say more.

FERNANDO (CONT'D)
So... how can I help you?

CARMEN
Well... you know how much Alberto
loves his football. You love
football too, no?

FERNANDO
Mhm.

CARMEN
Well, anyway. He loves his
football. But the problem is,
Fernando... we've had the same TV
since two years together. Very old.
Just like a small cube, very small.
So I say, it's time to see
Fernando.
(lowers voice)
Fernando, I need the biggest flat
screen TV you have.

FERNANDO
Okay.

Fernando disappears to the back of the store for a moment.
Carmen waits impatiently at the front. Fernando returns with
a large box on a cart. He steps back behind the glass case,
scans the box, and glances at his computer screen.

FERNANDO (CONT'D)
(sighs)
That's ten thousand pesos.

Carmen laughs in disbelief.

CARMEN
(jokingly)
Ten thousand pesos. How much do
they pay you, huh? You must be a
millionaire.

Carmen laughs dryly. Fernando looks at her. He's not joking.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
But Fernando, it's- it's my
anniversary...

FERNANDO
I don't decide the price.

CARMEN
(lowers voice)
I have only eight.

FERNANDO
I have a smaller size in the back-

Fernando starts toward the back again.

CARMEN
No!

Fernando freezes and looks at her.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Okay... Today I give you eight. And
tomorrow I bring you two more,
okay? We have cash in the house.
Ten thousand, okay?

FERNANDO
(sighs)
Miss Carmen...

CARMEN
Okay, tomorrow I bring three! Three
thousand, tomorrow. Please. I just
want today to be special.

Fernando hesitates.

FERNANDO
Four.

CARMEN

What?

FERNANDO

Four thousand. Tomorrow.

A beat. Carmen celebrates silently.

CARMEN

Thank you! Thank you so much!

FERNANDO

Eight thousand today. *Four* thousand tomorrow.

CARMEN

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Carmen opens her purse and hands him her card.

EXT. ELECTRONICS STORE - DAY

Carmen drags the large, heavy box out of the doors of the electronics shop. The boys are still playing soccer in the street. They notice her struggling to lug the box. They stop what they're doing and run up to her.

YOUNG BOY 2

Here, Miss Carmen. Let us help you.

Several of the older boys from the group hoist the box together and walk with Carmen to her house.

INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

It's later in the day, just before sunset. Their living space is a bit congested, but it's home. The TV box sits in the living room, fully wrapped.

Carmen is in the kitchen, cooking something on the stove. Her head spins excitedly toward the door when she hears the lock click.

In walks Carmen's husband, Alberto, wearing a dress shirt and slacks. He looks like he's just come home from work. In his hands are a briefcase and a medium sized gift bag. Carmen's face lights up when she sees him.

ALBERTO

Happy anniversary, my love.

Carmen jumps up to greet him at the door. She gives him a big hug. He drops his briefcase and the gift bag on the floor.

CARMEN
(joyfully)
Happy anniversary, *mi amor*. Welcome home! How was work?

She picks up his briefcase and the gift bag and lifts them from the front door to the dining table.

ALBERTO
Ah... work was work. Don't worry about it, my love.

Alberto sits down at the dining table. Carmen returns to the kitchen to finish cooking.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)
What's for dinner?

CARMEN
Your favorite! Steak and rice.

ALBERTO
Sounds delicious.

Carmen twists the stove off.

CARMEN
Before that...

She strides over to the living room and drags the big box into the dining room.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Let's open your gift!

Alberto's mouth hangs open. He can't believe the size of it.

ALBERTO
Carmen... What's all this?

CARMEN
Open it.

Alberto is still in shock, but he reaches to tear off the wrapping paper. He doesn't have to take it all off to know what it is.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
I know you say you can't see your football on our old TV, so...

ALBERTO

Carmen... I can't believe it! This
is the best gift ever, thank you!

Alberto gives Carmen a hug.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

Okay.

Alberto reaches for the gift bag on the table and pushes it
toward Carmen.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

For you.

Carmen gushes silently and then pulls out the stuffing paper
from the gift bag. Her jaw drops as well. She slowly pulls
out a brand-new, red designer bag.

ALBERTO (CONT'D)

Now you can get rid of that old
thing from the seventies.

Carmen hugs Alberto again.

CARMEN

Alberto! I love it! I love it so
much!

Alberto laughs.

ALBERTO

(lovingly)

Alright, that's enough. I'm
starving!

CARMEN

Oh! That's right, the steak!

Carmen speedwalks back into the kitchen. We stay in the
dining room. Alberto is still beaming at his gift.

ALBERTO

(to himself)

This is amazing.

(to Carmen)

How much did this cost?

CARMEN

Ah, don't worry about! We had just
enough. I just have to see Fernando
again tomorrow with the rest and
it's all paid for.

We see the wheels in Alberto's mind turning.

ALBERTO

The rest?

CARMEN

Yes! Do you remember where we keep
the cash? I know it's around here
somewhere.

Alberto stands up and walks into the kitchen. His mood has
shifted- he looks very serious now.

ALBERTO

Carmen... how much did you spend on
the TV?

Carmen looks at Alberto and recognizes his tone.

CARMEN

Just... the rest of the savings.
But we have our cash, no?

Alberto starts pacing slowly.

ALBERTO

Oh no... no, no, no...

CARMEN

My dear, what is it?

A beat.

ALBERTO

I spent it.

Another beat.

CARMEN

Spent... what?

ALBERTO

The cash. I spent it for the bag.
For you. For our anniversary.

CARMEN

Oh...

ALBERTO

And I promised Chiquita I would
come back tomorrow to pay the rest.
With the money from the savings...

Carmen leans against the counter and looks off pensively.

CARMEN

My love? What are we going to do?

They both stand in the kitchen, thinking. After a moment, Alberto steps toward Carmen and looks her in the eyes.

ALBERTO

(sadly)

Amor... I think we only have one option...

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

It's the next day, around the same time: right before sunset. The kids are playing in the street again, but there are fewer of them. One gets called inside for dinner. Down the street charges Fernando. He's clearly angry.

He storms up to Carmen and Alberto's house and knocks on the front door.

FERNANDO

Carmen!!!

He waits for a response, and then knocks again.

FERNANDO (CONT'D)

Carmen! Alberto!

OLD WOMAN (O.S.)

Not home.

Fernando spins around to see one of the old women from the front porch hobbling past the home with her walker. She stops for a moment and looks at him.

FERNANDO

What do you mean not home?

The old woman shrugs.

OLD WOMAN

Not home.

She goes on about her day, shuffling slowly down the street past the house. Fernando looks off in angry disbelief.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SUNSET

Cars drive up and down a one-lane highway. On either side of the highway is barren land. We see a sign that says, *You are now leaving Mala Suerte.*

Heaving a giant box on his back and carrying a little red designer purse on her shoulder, Alberto and Carmen walk past the sign. They are leaving Mala Suerte, walking off into the sunset.