

La casa del tango

Written by Skylise Campbell & Alexis Constantino

Cast of Characters

ESPERANZA ROMANO: 15 year old girl, daughter of Lourdes and Luciano

JULIETA ROMANO: 7 year old girl, Esperanza's younger sister

LOURDES ROMANO: 40 year old woman, mother to Esperanza and Julieta and wife to Luciano

LUCIANO ROMANO: 45 year old man, father to Esperanza and Julieta and husband to Lourdes

ENZO ORTIZ: 16 year old boy, Esperanza's childhood friend and the son of Senora Ortiz

EVA PERÓN: 31 year old woman, the first lady of Argentina

HECTOR SERRANO: 17 year old boy, Esperanza's dance partner

THE REPRESENTATIVE: 35 year old man, works for Eva Peron to bring help to the poor

SENORA ORTIZ: 49 years old, mother of Enzo and is friends with Lourdes

La Casa de el Tango

Scene 1:

The stage is empty but a bright spotlight is shining on a microphone stand. Eva enters through stage right towards the spotlight and begins to speak into the microphone.

EVA PERON:

(clears throat) Hola, everyone! I'm Eva Peron and I'd like to welcome you all to Buenos Aires! Thank you all so much for being here **en la casa de el Tango**. It means so much to me to be able to see so many people here. *(brief pause and smiles at the audience)* Well, without further delay, I'd like to introduce our first dance of this fine festival: **Con ustedes, Esperanza Romano!** Dancing the Argentine tango! **Espero que lo disfruten.**

***Audience noise* fade it out**

Claps and cheers can be heard in the background. Eva exits through stage left as the claps and lights fade to black. Lights turn on. Esperanza and Julieta are seen sleeping on opposite sides of the stage in the back. Lourdes enters through stage right and walks over to Esperanza. Lourdes gently shakes Esperanza.

LOURDES ROMANO:

(gentle voice) Esperanza! It's time to wake up! **despierta!**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(in a sleepy tone) **Cinco minutos mas...** I need to get back to that dream...

LOURDES ROMANO:

(irritated, almost impatient voice) **Ya levantate!** Forget about your dream. You have to start your chores, now! Your father and I are about leave for work.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Ugh... Okay, fine. **ya voy.**

Esperanza sits up on her bed and faces her mom.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Gracias, Esperanza.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Mama, can't you just stay home with us for once? **Nada mas ahora.** Julieta and I never get to see you anymore. **Por favor mama.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

You already know the answer to that. *(sighs)* I wish I could, but I can't. You know we need money in order to live right, don't you? **Entiendolo mi amor.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Si, ya se. And that's why you have to work in the first place.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Thanks for understanding. Just bear with it a little longer. **Todo saldrá bien.**

Lourdes pats Esperanza's head and waves good-bye to her as she exits through stage right.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(sighs) **Que aburrimiento!** It's always the same every day I wake up. Nothing new or exciting to look forward to. *(sighs)* Well, time to wake Julieta up.

Esperanza finally gets up from her bed. She walks over to the other side of the stage to wake up Julieta. She gently nudges her.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(speaks softly) Julieta. Wake up. **Ya es hora.**

Julieta turns her back to Esperanza and tries to go back to sleep.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(irritated voice) Julieta! Julieta, **levantate ya**, ahora! Get up!

Esperanza begins to shake her sister until Julieta slowly sits up. Julieta rubs her eyes and looks up at Esperanza.

JULIETA ROMANO:

Oh, **buenos dias**, Esperanza. What's for breakfast?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Finally, you're up. And... no se. Mom didn't buy food yet so....

JULIETA ROMANO:

Well, hurry up and figure it out. **Tengo hambre!**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

But you just woke up. How can you be hungry already?

Julieta gives her the puppy eyes and shifts to a polite sitting position in front of her. Esperanza begins to protest once more but stops herself and sighs.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Esta bien. Breakfast should be ready in about like.... 10 minutes. You always have your way of getting what you want, huh.

JULIETA ROMANO:

It's called being the little sister, Esperanza. You should know that by now. **Soy tu hermanita.**

Esperanza puts her hands on her hips, giving Julieta a face. Esperanza begins to walk to stage right. Julietta lays back down.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Apurate! Apurate!

JULIETTA ROMANO:

Ya voy, ya voy.

Julietta sleepily gets up and walks sleepily to stage right then turns back to get a toy off her bed. Then proceeds to exit stage right.

Scene 2:

Lights turn on. There are people scattered around the stage. Some are chatting or dancing. There's a table of food in a corner where some people are eating. The Romanos enter through stage left.

JULIETA ROMANO:

Finally, **ya llegamos!** It felt like forever since we were last here. Now it's time to party!

