

A GOOD BOY
the musical

Book and Lyrics by Lynden Harris
Music by AJ Layague and Marc Callahan

Contact:
Lynden Harris
lharris@hiddenvoices.org
919.259.5527

"We are all broken by something."

Bryan Stevenson

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Welcome to Crossroads Correctional, where the prisoner count hasn't cleared, families are stuck in the waiting room, and a ticking clock literally hangs on the wall.

As tensions mount, the captive visitors and lone guard struggle with their individual secrets, personal missions, and the previous night's execution, but the situation is out of their control.

Until, in the end, it isn't.

Based on years of workshops on death row, conversations with family members, and trainings with correctional officers, A GOOD BOY brings centerstage the most hidden among us: men living on death row, the families who love them, and the officers who work alongside. The characters are fictional, but all the stories they tell are true.

CHARACTERS
3 women/2 men

MARY, 50s, Multiracial. From Louisiana. Mother of a man on death row. Mezzo.

BULLOCK, 30s-50s, White. From Oklahoma. Correctional Officer (CO). Baritone.

YOLANDA, 40s, Dominican American. From NYC. Mother of a man on death row. This is her first visit. Mezzo.

BRADLEY, late 20s, African American. From California. Nephew of a man on death row. This is his first visit. Bari-tenor.

HEATHER, late 30s, White. From the Mid and Southwest. Sister of a man executed the previous evening. Soprano.

SETTING

The waiting area at Crossroads Correctional, a close-custody prison in the Midwest.

A counter sits near the double entrance/exit door. A section of the counter flips up to allow access for Correctional Officers. At one end of the counter, gray plastic buckets are stacked near a tabletop X-ray machine. Mid-counter, there are binders, a visitor log, an old school black landline. At the other end of the counter, a walk-through metal detector.

On the prison side of the counter, there are seven or eight utilitarian chairs for those who have been screened and are waiting to be escorted into the prison's secure areas. The door has a glass panel.

Just past the interior door, out of sight of the audience, another Correctional Officer oversees the opening and closing of the door. Moveable stanchions delineate a path from these doors, past the counter, toward the exterior entrance/exit.

In the waiting room, all the surfaces are hard and reflective. In addition to the sound of pneumatic doors, a piercing tone accompanies the opening of every door in the prison. The intercom often interrupts with staticky orders. The sounds of the scanner, the X-ray machine, the phone, the walkie talkies all contribute to a world that feels cold and highly mechanized.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Since prison protocols vary widely, as do prison settings, these notes may prove helpful.

There are no cell phones or weapons allowed inside Crossroads Correctional. This policy applies to visitors, staff, and officers. No electronics of any kind are allowed, including cameras, tablets, recording devices.

Officer neckties are the clip-on type. Backpacks, food containers, etc. are clear plastic. Every officer wears an ID badge with photo, name, and rank.

Visitors have no physical contact with residents inside. Communication happens through a small vent in the plexiglass partition. Visitors may only bring a single car key, tissues, perhaps a photo.

SONG LISTING

ACT 1

P.1	"Welcome to the Crossroads"	Mary, Ensemble
P.2	"Welcome to the Crossroads(var.)"	Bullock, Ensemble
P.10	"Only Yesterday"	Yolanda
P.15	"Evidence"	Mary, Yolanda
P.24	"Face to Face"	Yolanda, Mary, Heather, Bradley
P.32	"The Devil Wore Lilly"	Bradley
P.37	"Don't Tell"	Heather, Ensemble
P.41	"Face to Face (reprise)"	Ensemble

ACT 2

P.43	"Waiting Game"	Ensemble
P.53	"Bite the Bullet"	Bullock & Ensemble
P.59	"Who's Your Daddy?"	Bradley & Bullock
P.69	"I'm Sorry, Thank You"	Heather
P.74	"You Have to Believe"	Mary & Yolanda
P.76	"A Little Mercy"	Ensemble

ACT 1

CROSSROADS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY.

EARLY AFTERNOON. THE ACTION HAPPENS IN REAL TIME.

