

**ROOSTERS**

by Milcha Sanchez-Scott

*Chata*

Juana, Who taught you how to make totillas? Look at this. You call this a tortilla? Have some pride. Show him you're a woman. Ah, you people don't know what it is to eat fresh handmade tortillas. My grandmother Hortensia, the one they used to call "La India Condendada" ... she would start making them at five o'clock in the morning. So the men would have something to eat when they went into the fields. Hijo! She was tough ... Use to break her own horses ... and her own men. Every day at five o'clock she would wake me up. "Buenos pinchi dias," she would say. I was twelve or thirteen years old, still in braids ... "Press your hands into the dough," "Con fuerza," "Put your stamp on it." One day I woke up, tu sabes, con la sangre. "Ah! So you're a woman now. Got your cycle like the moon. Soon you'll want a man, well this is what you do. When you see the one you want, you roll the tortilla on the inside of your thigh and then you give it to him nice and warm. Be sure you give it to him and nobody else." Well, I been rolling tortillas on my thighs, on my nalgas, and God only knows where else, but I've been giving my tortillas to the wrong men ... and that's been the problem with my life. First there was Emilio. I gave him my first tortilla. Ay Mamacita, he use to say, these are delicious. Aye, he was handsome, a real lady-killer! After he did me the favor he didn't have the cojones to stick around ... took my TV set too. They're all crap. (*Sees Hector enter*) Yeah, Hector, I mean you, too. Men are shit. Pure shit. They called me the encyclopedia of love. You want to turn a few pages? Your Aunt Chata could show you a few things. Is that what fascinates you, honey? Is that why I always find you peeping at me, mirrors at the keyhole, your eyeballs in the cracks spying when I'm sleeping, smelling my kimono. I ain't drunk. What I drink ain't none of your business. Don't tell me what to do, Hector. You got nothin' to say about it, you ain't my man, and you ain't your mama's man. The sooner you learn that the better. So, you take your rooster, leave it, eat or sell it, but get out of here. What are you hanging around here for? Go on! Get out! It ain't your home anymore!