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Hija, calmate. It's just the village festival... We were here last month, remember?

JULIETA ROMANO:

Si me acuerdo, papa. But that was a month ago. Besides, I've been looking forward to eating **asado** and sweetbread. They're my favorite! I never get to eat them at home so this is my only chance.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Julieta! **Escucha a tu padre.** And you can't always be thinking of comida.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Yeah, Julieta. **Siempre piensas en comida.** But we only get to have sweetbread once a month.

JULIETA ROMANO:

Si mama it's not only me who wants to have expensive foods.

Enzo enters through stage left and appears next to Esperanza.

ENZO ORTIZ:

Hola, Esperanza.

Esperanza turns to look at him and smiles.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Enzo!

Esperanza hugs him as Julieta secretly makes a heart where Enzo could see it. Enzo smiles. Lourdes smiles softly at Enzo while Luciano crosses his arms and gives him a stern face. Esperanza and Enzo pull apart from their hug.

LOURDES ROMANO:

It's so nice to see you, Enzo. **Como estan tus padres?**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Nice to see you too. **Mis padres estan bien.** They're over there getting **el asado** if you want to talk to them.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Oh they are? Luciano, let's go say hello to them while we're here. **Apurate.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

What? I don't want to talk to them.

Luciano frowns at Lourdes.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Son nuestros amigos, and we've known them even before Enzo and Esperanza were born. Luciano. Be social every once in awhile.

Luciano lightens up and shrugs his shoulders.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Fine. I was getting hungry anyway. Julieta, **vienes con nosotros?**

JULIETA ROMANO:

(cheers) **Vale!** Sweetbread, here I come!

Julieta, Lourdes, and Luciano walk towards the table with food on stage right. As Lourdes and Julieta exit through stage right, Luciano looks back and gives Enzo an "I'm watching you" gesture while Esperanza isn't looking. Once he finishes, he follows after Lourdes and Julieta through stage right.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

So, Enzo, **como estas?**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Estoy bien y vos, como estas? You think you're dad's going to change his mind about your dancing?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

I'm great and no... He still thinks it's some dumb hobby that I shouldn't have.

ENZO ORTIZ:

That's too bad.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

But it's not just some dumb hobby! It's my lifelong dream! I can't believe he's still against it after so many years...**Es insoportable.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Well, I'm sure he'll get over it eventually. **Eso no lo puede cambiar.** Besides, dancing is what makes you, you. You can't really change that about yourself. *(brief pause)* By the way, I wanted to ask you something very important. **Puedes ponerme atención?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Um, okay? **Que pasa?**

Music Plays

ENZO ORTIZ:

Well... I... uh, I... um... **No se como decirtelo?** *(brief pause)* Esperanza, I know that we're best friends but I've been wanting to ask you-

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(cuts Enzo short) Espera. Hold that thought. I think I hear my favorite song playing!
Vamos, Enzo! Vamos a bailar!

ENZO ORTIZ:

Huh? But I wasn't finished with what I was...

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Dimelo despues. Come on! We'll be dance partners. Like always.

ENZO ORTIZ:

(unenthusiastically) Right... Dance partners forever...

Fade music

Esperanza pulls Ezo and they both exit stage left.

Scene 3:

SETTING: THE VILLAGE SQUARE OFF TO THE SIDE

Senora Ortiz enters stage right, Lourdes enters stage left.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Hola, Senora Ortiz. Como esta?

SENORA ORTIZ:

Me encuentro bien. *(gossiping)* By the way, have you heard the latest news?

Begins to walk away from food table.

LOURDES ROMANO:

No. I don't think so. **Por que? Que paso?**

SENORA ORTIZ:

Well, people have been talking about this program, called the Eva Peron Foundation, that's going to take place in our village. You're supposed to sign up for it if you want to be a part of it. **Es para ayudar a los pobres.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

What is it? **Expliqueme mas por favor.**

Walks to center stage.

SENORA ORTIZ:

It's so that families can get help with anything that they need. Things like food, clothes and sewing machines will be given to us, so we can at least get by every day. And the program is even offering dance classes. Deberias hacer lo. I already signed my family up for it. **Tu tambien deberias de hacerlo.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

Se oye bien. I'd really like to sign up for it too. It'd really help my family. I just need to talk this over with Luciano **mi marido.**

SENORA ORTIZ:

(nods) I just hope he won't be too difficult in letting you sign up. *(brief pause)* By the way, a representative from Buenos Aires was sent here by Eva Peron herself! Turns out, he's looking for people who can perform at the Buenos Aires cultural festival next month. Maybe Esperanza could go perform there. But I think she needs a dance partner first. **El baile tiene que ser en pareja.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

Estas son buenas noticias I hope Luciano will let me sign up for that program. It's really going to help the kids. Maybe they'll finally be able to live happy and comfortable lives. **Finalmente el gobierno está haciendo algo por los pobres.**

SENORA ORTIZ:

I think Esperanza and Enzo are dancing over there, let's go see.