MARY stands in the parking lot of Crossroads Correctional Facility. As she sings, MARY prepares to enter the prison. She removes her lanyard ID and cardigan, opens handbag, removes and pockets her drivers license, takes her car key off her key ring and pockets it, removes cellphone from that pocket and places it in her handbag. Finally, she puts a jacket over her scrubs, pats the jacket pockets, finds some peppermints, places them in her handbag. In another pocket she discovers a pen and tucks that in the handbag, as well. She opens handbag and removes a tissue, then a handful. By the time MARY finishes singing, she has only the jacket, her license, one key, and the tissues.

MARY

"WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS"

SO MUCH CAN HAPPEN IN A WEEK
IT'S HARD TO MEASURE ALL THE CHANGE
YOU LOOK AROUND FOR WHO YOU WERE
BUT NOTHING EVEN LOOKS THE SAME

WHO DECIDES WHEN TIME IS UP?
WHAT'S THE MEASURE OF A LIFE?
WHEN YOU GONNA PULL THE PLUG?
WHO IN HEAVEN HAS THE RIGHT?

WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS
WHAT TO KEEP AND WHAT LET GO
WHERE THIS LIFE IS TAKING YOU
THERE'S JUST NO WAY TO KNOW

SO MUCH CAN HAPPEN IN A DAY
A DAY, A NIGHT, AN HOUR
YOU NEVER KNOW JUST WHAT WILL COUNT
IT'S NOT WITHIN OUR POWER

SOME DECISIONS CAN'T BE CHANGED
THEY CHANGE ENTIRELY WHO YOU ARE
ONCE THEY'RE MADE, THAT WORLD IS GONE
THE WORLD, THE LIFE YOU KNEW BEFORE

WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS
WHAT TO KEEP AND WHAT LET GO
WHERE THIS LIFE IS TAKING YOU
THERE'S JUST NO WAY TO KNOW.
LORD KNOWS I DO NOT KNOW

MARY AND YOLANDA
LORD KNOWS I DO NOT KNOW

MARY, YOLANDA, BRADLEY
LORD KNOWS I DO NOT KNOW

MARY, YOLANDA, HEATHER, BRADLEY
LORD KNOWS I DO NOT KNOW

MARY
HOW CAN YOU EVER KNOW?

Lights up on BULLOCK, who stands in the center of the enclosed counter, phone to his ear. He is on hold. Above his head, a sign says Crossroads Correctional Institution. A clock hangs on the wall. As he sings, he surreptitiously packs items into his clear plastic backpack, unclips then reattaches his tie, checks the wall clock against his watch, looks out the door for his replacement, fiddles with his badge, at some point hangs up. He is not used to working reception and he was ready to leave yesterday. Literally.

BULLOCK
"WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS" (VAR)
WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS, OVERTIME IS NOT A CHOICE
(hangs up phone)
WORK YOUR TWELVE WITHOUT A BREAK, BABYSITTING ALL THE NUTS
STUCK AWAY IN NODAMNWHERE, MILES FROM ANY KIND OF LIFE
THAT'S THE POINT, HIDE THE PLACE, KEEP IT OUT OF SIGHT

WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS!
NO RESPECT AND SHITTY PAY.
LOSE YOUR LIFE OR LOSE YOUR MIND
YOU CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO STAY.

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 1
CELL COUNT

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 2
TRANSPORT

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 3
TOILET PAPER FOR CELL NINE

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 2
STRIP SEARCH

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 1
CELL COUNT

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 3
TOILET PAPER FOR CELL FIVE

BULLOCK
OUTSIDE REC AN HOUR EACH DAY,
SHACKLED IN A CAGE, SHACKLES IN A--

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 2
STRIP SEARCH

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE 1
CELL COUNT

BULLOCK
THIS IS HOW YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS

GETTING GASSED IS PLAYTIME HERE AND I AIN'T TALKING MACE
BUT FECES, PISS, AND OTHER SHIT, THROWN INTO YOUR FACE
IF YOU'RE INSIDE, YOU'RE DOING TIME, BOTH SIDES OF THE BARS
I USED TO THINK IRAQ WAS BAD, BUT CROSSROADS IS THE WAR

WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS,
NO RESPECT AND SHITTY PAY.
LOSE YOUR LIFE OR LOSE YOUR MIND,
YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO STAY

ENSEMBLE
WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS

MARY
LORD KNOWS I DO NOT KNOW

BULLOCK
MISS YOUR KIDS, MISS YOUR WIFE,
MISS YOUR FUCKING LIFE

ENSEMBLE
WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS

BULLOCK
WELCOME TO THE CROSSROADS
WHERE TIME GOES TO DIE!

