

## Image descriptions for

### ***Paco***

**by Carlo Quispe**

#### **COVER**

Red, pink, and purple coloration. Paco—wearing small horns, black bat wings over his buff shoulders, a black speedo bottom and calf high boots—smiles gleefully as he is riding on a long tongue sticking out of the mouth of a purple shadow that has a face, yet also resembles a wave. Paco has his hands in the air and is smiling wide. In the top left corner, in white text on a black square, reads the title: *PACO*.

#### **PAGE ONE**

##### **PANEL 1**

Three characters are standing in a bustling club called HELL HOLE. The lighting is consistent with that of the cover—pink, red and purple hues. Paco is olive-complexioned with black hair. He is wearing the same outfit as on the cover, but is significantly smaller here, slim in frame. He is holding a pink flask. Cris, a buff, tall friend with a hairy chest, is dressed like a satyr, with horns in his hair and fluffy pants with a long forked tail. Rafa, wearing a long green shirt or dress, has black hair styled in a mullet, a moustache, and a deeper complexion.

*Paco: Fun party tonight Cris!*

*Cris: Paco, this is Rafa! Rafa Meet Paco!*

*Paco and Rafa, together: ¡Hola!*

## PANEL 2

Paco and Rafa standing in the bottom left corner of the panel, both holding drink bottles. Rafa has his arm over Paco's shoulder.

Paco: *You look pretty!*

Rafa: *Thank you!*

To the right of the panel Cris wanders towards a crowd of dancing people, his forked tail trailing behind as he points ahead of him, off panel.

Cris: *Check it out guys! We got free HIV testing now!*

## PANEL 3

Paco and Rafa chat and take sips of their drinks

Paco: *At a party?*

Rafa: *Sure man! Do you know your status?*

Miguel, a blonde person, carrying a pink bowl and wearing a big pink triangle singlet, approaches from the right, partially off panel.

Miguel: *Free condoms!*

## PANEL 4

Rafa stands to the left of the panel, with his hand to his chin in curiosity. Paco walks to the center of the panel and reaches his hand into the pink bowl held out by Miguel. To the right of the panel we see a table in the background with objects on, with a big sign that reads *GET TESTED NOW* above it, and another person wearing a triangle, similar to Miguel's, standing next to the table.

Paco, taking condoms from a bowl, says: *It's been a while!*

Rafa, holding their hand to their chin, says: *How come?*

Paco: *I guess I'm afraid of bad news!*

Miguel, holding a bowl of condoms, says: *Hi guys I'm Miguel! Are you interested in getting tested tonight?*

## PAGE TWO

### PANEL 1

Paco, Rafa, Cris and Miguel are all sitting on couches in HELL HOLE, huddled close together. Paco sits in the center of the group with his legs spread wide open.

Paco: *I don't know my status. I've been single for a year now. Nobody was on me to get tested. My ex tested positive recently.*

### PANEL 2

Facing Miguel to his left, Paco: *And so now I'm afraid of testing positive.*

Standing behind the couches and leaning forward, Cris: *I'm just tryin to encourage you to find out—no pressure.*

Sitting to the farthest right, Rafa says: *It's weird for me. Sometimes I don't think people wanna know my status*

### PANEL 3

Rafa scoots along as Cris has moved around to sit to the right of everyone. They are all looking at Cris.

Rafa: *I think they'd rather not know. It's a turn off to tell them I'm positive.*

Cris: *Oh yeah. Been there.*

### PANEL 4

Miguel: *Even if they're on PREP?*

Everyone is facing Miguel.

Rafa: *Yes. Still scared.*

PANEL 5

Miguel: *They're stupid.*

Rafa: *Just ignorant.*

**PAGE THREE**

PANEL 1

The characters have moved to the dance floor of HELL HOLE and are standing talking. Cris towers above the others and has his hand around Paco's shoulders. They are all carrying drinks, which the lighting makes pink.

Paco: *I will get tested soon!*

Cris: *Oh good!*

Miguel: *I'll go with you next week!*

PANEL 2

Paco: *Thank you!*

Handing a piece of paper to Paco, Miguel says: *It will be less scary with a friend! Here's my info. Let's meet OK?*

Rafa: *Let's dance!*

PANEL 3

A close up of Paco and Cris facing each other, Cris is holding his forked tail between them. The HELL HOLE sign shines above their heads.

Cris: *So can I take you home? We can use rubbers.*

Paco: *All right.*

#### PANEL 4

Paco moves closer to Cris and takes a drink from his bottle.