They exit through stage left.

Scene 4:

SETTING: THE ROMANO HOUSE

Lights turn on. Luciano and Lourdes are seen sitting opposite of each other.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Luciano, please **tenemos que hablar.**

Takes shoes off and relaxes in chair.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Can't this wait? I just want to rest after a long day's work. **Estoy cansado y me quiero dormir. Es importante?**

LOURDES ROMANO

Si... at least I think so. Anyway, I know you've heard about the program that helps out families. And I was hoping to-

LUCIANO ROMANO:

(stern voice) We're not going to sign up for that. **Definitivamente no.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

Luciano esto es algo bueno. Just think it over. **Por favor.** Think about the kids. By going with the program, it would provide our kids with education and the dancing opportunity Esperanza has been hoping for. I'm positive it'll make our lives even better. **En verdad lo necesitamos.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Luciano gets up from his seat

And how do you think that makes me feel as a father? I can barely put food on the table, let alone provide our kids with an education. **Me siento fracasado.**

Lourdes looks at Luciano confused.

LOURDES ROMANO:

What, **qué quieres decir?**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

What I'm trying to say is that I don't like that program one bit. Sure it helps our family, but what about me? I can't even support my own family without having you work and in addition to this, we hardly have any time for our daughters.

Lourdes stands up.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Pero con el programa, you won't have to worry about those things anymore. I could get a sewing machine and we wouldn't have to worry about buying clothes, anymore. I could even sell any extra clothes that I'm able to make to earn money. **No podemos dejar pasar esta oportunidad.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

I don't want Esperanza to dance. It is my duty as a father to take care of my family and I am not even doing well in that. Can you imagine how humiliating it would be for my daughter to be a dancer? **Entiendeme Lourdes no podemos permitir esto.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

Well, does it help if you knew the program was sponsored by Eva Peron? **Ella misma esta impulsando.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Eva Peron? **De verdad?** She's the biggest fake in Argentina. All she does is pretend to care of the poor when what she's really for is the popularity that people can give her. She thinks that if she can act all saintly in public, **significa que todos la aman y admiran.** For all we know, that whole program is a scam! Do not even get me started on how she slept her way to the top. (*stands up and begins to walk off the stage*) **Yo no quiero hablar mas de esto. Me voy a dormir.**

Luciano exits through stage left before Lourdes could speak any further. Lourdes sulks back down in her chair. Esperanza enters through stage right. She approaches Lourdes and sits down next to her.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Mama? How are you and papa **estan bien?**

LOURDES ROMANO:

Si, si. We're okay. **No te preocupes** (sighs) **Dime.** How much do you love dancing, **hija?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Stands up

I love it so much, it's all I can think about. It's like, practically my life... err... well rather, I feel dancing is what I'm supposed to do in my life. I can't think of anything else that I would do. **Bailar es lo que más me hace feliz.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

That's what I thought. **Ya me lo imaginaba.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Es malo?

LOURDES ROMANO:

No, of course it's not bad. **Tienes mucho talento** (*long pause*)

Lourdes looks as though she's making a very hard decision.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Um...?

Lourdes stands up and walks to the table and begins to fill out a paper.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Okay, I've decided. I'm going to sign our family up for that program. Just don't tell your father. **Prometanme que no le van a decir nada.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

I won't... **Pero por que no?**

LOURDES ROMANO:

Because it involves you attending a dance class, and possibly going to the capital to perform in its cultural festival. And you know how your father is... Anyway, go and get a dance partner if you want to go to Buenos Aires **Necesitas encontrar a alguien....**

(smile)

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

I can't believe this is actually happening! **Tienes razon!** Things did get better. I need to go and tell Enzo. He's got to hear about this. **Que gran sorpresa.**

Esperanza runs off the stage through right. Lourdes finishes filling out the paper. Then exits through stage right.

Scene 5:

SETTING: VILLAGE SQUARE

Enzo is sitting relaxed on a bench reading a newspaper in the park. Esperanza comes and stands next to him.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(waves excitedly) Enzo!

Enzo sits up straight.

ENZO ORTIZ:

(waves back) Hi, Esperanza. Have you heard Eva Peron was diagnosed with Cancer, but she is still working with her charities? **Que te pasa?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

No I haven't, pero, I've got some exciting news for you to hear. **Estoy muy emocionada.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

(in a teasing voice) What makes your news so exciting? **Dime que pasa.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Que piensas que es?