(rubs face)
Twenty hours, Christ, I gotta get outta here.

Phone buzzes.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Bullock. What?! He's bangin' out again?! Yeah, I know he worked last night. Everybody worked last night. Everybody's working all the damn time.

(checks he's alone)

So, what? He didn't read the job description? They should fire his ass.

(listens)

He knew the guy. And that matters why? This shit ain't personal. It's professional--

MARY enters. BULLOCK glances, moves away, resumes conversation more softly. As he talks, MARY places her prison pass and ID on the counter, takes a bin, pulls a pair of footies from her coat pocket, leans against the counter, removes her clogs and stretches the footies over her feet. She places the clogs in the bucket, along with her car key, then touches her earrings before deciding they won't trigger the metal detector.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

And he's gettin' paid to do a job. You gotta cull the herd, man, that's just nature.

(listens)

Yeah, well, I been here nineteen hours and forty-six minutes and it is shit past time to go.

(hangs up)

Christ, I need a smoke. These 100 hour weeks are gonna kill me.

BULLOCK pats his pockets for a cigarette, remembers he can't smoke, pulls out his squeeze ball. He turns and reads MARY'S pass as she places her jacket in the bucket.

MARY

Good afternoon.

BULLOCK

(points to jacket)

You'll have to wear that through.

MARY

But I always put it--yes sir, of course.

MARY puts on her jacket and carefully walks through the metal detector as BULLOCK watches the X-ray scan of the bucket. Once clear, BULLOCK places the bucket on the counter near the chairs.

BULLOCK

There.

MARY

Thank you. Have a blessed day.

MARY removes her shoes and key from the bucket as YOLANDA, fast and brash, rushes through the doors, carrying a voluminous handbag. MARY tries not to stare.

YOLANDA

AndaelDiablo tell me I hadn't missed it! My plane was delayed all morning and then the crazy Uber driver refused to come here, forced me outta the car two, three blocks away. Carajo, is this like the airport, I gotta take off my shoes?

BULLOCK

Did they say it was all right for you to go inside wearing that?

YOLANDA

(tugs her top)

Yeah. Why?

BULLOCK

You ever been inside a prison?

YOLANDA

Sure, of course.

(uncomfortable)

I mean not recent-like, but you know, yeah.

BULLOCK

Let me see your pass.

YOLANDA hands over pass.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

And your driver's license.

YOLANDA puts her ID on counter.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

You don't got a driver's license?

YOLANDA

I'm from New York. We don't drive. You should be grateful.

BULLOCK

Shoes in the bin. Jacket in the bin. And what are you doing with that bag?

YOLANDA

Oh, yeah, yeah, this thing is packed! Cause fifty dollars to check a bag, I'm not paying that! I'm flyin' Spirit, and they charge for everything, like maybe they charge extra you wanna arrive alive. For real, when we landed, the whole plane broke out cheerin'.

BULLOCK

There's no personal property allowed inside.

YOLANDA

So what you want me to do with it?

BULLOCK

(exasperated)

I guess I can put the bag behind the counter, but I am not responsible for any of it. You leave it, that's on you.

YOLANDA thrusts handbag forward.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

No. Ma'am. You have to send it through the machine, same as everything else.

YOLANDA

Sure, sure, right. I knew that.

YOLANDA puts bag in a bin then walks gingerly across the floor through the metal detector. The alarm sounds. She looks around wildly. MARY gestures and taps her earrings.

MARY

(whispers)

Earrings.

YOLANDA

Yeah, they're nice. Go real good with your outfit.

BULLOCK

Back up and try again.

MARY

(mimes, whispers louder)

Your earrings.

YOLANDA returns to the front,
places earrings in a bin, walks
through again. The alarm sounds.

YOLANDA

What the fuck is wrong with this machine? I
ain't got nothing more to take off.

BULLOCK

Ma'am, I'm gonna let it go once, but if you
swear again, I'll have to ask you to leave.

YOLANDA

Did I swear? What the fuck I say?

BULLOCK

Check your pockets. You can't have nothing
that's metal on you.

YOLANDA pats herself, walks again.
The alarm sounds.

YOLANDA

Coño, what the--Oh, Dios, it's the bra! I gotta
have the underwire, cause you know, being all
built like this--

BULLOCK

You'll have to go through again.

