

LA LLORONA

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“Hey dude,” William says to Jim as he opens the door to his dorm room. The floor and all available surface space is littered with textbooks, disposable coffee cups, and half eaten candy bars.

“Hey, William,” Jim says. “Where’s the roommate?”

“Library. Says he can’t concentrate with my ugly face around.”

“Uh, yeah,” Jim says. “So I was like,” he sits in one of the chairs, putting his notebooks on top of William’s on the desk. “I dunno. This is maybe gonna sound weird, but I was uh, like walking over here.”

William reaches across Jim to turn off the radio sitting next to him in the bookcase, then sits on the corner of his bed.

“I’m walking next to the river, right, and I hear this chick crying. Now, I don’t want to get up in anyone’s business or anything, so I just keep on walking. But she’s following me. I can hear her following me. So I’m like, you know, walking faster or whatever, but she’s still like wailing and crying and stuff—”

“You think she, uh,” William cuts in, “think she’s uh, warning you your father’s about to die?”

“No man, we’re German. But uh, like, so she’s still crying and stuff, these really long wet wails of like, you know. And I look in the river, and I think I see this baby. I mean, I think it’s a baby. It’s wrapped up in this blanket, and all I see is the back of what could be like, this baby wrapped in a blanket, right? But, yeah, I think it’s a baby, and it’s just like, floating and stuff. And I’m like, whoa, right. This is a police matter. But I wanna make sure, you know, it’s a baby, and not like, plastic or anything. I don’t want the cops to show up, and be all like, Son, this is a doll. I mean, boy would my face be red. So I pick up this stick, right, to drag it back to the bank or whatever, so it won’t like, float away before I get the cops over there. And like, I’m trying to get at it, gently, of course, I don’t wanna be all like, contaminating a scene or whatever, but uh, yeah, the stick’s going right through it. Like a hologram or something. Like the joke’s on me. And meanwhile this lady’s still crying, and I still haven’t even seen her yet, and then, right, walking haven’t even seen her yet, and then, right, I’m walking back up to the path, and *BAM*, there she is. And I’m like, you know, good Samaritan or whatever, and I’m like, Ma’am, are you okay? And she’s wearing this dress, and like, this shawl

thing or whatever. I dunno, it looked kind of like the blanket on the baby. I mean, I dunno, but like, she looks kind of dated, you know. I guess the style could be coming back, retro or whatever, I'm not real big on fashion, but I don't think so, right. And she's still like, oh, wanh wanh, and she walks up and she like, I mean like, I know, I know, and she like, puts her fingers on my face. And her fingers were cold, dude, and they smelled. I mean this woman smelled like death. Like stinky, moldy dead body. It was gross. But yeah, so she's got these long as hell white fingers on my face and in my hair and stuff, and then she just vanishes. I know it sounds weird, right, and I'm just like, whoa, okay. But I can still hear her crying, like brutally or whatever, and then I look back into the river, right, and I see her face there, where I saw the baby, only the baby's not there anymore, and I mean, I don't know where the baby went. And like, so there's her face, and like, I didn't see her face before 'cuz her hair was in the way. She had this really long dark hair, and she was kind of wet when I saw her, too, kind of dripping, right. And like, her face, it's got no eyes, dude. This chick had no eyes. I don't know what's up with her, man. But I was like, whatever. And I just kept walking."

"Was she hot?" William asks.
"Yeah she was hot."