Paco: *I'll find out my status soon Cris.*

Cris: *That's good.*

#### PANEL 5

Arm around Paco's waist, Cris says: *Life is about facing challenges.*

### PAGE FOUR

Miguel and Paco are walking down the brown sidewalk. Miguel, blonde haired, is wearing a white shirt with a pink logo, blue jeans and red shoes. Paco, black haired, is wearing a blue shirt, blue pants and pink shoes. There are several cars of different colors—orange, red, blue, green, maroon—driving in the street. Each panel centers on Miguel and Paco walking down the street. It is the kind of day when the sky is bright blue and the clouds are thick puffs of cotton.

#### PANEL 1

Paco: *I hate going to get tested Miguel. I'm so afraid of bad news.*

Miguel: *Paco if you go on PREP you won't be so nervous.*

#### PANEL 2

Paco: *Really? But I don't want to take a pill everyday.*

Miguel: *It's not so bad. I've been on it for a while. It's ok.*

#### PANEL 3

Paco, clutches his arms together in distress: *I just hate doctors. The whole thing.*

Miguel, reassuringly and placing an arm around Paco's shoulders: *Don't be afraid.*

PANEL 4

Paco: *Ok.*

Miguel, still with an arm around Paco's shoulders: *It won't be so bad.*

PANEL 5

The background seems to zoom out of view, signified by thick black lines emanating from Paco and Miguel in the center of the panel.

Paco, sweating: *Oh shoot! There's the clinic.*

Miguel, smiling, still with his arm around Paco: *We can do it!*

**PAGE FIVE**

PANEL 1

Paco and Miguel arrive at the free clinic. Paco is holding his arm and seems to be dazed, as squiggles surround his head. Miguel reaches out to Paco. Above their heads is a sign that reads: *FREE HIV TESTING*. Behind them to the right is a *FREE CONDOMS* display.

Paco: *Hi Miguel.*

Miguel: *Hi Paco.*

PANEL 2

Paco and Miguel are now sitting on chairs in a waiting room full of other people sitting around them. Paco sits with his arms and legs crossed, a confusion squiggle above his head. Miguel is sitting relaxed, looking at Paco.

Paco: *I just want to get this over with.*

Miguel: *I knew you could do it Paco.*

PANEL 3

Paco, uncrossing his legs, says: *I'm so nervous.*

Miguel: *It's ok if you are.*

PANEL 4

Miguel reaches over to put his right arm around Paco's shoulders and his left hand on Paco's hand. Paco looks up to Miguel.

Miguel: *What's important is that you take care of your health.*

PANEL 5

Paco, looking forward: *I'm so afraid.*

Miguel: *I know. It will be over soon.*

**PAGE SIX**

PANEL 1

Still in the waiting room, with people talking indecipherably around them, Paco holds his hands up towards his face. A sign above them reads: **GET TESTED NOW.**

Paco: *I don't know if I can handle this.*

Miguel; *Yes you can— you are here Paco.*

PANEL 2

The panel zooms out a little. A doctor in a white coat, red tie and tan pants walks in and calls out.

Paco: *I almost passed out when they took my blood.*

Miguel: *Relax Paco. It's better to know than not know.*

Doctor: *Number 13!*

### PANEL 3

Paco stands, sweating, holding a small pink ticket, the doctor approaches holding a brown clipboard in his left hand.

Paco: *Lucky me.*

Doctor: *Hi there I'm Hernan.*

### PANEL 4

Dr. Hernan leads Paco down a hallway. Dr. Hernan is a Black man with a beard and has a brown clipboard tucked under his right arm. The corridor is decorated the same as the reception room, in yellowish brown, with dark red from mid-wall to the floor. All the doors are red. Paco's arms are crossed.

Dr. Hernan: *How are you today?*

Paco: *I'm very nervous doctor.*

### PANEL 5

Paco is seated in a pale pink chair, facing Dr. Hernan in his office. There is a floating bookshelf behind Dr. Hernan's head with books that are yellow, red, white and blue.

Paco: *I even brought a friend for moral support.*

Dr. Hernan: *That's a good friend.*

## PAGE SEVEN

### PANEL 1

Paco and Dr. Hernan sit in chairs facing each other in Dr. Hernan's office. Paco is crying and has a tear running down his face.

Dr. Hernan: *Your test was negative Paco.*

Paco: *Doctor thank you. I was terrified about the stigma.*



## PANEL 2

A close up on Paco, arms in the air, still crying.