YOLANDA

But it's the underwire.

BULLOCK

Ma'am, you cannot go inside if you're setting
off the metal detector.

YOLANDA

No, no, no, no, no, ain't nothing keeping me
from this visit! Where's the bathroom? I'll
just take off the bra and give it to you to
keep.

BULLOCK

Where do you think you are?! You cannot go
inside without undergarments. Now, walk through
again.

YOLANDA

But, the alarm's gonna go off. I mean, I can't
usually predict the future or nothin' but this
one I got.

Behind BULLOCK, MARY stands and mouths "WALK SIDEWAYS. SLOW!" YOLANDA stares.

BULLOCK

You can't go inside until you clear the metal detector.

MARY mimes a highly exaggerated version of how to game the machine. BULLOCK looks up from log.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

Ma'am! Are you going through or not?

YOLANDA

Sure, sure. Right now.

BULLOCK turns to watch the last bin scan as YOLANDA imitates MARY'S exaggerated movements. No alarm. BULLOCK sets YOLANDA'S bins on the counter.

BULLOCK

That's your pass to Unit 6. You need to return both passes on your way out.

YOLANDA

How long till it starts? The visitation?

BULLOCK

(shrugs)

They'll call when they're ready. And button your jacket.

YOLANDA

Cause I already missed the morning visit and--

BULLOCK turns away. YOLANDA sits, puts on shoes.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Asshole.

MARY

You really shouldn't use that kind of language.

YOLANDA

Oh, sorry, you religious?

MARY

No. I mean, yes, but --

YOLANDA

That's okay. I don't got no problem with religion, I'm in some church least once a day. Usually the basement but, hey, I'm there, right?

MARY

It's just, if you use profanity, they really will make you leave. Maybe you should just cuss in, you know, your own language.

YOLANDA

Sure, sure. That's the only words I know anyhow.

(looks at BULLOCK)

Mamaguevo.

(to MARY)

I'm Yolanda. Thanks for your help ... ???

MARY

Mary. And you're welcome.

YOLANDA

Mary? Ooh, that's like a sign or somethin' cause the whole flight, what am I doin'? Saying the Hail Mary! Cause my plan was to fly Spirit, not become it. And sorry about the swearing--I ain't used to all this pressure. It's a big day, ya know? I hadn't been down to see my son in...a while. We're from New York. And getting here? I had no idea!

(looks around)

So, Mary, you come here often? Sorry, that sounds like a bad pickup line. Just, seems like you know your way around the place.

MARY

Every week I can. That's how come I knew about the metal detector, I seen folks slide through like that. Well, not exactly like that. But I missed last week on account of being at the hospital.

YOLANDA

That where you work?

MARY

No, no, I do memory care.

YOLANDA

Right, right.

MARY

I couldn't come last week on account of a family emergency. So I missed seeing my boy.

YOLANDA

Oh, you got a son here, too?! That's nice ... I mean, not nice but ya know, nice you're here.

(looks around again)

It always so quiet? Like I said, this ain't my first time, it's just been a minute.

MARY

Pretty quiet. I think most family ain't coming today on account of ... last night.

YOLANDA

Sure, sure. Last night.

MARY

Times like this, the boys need a little space, but I got something Robbie needs to hear. Before it's too late.

Yolanda

It's a big day for us, too. Daniel's birthday. That's my son--Daniel. Gonna be 27--I cannot wrap my mind around that. He's been inside since before he was a legal man. Coño, having his twenty-first in this place? That was the worst! Seems like only yesterday he was this little baby thing--

"ONLY YESTERDAY"

HE HAD THESE tiny LITTLE FINGERNAILS
LIKE TINY PERFECT ...

Razor blades! Dios, slice you like a fish
filet!

SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY

HE WAS SO SMALL AND I WAS SO YOUNG
I THOUGHT I COULD GIVE HIM MORE KINDNESS, MORE LOVE
BUT YOU cannot GIVE WHAT YOU NEVER GOT

Which unfortunately you do not figure out till
like after the fact

AND IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY
AND IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY
AND IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY
ONLY YESTERDAY

I WANTED THE LOVE ONLY BABIES HAVE
THAT ALL-THE-WAY LOVE, NO QUESTIONS ASKED
THE KIND OF LOVE YOU THINK WILL LAST

Which is just stupid, cause how much did you
love your mother when you was twelve? Right? I
thought I could give him the world and more,
but who knew babies was such a bore? And our
world was clubs and what we could score.

