**Introduction:**

**This play was conceived in a participatory manner, as part of the research project *Mobilizing the experience of youth; expanding a resource by youth for youth to support a way out of homelessness*, which was undertaken by Casa Alianza Nicaragua, through its street youth division. This was done during the period November 2018 - February 2020ꟷ15 months of training, and personal and group growth using an empowerment-based approach, which allowed street youth to discover their potential and use it by exercising values, changing attitudes, and assuming roles of leadership. These activities were shared by applying what we call in this process *the youth-to-youth support method*.**

**Title:** Living and Overcoming

**Subject:** Living on the streets

**Plot:** The play deals with the causes, realities and alternatives of a young person on the streets

**Moral: “There are always alternatives to live a better life, even when things look very grim**”

**Genre and type:** Collective creation Popular Theatre.

**Synopsis:** The play describes the experience of two families, one that is very poor and the other that lacks nothing. In both families things happen that may, and/or do, drives children, adolescents and youth leave their homes and live on the streets. Life makes Moroco, Nino and Nina face the hardships of the streets, where they find themselves stealing and doing drugs to survive. Although they come from different families, their life on the streets is the same. But they are faced with opportunities that not everyone deals with in the same manner. Nino joins a breakdancing group and this allows him to stop stealing and doing drugs, as he becomes the breakdance champion in his area and a role model for the others. His sister and friend have problems with law enforcement authorities and Moroco ends up in prison.

**Scene I**

**The play starts with a group of young people who are signing the rap song *Experiences* which describes some situations which will be presented later in the play. When they finish the song, Juna and Edin, parents of a boy (Nino) and a girl (Nina), are doing their daily chores at home, and as the music wades off Nino and Nina enter the stage. We see a low-income environment.**

**They approach their father:**

**Nina: *Dad, Dad! We want to go to school!***

**Edin: *Go and ask your mother!***

**They run to their mother:**

**Nino: *Mum, Mum! We want to go to school!***

**Juna: *Go and ask your father!***

**They go to their father and say at the same time:**

**Nina and Nino: *Dad! We want to go to school!***

**Edin: *Listen kids. The truth is that we can’t afford to send you to school, our financial condition isn´t good. Instead, go and sell these coconuts that I´ve been prepping.***

**Juna: *And you’d better sell them all. You’ll see, if you ever come back with the stuff unsold!***

**They exit.**

**Scene II**

**Pancha and Luison, mother and father of the household, and Fulgencia, who works for them as household employee, enter the stage.**

**Pancha and Luison are doing their chores, reviewing accounts and signing documents, when they are visited by two businessmen:**

**Businessman 1: *Good morning. How are you Pancha?***

**Businessman 2: *How are you Luison?***

**Pancha: *We´re doing fine, thanks. And you? How can we help you?***

**Businessman 1: *We´re very well, thank you. We came to make you a business proposal. But we´d have to travel abroad, for about 2 to 3 weeks. This way you´ll see in person what we are doing there.***

**Pancha: *Of course. We need to take that trip.***

**Moroco, Pancha’s and Luison’s son, enters.**

**Moroco: *Mum, Dad, I need to tell you something, I have a problem…***

**Luison: *Later, Moroco. Now we can’t, we are very busy with our visitors.***

**Moroco exits somewhat disappointed in his father’s reply.**

**Businessman 2: *That’s it, then. We’ll leave tomorrow first thing in the morning. We’ll meet you at the airport.***

**Luison: *Perfect. See you tomorrow.***

**The businessmen say goodbye and exit.**

**Moroco rushes in hoping that this time his parents will listen to him:**

**Moroco: *Now, yes? Can you listen to me?***

**Pancha: *Not now, son. We are getting ready for our trip, and we are running short of time. Don’t bother, please, We’ll see to it later.***

**Moroco: *It’s always the same. You only have that in mind, business, business and more business. You never pay attention to me.***

**He exits.**

**Scene III**

**Nino and Nina enter. They are selling their coconuts, offering out loud “*Coconuts, coconuts, for 20 pesos. Would you like one?”*. They walk around the stage offering their product. They meet in the center and look around.**

**Nina, with a sad and worried tone, says: *Nino, it’s late and we haven’t sold not even one coconut.***

**Nino: *Yeah. Now they’ll beat us.***

**They exit walking sadly.**

**Scene IV**

**Moroco enters and lies down on the couch, while Fulgencia is doing the cleaning.**

**Fulgencia: *At least raise your feet! You’re all day lying there.***

**Moroco: *You just do your job, that´s what you´re paid for.***

**Pancha and Luison, who have come back from their trip, enter.**

**Pancha: *Look at you, Moroco! You´re all day lying down, you should find something to do.***

**Moroco: *Just let me be, mother. Focus on your business and don’t bother me.***

**Luison: *Leave him alone, don’t waste your time with him. Let’s get some rest, it’s been a long trip.***

**Pancha and Luison exit.**

**Michy, Moroco’s friend, enters.**

**Michy: *Hello!***

**Moroco: *Fulgencia, open the door.***

**Fulgencia: *That junkie again...***

**Michy: *How’s it going, Moroco?***

**Moroco: *Somewhat bored, man. Wanna play Nintendo?***

**Michy:  *Yeah, cool.***

**They play for a while until Pancha and Luison enter after having woken up by the noise.**

**Pancha: *What’s this? What’s all this noise about? (Speaking to Michy:) And you? What are you doing here? Why didn’t you go to school?***

