

THE BOOK OF LEONIDAS

by

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## PROLOGUE

General Rafael **Leonidas** Trujillo, also known as *El Jefe*(The Boss), was the dictator of the Dominican Republic from 1930-1961. His thirty-one years in power is known as the Trujillo Era and is considered one of the bloodiest periods ever in the Americas.

He was gunned down with his driver on a highway in the Dominican Republic on May 30th, 1961.

### The People

**Lenny Pabon** : M 38. Dominican. Black. Ruggedly handsome. Outgoing, affable, street smart. Walks with a limp. He's a small time hustler of loosies on the same street in Queens, NY that his father, Leonidas, was once a legendary crime lord in the 1970's. He lives with and supports his repressive mother. Lenny is trying to run out from his father's shadow.

**Leonidas Pabon** : M,50's, to also play himself in his late 20's. Dominican. White. Handsome, charming and smooth. Also cold and murderous. Father of Lenny. He is the feared captain of General Rafael Leonidas Trujillo's secret police.

**Luz Pabon**: F,late 50's, to also play her younger self. Dominican. Black. Suffering from Diabetes she is strong, controlling, calculating and manipulative. When she was young she was a the town beauty. Wife of Leonidas and mother of Lenny.

**Lindsay Wasserman**: early 30's. Caucasian. A trust fund baby, she defies the stereotype with her wit and smarts, though she is not as tough as she likes to think she is. She is the daughter of a recently nationally disgraced and indicted hedge fund fraudster.

**Bartender/Butcher**: M, 50's. Dominican. Same actor plays both roles. Protective fathers of daughters that Leonidas preys on.

**Adisa**: M, early 20's. African. A rising gangster that embraces his father's violent reputation and strives to be like him.

ACT ONE

scene one

TIME: Present

PLACE: Queens, NYC

The sounds of a typical New York City day: Car horns blaring, loud construction noises, distant police sirens etc...

Lights up on a busy street corner lined with a crowded mixture of Bengali, Muslim and Greek restaurants and businesses.

Seemingly out of place in this neighborhood are two white doors with a lit up neon crucifix and sign beneath that reads, "Divinity Baptist Church".

Actively pacing the stage while hustling loosies to passing pedestrians, is LENNY PABON. He walks with a distinct left limp but he hustles with a lot of flair and humor.

Unbeknownst to him, LINDSAY, enters the stage from the church door. She puffs on an E-cigarette and watches his hustle with interest.

LENNY

LOOSIES! LOOSIES! Two for a dolla!  
Two for a dolla! These prices  
guaranteed to make you holla!...

(to a passing pedestrian)

I got Kooool Menthols for all you  
*morenos y morenas*...

(to another passing  
pedestrian)

Camels for you sons of Mohammed!  
(stepping to another)

P-Funks for my stylish hipster  
*amigos*!...And of course, Virginia  
Slims for all you sexy *mamacita's*  
out there!

(eyeing a cute girl  
walking by; smooth)

"You've come loooong way, baby,  
girl"...Loosies! Loosies! Two for  
a dolla! Two for a dolla!

Lenny makes a sale to a passing pedestrian. He collects his dollar in exchange for a couple of cigarettes.

Entering on the opposite side of the stage is, ADISA, carrying a back pack. He faces out to the audience and begins his hustle to passing pedestrians. He speaks with a thick African accent and lacks Lenny's flair for selling.

ADISA  
Cigarettes! I have cigarettes!  
Only two for one dollar! One  
dollar! Cigarettes! Cigarettes!

Lenny quickly turns to see him.

LENNY  
Yo, **Uganda**?!

Adisa ignores him.

ADISA  
(to passing pedestrian)  
Cigarettes for you!

Lenny angrily steps across the stage to him.

LENNY  
Uganda! I'm talkin' to you!

He turns to face Lenny.

ADISA  
(unmoved)  
First of all, I am from Chad.

LENNY  
Looky here, Africa. This be my  
fuckin' block. My block! You  
hear?

ADISA  
No. I don't think so.

LENNY  
Don't think so?! Take a deep  
breathe...I said, do it, *bembe*.

Adisa inhales deeply.

LENNY  
You smell that?

ADISA  
I smell Bengali food.

LENNY  
 (in his grill)  
 Nah, bro. You smell **me**. You know  
 why?