AND IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY
AND IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY
AND IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY

ONLY YESTERDAY

NEXT THING I KNOW HE'S GROWN TO A MAN
MORE LIKE A BOY-MAN, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND,
THIS WASN'T AT ALL THE LIFE I'D PLANNED
I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND

Ya know that soft little place on babies'
scalps--that tiny heartbeat? Like a baby bird
wanting out--carajo, that'll rip your heart in
half.

IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY
HE WAS SO SMALL AND I WAS SO YOUNG

Well, what's done is done and today Yolanda's
making amends for how she done. I was gonna
bring him like a gift or somethin', but they
won't let you take nothin' in.

(laughs)

Guess that makes me the present, right?

The entrance door opens and
HEATHER enters, punch drunk from
too little sleep and too much
caffeine. BULLOCK barely glances
at her.

BULLOCK

You can't go inside wearing that. No open-toe
shoes, no jeans--who's working the desk down
there?

HEATHER

I ain't going inside. I'm here to pick up ... my
brother's property.

MARY flinches.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

It's supposed to be here. That's what they said
yesterday. Day before. Whenever it was I saw
him. They said pick it up this afternoon.

BULLOCK

Sorry, not here.

HEATHER

Can you look again? It's some ... actually, I
don't know what it is. Drawings, art books.
Lotta art books. I think maybe some Buddhist
stuff, too, but that you can keep.

BULLOCK

There's no boxes.

HEATHER

Well, can you find out where they are? I'm on a
real tight schedule here.

The entrance door opens. BRADLEY strides to the counter, places his ID and pass on it. He is preoccupied.

BULLOCK
(reads pass, glances at clock)
You know you're early, right.

BRADLEY
I do.

BULLOCK
The warden's occupied at the moment.

BRADLEY
I'll wait. Some, ah--
(leans in)
questions came up during the lunch break, and I might actually want to see my uncle again.

BULLOCK
Shoes off, jacket off, empty your pockets.

BRADLEY
This morning I wore my jacket--

BULLOCK
And now it's the afternoon.

As BRADLEY and BULLOCK deal with security, HEATHER fidgets, drums her fingers against the counter.

YOLANDA
(to MARY)
What you think? Pastor?

MARY
Pardon?

YOLANDA
Him. Smooth talking, with that suit and those shoes? Um-huh, got him a megachurch somewhere. Girl, if I had that to look at, I'd be taking communion every day.

MARY
He could be in funerals.

YOLANDA
Shame to waste all that on the dead. I mean, he could maybe be a dealer but he looks too, ya know.

BRADLEY puts on his jackets and shoes and sits a few seats away.

HEATHER

Excuse me, can you check on the box now?

BULLOCK lifts receiver, punches numbers.

YOLANDA

(to BRADLEY)

So, you by any chance a preacher?

BRADLEY

Me? No.

YOLANDA

Well, you should maybe consider it. Mr.???

BRADLEY

Oh. Just call me Brad.

YOLANDA

Brad?!

BRADLEY

Well, Bradley, but I go by Brad.

YOLANDA looks at MARY.

YOLANDA

He ain't no dealer, not with that name.

(to BRADLEY)

Yolanda. This is Mary. Nice to meet you. You want I should keep guessin'?

BRADLEY

Pardon?

YOLANDA

King, captain, soldier, thief?

BRADLEY

Oh. I'm an attorney.

BULLOCK

(on phone)

There's a woman here to pick up property. Yeah, that's her. The sister.

YOLANDA

For real, an attorney? You got clients in here?

BRADLEY

No.

YOLANDA

Yeah, you probably high, right?

BRADLEY

Excuse me?

MARY

(to YOLANDA)

Now, some attorneys do that pro bono work.

(to BRADLEY, hopeful)

Isn't that right? Do you ever do that?

BRADLEY

Pro bono? No. Actually, I work in the DA's office.

MARY and YOLANDA look at each other.

MARY

Oh.

YOLANDA

Oh.

MARY and YOLANDA sit back.

BULLOCK

Where? Can't somebody bring it?

(hangs up)

Wait here.