**Michy: *I didn’t feel like going today. So, I came to see Moroco and play for a while.***

**Moroco: *Yes, mother. We’re going to play a bit and smoke too.***

**Pancha: *What do you mean “smoke”? I don’t want you with those things here. Off you go to the street.***

**Moroco*: Ok, we’d better go to the street instead of staying here and bother. Anyways, you don’t even care about me.***

**They all exit.**

**Scene V**

**Juna and Edin enter. They are drinking and smoking. Nino and Nina enter. They are scared and try not to come close to the parents, pushing one another because none wants to the first to face their parents. In the end, it’s Nina who makes eye contact with their mother.**

**Nina: *Mum, you see, we couldn’t sell a single coconunt.***

**Juna: *How come? I told you had to sell everything. I’ll sure beat you hard this time!***

**They both get on their feet. June beats Nina and Edin beats Nino. Both kids manage to get loose and run saying:**

**Nina: *You beat us too much, we’ll be better off if we leave.***

**Niño: *Yes, we’ll never come back.***

**As Nino and Nina exit, Juna and Edin look at each other for some seconds, then at the public, back at each other, and say sarcastically:**

***Let them go, this way we’ll have more time to go on drinking.***

**Edin*: Let’s go to the bar and continue partying there.***

**They exit.**

**Scene VI**

**Nino and Nina are on one side of the stage, and on the other side, Moroco and Michy start walking slowly towards the center. During their first steps, they show they are very hungry, with the next 4 steps, they show insecurity and fear as it’s their first night on the streets, homeless, with no shelter, and lastly, they show they are cold and they get closer little by little so as to warm up (at this point they get to the center of the stage).**

**Moroco: *It’s really cold, guys. This is my first night on the streets. And you?***

**Nina: *Same here. We ran away from home because they beat us hard; for every tiny thing, they beat us up.***

**Moroco: *In my case, they didn’t care about me, little by little I started to realize I was better on the street.***

***Moroco: And what’s your name?***

***Nino: I’m Nino and she’s my sister Nina.***

***Moroco: I’m Moroco and this is my friend Michy.***

**While they are talking, two mysterious characters enter, the Vultures, who circle around as if stalking these teenagers, who look surprised and somewhat scared.**

**Vulture 1: *What happened, guys? What are you doing around here?***

**Nina: *We ran away from home and we are hungry*.**

**Vulture 2: *Here, I got something that’ll do you good, it’s very good weed.***

**Nino: *But we are hungry, that’s not food.***

**Vulture 1: *If you smoke this, you won’t be hungry.***

**Moroco: *But we don’t have any money.***

**Vulture 2: *Never mind. This one is a gift and if you like it, we’ll get you more, but then, yes, you’ll have to pay.***

**The teenagers accept the weed and stay on stage smoking while the Vultures exit. Under the effect of the drug, they feel hungrier. They see a young woman selling snacks and they decide to steal the basket from her.**

**The vendor runs off the stage, afraid of the teenagers who have robbed her of all she had. They stay on stage enjoying the contents of the basket they stole.**

**At the same time they start feeling the need of more weed, so they approach a woman with another theft in mind.**

**Moroco: *Hey, guys. You see that woman coming this way. Distract her, and I’ll snatch what she carries.***

**Nino and Nina: *Cool. Let’s go.***

**Nino, Nina and Michy distract the woman by walking in front of hear and asking her questions, while Moroco snatches her cellphone and handbag.**

**The woman exits terrified. The teenagers have now taken over that spot to steal from passers-by. But Moroco is toying with the idea of a larger theft.**

**Moroco: *Guys, I know a house that is detached and has lots of things we can steal and then sell.***

**Nino: *Ok. Let’s go, then.***

**They are about to break in, when a group of young people appears on stage street dancing, with background music, showing their skills and having a lot of fun. The teenagers are disinterested, except for Nino, who is drawn to the dance and little by little joins the group.**

**Moroco: *Come on, Nino. Let’s go. We need to do what we talked about.***

**Nino: *Go, I’m staying here with these guys. I like what they are doing.***

**As Nino joins the group, he starts dancing with them and they exit the stage.**

**Scene VII**

**Moroco, Nina and Michy enter. They intend to break into the house as planned.**

**Moroco: *Come Michy, you go in.***

**Michy: *I can’t reach the window. You go in. I and Nina will wait here, and you´ll pass on the stuff to us.***

**When Moroco is trying to go in through the window, the police appear. Nina and Michy manage to run and escape, but Moroco is taken away by the police.**

**They exit.**

**Scene VIII**

**The presenter of a breakdance event enters.**

**Presenter: *And here he is, the champion of the national breakdance battle, Ninooooooooooo.***

**Nino enters the stage breakdancing. His group makes a circle around him, celebrating his victory.**

**The actors and actresses enter, they greet the public and bow in appreciation for their applause.**

**End**

**Direction:**

**The project team of Casa Alianza.**

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