ADISA  
 I have no idea.

LENNY  
 'Cause I marked this block a long  
 time ago.

ADISA  
 I do not care.

LENNY  
 Do you know who I am?

ADISA  
 A cigarette salesman?

LENNY  
 (with pride)  
 I'm Lenny Pabon, yo!

ADISA  
 And my name is Adisa Okoro.

LENNY  
 Oh, that right? Nobody gives a  
 shit. Go mark your own block!

ADISA  
 (standing firm)  
 I'm just trying to make money. I'm  
 a capitalist, just like you.

LENNY  
 Capitalist, huh? 'fraid you got it  
 all wrong, *palomo*...

Lenny looks around before lifting up his jacket and flashing  
 the handle of gold plated pistol that's tucked in his  
 waistband.

LENNY  
 This is what a real capitalist  
 looks like.

Adisa holds up his hands in submission.

ADISA  
 Whoa, man. Take it easy.

LENNY  
Now do you get me?

ADISA  
Yes, yes. I am sorry.

LENNY  
In Queens, this is how we way say  
"time ta' get steppin'"...  
(placing his hand on his  
pistol)  
Now...time ta'get steppin'...

Adisa gets his back up. They both stare at each other in a long tense standoff. For a moment, he appears as if he may charge Lenny...Then suddenly, he releases a wide smile.

ADISA  
Okay. No problem, bro. You got no problems from me.

He goes to exit.

LENNY  
Yo Uganda? One last *palabra*...

Adisa stops and turns around.

LENNY  
Ask around who Lenny Pabon's father is. *Cono!* You gonna shit your *pantalones, palomo!*

Adisa exits. Lenny beams with pride and does a little triumphant strut.

LENNY  
(to himself)  
Who's a a bad ass, mofo?  
(beating his chest)  
You is, son!

Lenny snaps back to the hustle.

LENNY  
(announcing)  
Listen up, listen up! BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL! BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL! **Three** Generic loosies for a dolla! Yo' ears heard that right, nicotine fiends! Three for a dolla!...

Lindsay steps up to him.

LINDSAY  
 Alright, I'll bite. Who's your  
 daddy?

Lenny turns around to see Lindsay.

LENNY  
 Come again?

LINDSAY  
 I was wondering who your-

LENNY  
 (impatient)  
 -Looky here, *chica*. You gonna buy  
 a loosie or not?

LINDSAY  
 Huh? Oh, I only smoke E-  
 cigarettes.

LENNY  
 (shaking his head)  
 Fuckin' hipsters.

Lenny walks away annoyed.

LINDSAY  
 (calling out)  
 I was watching you.

LENNY  
 (whipping around)  
 You was what?

LINDSAY  
 Watching you.

LENNY  
 Do I know you?

LINDSAY  
 Well, no-

LENNY  
 You a cop?

LINDSAY  
 A cop? No.

LENNY  
 (like she's a whack job)  
 Right. Why don't you go and keep  
 yo' *cray-cray-self* long distance?

He walks away.

LINDSAY  
 "Cray cray"?

She follows after him.

LENNY  
 (turning around; final)  
*Chica, time ta'-*

LENNY/LINDSAY  
 (**in unison**)  
 -get steppin'.

Beat.

LENNY  
 Ah, I get it. You like some crazy  
 meth bitch, ain't you?

LINDSAY  
 What? Oh, God no!

LENNY  
 (looking her over)  
 Must be new at it 'cause you still  
 pretty.

LINDSAY  
 No, look...I don't think you  
 understand.

LENNY  
 Narco ain't my trade, girl. Try the  
 next corner over. Ask for Super  
 Puppet.

Ignoring her, he steps away going back to his hustle.

LENNY (CONT'D)  
 (calling out)  
*Dos por uno!-*

LINDSAY  
 I just wanted to say-

LENNY  
 (calling out)  
*-Uno por dos!*

LINDSAY  
(loudly blurting out)  
I was impressed how you handled  
that African dude.

He freezes.

LENNY  
Hold up? You saw that?

LINDSAY  
You like scared the shit out of  
him.

LENNY  
(pleased with himself)  
I did, didn't I?

LINDSAY  
You were great.

LENNY  
(flattered)  
So you meanin' to say, I was a  
baddass nigga?

LINDSAY  
Um, I can't say that word.