BULLOCK taps on window glass, moves to interior door, is buzzed through.

BRADLEY

I'm not here professionally. I'm here for the same reason as everybody else.

YOLANDA

Don't be stupid. No way you got somebody on Unit 6.

BRADLEY

Actually, I do.

YOLANDA

And you an attorney?! Nah, don't nobody with a real lawyer end up here.

BRADLEY

My uncle. Boo. Well, the guys here call him Long Beach -- he's from California.

MARY

(to BRADLEY)

It's good to have a family that's tight. That support, visits, just make all the difference.

BRADLEY

(hesitates)

We're not. Close, not really. This is my first visit. It's, uh, a long way. From Boston. But my uncle and I, we correspond.

(to YOLANDA)

You know, write letters and such.

YOLANDA

I'm familiar with the word.

BRADLEY

It's just, what you said, when Uncle Boo was sentenced, I was a kid. Like, two or something. I don't even remember him.

MARY

Well, maybe you can help him now. Or help somebody?

(makes her case)

When Robbie was arrested, I wanted to buy a lawyer so bad! I went to the bank, even went to his father, but wouldn't nobody give me money for a lawyer. Cause those public defenders, they got no time at all. Ours spent maybe an hour with Robbie--an hour, on a murder charge! And all he said was Robbie oughta claim he done it! On account of Robbie never been in no trouble so he'd likely get a plea deal. And the detectives at the same time are tellin' Robbie he best claim his--this other boy done it, or that boy might point the finger at him.

"EVIDENCE"

IT WAS A NIGHTMARE
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING --
I AM WALKIN' IN A DAZE.
IT WAS A NIGHTMARE
I CAN'T STOP PANICKING --
MUST'VE CRIED FOR SEVEN DAYS.

YOLANDA

I know that's right.

MARY

IT WAS A NIGHTMARE
BOTH OF THEM DETECTIVES
SAYING "SIGN THE DOTTED LINE,"
IT WAS A NIGHTMARE
WHAT'S RIGHT IS REAL DECEPTIVE
WHEN YOUR LIFE IS ON THE LINE
But Robbie refused, sayin, "I don't know if he done it or not, cause I wasn't there." I felt a little better then, cause he was like
"MAMA DON'T YOU WORRY
I'LL BE HOME BEFORE YOU KNOW

They AIN'T GOT NOTHING ON ME
THEY GOTTA LET ME GO
 He thought he'd be home that same day, cause
 the police had evidence--
EVIDENCE FROM RIGHT THERE
A FINGERPRINT, DRIED BLOOD,
SOME KINDA HAT OR CAP,
THEY EVEN HAD A HAIR,
A SHOEPRINT FROM SOME MUD,
AND NOTHING WAS A MATCH,
NOT ONE THING WAS A MATCH FOR MY SON!

 YOLANDA
NOTHING WAS A MATCH

 MARY
NOT ONE THING!

 YOLANDA
WAS A MATCH FOR YOUR SON!

 MARY
 Then, Robbie found a sales receipt proving he
 was innocent!!! From when he stopped to get a
 drink same time as the incident.
SO I GOT DOWN ON MY KNEES
 (which, trust me, ain't so easy)
GOT RIGHT DOWN ON MY KNEES
SAYING "THANK YOU, LORD, FOR THE HARDEES!!!"

 YOLANDA
THANK GOD FOR THE HARDEES!

 MARY
WASN'T NOTHING BUT A NIGHTMARE!

 YOLANDA
HE COULD PROVE HIS INNOCENCE!

 MARY AND YOLANDA
JUST A CRAZY NIGHTMARE!

 MARY
MY BOY WAS INNOCENT!

 YOLANDA
YOUR BOY WAS INNOCENT!

 MARY
MY BOY WAS INNOCENT!
 I said, "Son, tell the truth."
 (shakes head)
 I should've begged him to lie. Cause soon as
 Robbie refused to say that other boy done it,
 the detectives got him to blame Robbie. And all
 that evidence? They just threw it away.

 (MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Cause them DA's don't care 'bout truth, long as someone pays. And the DA gets his raise.

(scrabbles for a tissue)

So now my son is on death row and, Lord have mercy, I helped put him there.

YOLANDA

Oh, no no no.

HEATHER

Sounds like it was everything but you that put him here.