Paco: *What would my family think? What would my friends say?*

## PANEL 3

Zoomed back out to see both Dr. Hernan and Paco, who is still crying and has both hands gripping his chair's arm rests.

Paco: *Would anybody love me?*

Dr. Henan: *Oh, kid. I see. Listen.*

## PANEL 4

Dr. Hernan, sitting tall with open body language holds his clipboard in the air, while Paco sits listening, his right hand to his chin.

Dr. Hernan: *Of course your family and friends would still love you. I'm HIV positive, so I would care about you.*

## PANEL 5

Dr. Hernan: *There's people that would like you ten times more. Come back in 3 months so we can keep an eye on you.*

Paco: Ok.

## PAGE EIGHT

## PANEL 1

Paco and Dr. Hernan are still in Dr. Hernan's office. The angle of view has shifted so that Paco is to the left of the panel and Dr. Hernan is to the right. Now we can see the window behind Dr. Hernan's seat. In a far corner of the room there is a plant with sleepy green leaves in a relatively tall yellow pot. Paco has his arms raised to his face as if he is hiding.

Paco: *I feel like I'm bad for not getting tested for so long. On top of being bad for being gay.*

Dr. Hernan: *You are not bad. You're ok.*

## PANEL 2

Paco's arms rest in his lap. Dr. Hernan gesticulates with one hand in the air while he speaks.

Paco: *I feel guilty for not always being safe.*

Dr. Hernan: *I understand—look—Don't feel bad—it's natural to want to do that—not sure it's rational...*

## PANEL 3

A closer view of Paco and Dr. Hernan talking, white puffy clouds are still on view outside the window.

Dr. Hernan: *I'd like to meet the person that has always had safe sex.*

Paco: *Huh?*

## PANEL 4

Paco: *Do they exist?*

Dr. Hernan, arms spread far apart, says: *I'm not saying they don't but I think it's not unusual to want to do it without barriers.*

## PANEL 5

Paco looks up at Dr. Hernan, with his arms back on the chair arm rests. Dr. Hernan holds the clipboard with both hands.

Paco: *So I'm not so bad.*

Dr. Hernan: *Everybody does it sometime. Enough to catch something.*

## PAGE NINE

### PANEL 1

Angle of view of Dr. Hernan's office shifts again. Dr. Hernan is to the left of the panel and Paco is to the right. A black computer on the dark wooden desk is now present. The window shifts out of view. Paco's body language suggests a new openness. He rests his arms on his chair and keeps his legs evenly spaced.

Dr. Hernan: *Look kid, we're all human. We all express ourselves sexually.*

### PANEL 2

Dr. Hernan: *Safe sex is an abstract. You are not a bad person.*

Paco: *Oh. Thank you.*

### PANEL 3

Dr. Hernan: *Don't let guilt or shame keep you from getting tested.*

### PANEL 4

Dr. Hernan and Paco are still facing one another, but Dr. Hernan is further away, having moved his office chair back towards the computer.

Dr. Hernan: *You need to keep getting tested even if you are afraid.*

Paco: *Thanks doctor.*

### PANEL 5

Paco: *I don't get to talk to health care professionals very much.*

## PAGE TEN

### PANEL 1

Miguel and Paco are walking down the street like the one they travelled along to get to the clinic. Miguel is eating a sandwich with lettuce and

tomato bits hanging out of the sides. Paco has a confusion squiggle emanating from his head once again as he digests the meeting with Dr. Hernan.

Paco, with one arm grabbing the other, says: *Well, I do have to get tested again.*

Miguel: *I'm glad you took care of your health.*

## PANEL 2

Paco, hands in his pants pockets, says: *It'll feel better in 3 months.*

Miguel: *And then you will go to all the sex parties. Just kidding.*

## PANEL 3

Paco: *I don't know—I think I'll get more info about PREP and stuff. But I have a bigger problem.*

Miguel: *You mean how afraid you were?*

## PANEL 4

The panel now views Paco and Miguel face on. They are looking at each other with city buildings behind them before a bright blue sky with fluffy clouds and birds flying. Paco has his left arm around Miguel's shoulders, while Miguel chews and holds his sandwich with both hands.

Paco: *Yeah, I don't like that feeling. Thanks for being there for me.*

Miguel: *No prob.*

**END**

## **CREDITS:**

Image descriptions by Joselia Hughes.