LENNY  
Awright, awright. I can dig that.  
I ain't a violent dude, know what  
I'm sayin'? But sometimes you gotta  
send a message.

LINDSAY  
Sure. You got to stand up for  
yourself.

LENNY  
Exactly. I never seen you around  
here before.

LINDSAY  
I'm new here.

LENNY  
New from where?

LINDSAY  
Chelsea.

LENNY  
Chelsea? Very nice, very nice.

LINDSAY

It's not as nice as you think.

LENNY

Wassup? You get kicked outta the garden?

LINDSAY

Garden?

LENNY

The Garden of Eden that is Chelsea.

LINDSAY

No.

(pointing to the white  
church doors)

I do charity work at the Divinity Church.

LENNY

Charity work?

LINDSAY

Well, actually it's more like "court ordered" charity work.

LENNY

Court ordered? I'm impressed. Fist bump.

He puts out his fist. She firmly bumps it. He laughs.

LENNY (CONT'D)

There you go! So what you get busted for? Driving yo' Benz drunk and running over a rich old lady's poodle?

LINDSAY

Uh, not exactly.

LENNY

Lay it on me.

LINDSAY

Forget it, it's embarrassing.

LENNY

Come on, spill it.

LINDSAY

(beat)

I was having a rough day so I bumped a few lines. And well, what goes better with coke than Grey Goose, right?

LENNY

Well, around here it's crack and a bottle of Old English but go on.

LINDSAY

Later in the night I start getting woozy and remember that in the morning, I popped a couple of Xanax. So I decide to drive home before I turn into a hot mess, you know? And then that's when I hit a parked cop car.

LENNY

Damn...

LINDSAY

(reluctantly adding)

And then I slapped the cop in the face.

LENNY

You really are a hot mess, ain't you?

LINDSAY

What? I was having a rough day.

LENNY

(sarcastic)

Sure. Sounds normal enough to me.

(mimicking addressing a judge)

Yo' honor. I know I was caught with that Glock and brick of cocaine but...I was having a real rough day.

LINDSAY

OK. Point made.

LENNY

Hold up. So you did all that and only got community service?

LINDSAY

What do you mean, "only"?

LENNY

And the cops didn't shoot you  
neither?

LINDSAY

Shoot me? Why would they do that?

LENNY

(amazed)

Cono, it really is true what they  
say about white folks.

LINDSAY

What's that supposed to mean?

LENNY

Means next time I gotta get your  
attorney.

Lenny turns to a customer.

LENNY (CONT'D)

That's one dolla, brotha.

He exchanges the loosies for a bill.

LENNY (CONT'D)

So what you do in the church?

LINDSAY

I work in the soup kitchen. I  
don't think the people I work with  
don't like me too much.

LENNY

Ah, I'm sure they do.

LINDSAY

They gave me the nickname, "PWP".

LENNY

PWP?

LINDSAY

Pretty White Pony.

He busts up laughing.

LENNY

Yeah, they definitely hate your  
ass.

LINDSAY

I'm standing right here, you know that right?

LENNY

But hey, at least you're making an impression?

LINDSAY

(playing along)

I'll actually take that. Thank you.

They both laugh. Beat. He checks his phone.

LENNY

There's an AA meeting breakin' down the street. I got to roll.

LINDSAY

(surprised)

Oh. How long have you been sober?

LENNY

Sober? Nah, it's where I unload most of my loosies. Alkies smoke like fiends.

LINDSAY

I guess, I should get back as well. This week, I'm on pots and pans detail.

LENNY

Sucks.

LINDSAY

(shrugging)

Yeah but I guess that's what I get for fucking up...

She starts to step back to the church. He watches her for a moment.

LENNY

My name is Leonidas. But the block knows me as Lenny.

LINDSAY

I'm Lindsay.

(self-deprecating)

I know, it's a stupid sounding name  
but that's only because that bitch,  
Lohan, fucked it up for all us  
other Lindsay's.

LENNY

Who's Lohan?

LINDSAY

Forget it. See you around  
sometime?

LENNY

Seven days a week. Three hundred  
sixty-five a year.

LINDSAY

(smiling)

Cool.

She steps to the church doors.

LENNY

Yo Lindsay?

She turns around.

LENNY

Welcome to Queens.

They both smile as lights fade to black.