MARY

(to BRADLEY)

I just wish he could get help from a real attorney.

BRADLEY looks away.

MARY (CONT'D)

Anyhow, it's mighty generous of you to fly all this way. I'm sure your uncle appreciates it.

HEATHER whaps counter, sighs.

YOLANDA

Hey, lady, you wanna sit?

HEATHER

(looks through interior door glass)

Might as well. Feels like I hadn't slept since Jesus was a cowboy.

MARY moves a few seats away,
gestures to her former chair.
HEATHER sits.

YOLANDA

Anybody know why we still waiting?

MARY

Ain't no tellin'. Some days they just run late.

YOLANDA

So, do they give us extra time? I mean, if we start late, do we still get two hours?

MARY

Oh, no, baby, when the schedule says it's over, it's over.

YOLANDA

Que la vaina, I'm telling ya, all this stress, it's making me very really ... hungry!

(MORE)

YOLANDA (CONT'D)
(to HEATHER)

You hungry?

HEATHER
Starved half stupid.
(points toward door)
But the vending machines are in there--

YOLANDA
(crossing to counter)
And Yolanda's vending machine is right here!

YOLANDA leans over, way over, the
counter to snag her bag.

MARY
Oh, you shouldn't--

YOLANDA
What? Eat my own food?
(pitches snacks)
Platanitos! Chicharrones! Yuquitas! I'd share
the peanuts from the plane but they didn't give
us none. Diache, don't be all formal-like, eat!

YOLANDA retrieves an AA coin from
her bag, tucks it in her bra,
along with some chewing gum, a
cigarette, and tissues.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)
Eat! We gotta destroy the evidence.

MARY
(opens bag and eats)
I really shouldn't.

BRADLEY hands the unopened
Chicharrones to YOLANDA.

BRADLEY
Thanks, but I can't.

YOLANDA
What, you Muslim or somethin'? Daniel keeps
saying he is, but he ain't no real Muslim. You
can play at being Muslim all you want but it's
just one more thing you gonna have to confess.

HEATHER
Huh, Jimbo turned into a Buddhist here. I don't
know if that really counts as a religion,
though--I mean, learning how to sit still is
nice, but we generally call that kindergarten.

YOLANDA

(to BRADLEY)

If ya don't want the pork, you're welcome to the platanos.

BRADLEY

No, it's not that. I avoid the salt.

Mary

Those are pork?

YOLANDA

Yeah, baby, pork skins.

MARY

If I'd known they was cracklins, I'd've taken more.

YOLANDA

Here ya go.

(to BRADLEY)

I ain't never heard of a religion don't let you eat salt.

BRADLEY

It's not religious.

YOLANDA

So, what, you got the high blood? Cause I can't think what you got to be stressed about, not with shoes like that.

BRADLEY

I have polycystic--my kidneys are compromised.

YOLANDA

Well, whatever. You awful young to be compromised. But then, you in the DA's office...

YOLANDA laughs at her own joke.
The buzzer sounds. Snacks are hidden. Moments later, BULLOCK enters, pushing a handcart. On top is a huge cardboard box.

BULLOCK

(to HEATHER)

Ma'am, you can't sit there. You hadn't been screened.

HEATHER

I'm not going in. I'm just waiting for my brother's property, and I hope to tiny Jesus diapers that's it.

BULLOCK

Don't matter. You sit there, you gotta get screened.

HEATHER

(stands, brushing off crumbs)

I just need his stuff and I'm gone.

BULLOCK

(stows cart beside counter)

Can't release it yet.

HEATHER

What?! How come?

BULLOCK

(shrugs)

Above my paygrade.

(flicks paper taped to box)

Got a DNR on it.

HEATHER

DNR?

MARY

Do Not Resuscitate.

BULLOCK

Do Not Release.

HEATHER

What's the hold up? Cause I'm runnin' outta time.

BULLOCK

Like I said, above my paygrade.

HEATHER groans, sits.

BULLOCK (CONT'D)

And like I also said, you wanna sit there, you gotta get screened.

HEATHER groans, steps over stanchion rope and leans against wall near seating area.

YOLANDA

So, what is your paygrade? Not to be funny but is there, like, a supervisor or somethin'? Cause I already missed the morning session, and now you're cutting into my afternoon time. It ain't like I can come back. I got a plane to catch.