ENZO ORTIZ:

Okay pues. *(brief pause)* Uh... you.... want to be my girlfriend? **me amas?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Que?

ENZO ORTIZ:

I-I mean... you're... um... you get to see Casablanca in town?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Esperanza talks with a lot of passion and emotion.

Nope, but what I'm about to tell you is even better than Casablanca. **Estas listo?** Wait for it. Wait for it... *(brief pause)* I get to attend weekly dance classes now! And I even get the chance to dance at the cultural festival in Buenos Aires! Isn't this... amazing? You know how long I've been wanting this. Can you imagine? Me, performing in Buenos Aires.... With Eva Peron hosting? That would just be amazing. **El sueño de mi vida hecho una realidad.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Yeah, that's awesome. **Pense que a tu papa se opone rotundamente.** Let alone your dancing.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Yeah, well... **el no sabe de esto... todavía.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

So you and your mom signed up for the program behind his back? **a escondidas!**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

You make it sound like we did something horrible. But yeah, we did... **No le digas a nadie.** This is my one and only chance to pursue dancing. **Lo que estaba esperando por tanto tiempo.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Fine. I won't tell. **No te preocupes.** But if you're going to dance at the Buenos Aires festival, don't you need a dance partner to perform there?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Todavía no lo he pensado.

ENZO ORTIZ:

Well, who do you think would make a great partner? **Con quién te gustaría bailar?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Hmm, good question... **Dejame pensar.** Well, there's that guy from the marketplace. **Su nombre era Pedro? O era Diego? No me acuerdo.** Ooh what about that guy from church? I've seen him dance a couple time. I think his name was Marco. *(brief pause)* **No... alguien mas.** *(long pause)* Yes! I've decided!

ENZO ORTIZ:

Quien?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

My new dance partner. **Pienso que lo conoces.** I've talked to him a couple times, but he probably wouldn't want to be my dance partner even if I asked.

ENZO ORTIZ:

No digas eso. I'm sure anyone would love to be your dance partner. So, **quien es?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Hector. You know him, right?

ENZO ORTIZ:

Enzo steps back and is angry.

Que? Hector? You mean *that* Hector who everybody adores?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Esperanza describes Hector with adoring emotions.

Yep. And it's no wonder everyone adores him. He's so handsome and he has one of the cutest smiles I've ever seen. Lo has mirado bailar? El es increíble. *(insecurely)* But I don't know if I should ask him, I mean he's the most popular boy in our village. He probably doesn't even know I exist...**Bailar con el seria maravilloso.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Uh... I don't think Hector's a good choice for you. **Piensa en alguien diferente.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

What's wrong with him? Everyone says he is great, so he should be the perfect dance partner. I'm pretty sure we'd perform well together anyway. Geez, Enzo. **Cual es tu problema?** I thought you'd support me on this.

ENZO ORTIZ:

(*calmly*) Esperanza, you know I'm giving you my full support but what I'm trying to say is that I don't think Hector is any good. **No es buena idea que bailes con el.** Trust me.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Well, then. I'll just take that as a suggestion, Enzo. But you can't change my mind anymore. My mind is set. Now if you'll excuse me, **voy a encontrar a Hector. No se por que estoy perdiendo el tiempo...**

ENZO ORTIZ:

(*angrily*) You know what? Fine. Do what you want and don't follow your best friend's advice.

Begins to exit stage left while saying..

Nada mas te quiero ayudar.

Enzo exits stage left and Esperanza stands there in disbelief using hand motions to say "what just happened" Then she exits stage right.

Scene 6:

SETTING: ROMANO HOUSEHOLD

Lights turn on and the Romano family is seen on stage sitting in chairs, While Lourdes is washing clothes next to them.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

(*sighs*) **Finalmente puedo tomar un dia libre.** A day off from work to relax. By the way, Lourdes, is it just by coincidence that we have the same day off from work?

LOURDES ROMANO:

Pienso que si.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

(*with concern*) Lourdes? Dear? **Estas bien?** You sound uneasy.

LOURDES ROMANO:

What? **Si yo estoy bien.** You're probably just-

KNOCK KNOCK

JULIETA ROMANO:

Que podria ser? It's been forever since we had visitors.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Yeah... I'm wondering that too. Well... (Rolls eyes) **Ve a ver quien es.**

Luciano walks towards stage left and opens the door. A man walks in with a paper in hand. Luciano looks shocked.

REPRESENTATIVE:

Buenas tardes. Excuse me for intruding. I am a representative sent from Eva Peron. My business today with you is about the program you signed up for. More specifically, I'm here to discuss your daughter's participation in the upcoming cultural festival. **Espero no interrumpir nada importante.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

What the hell! We didn't sign up for any program. **Usted seguramente se ha equivocado.**

Luciano looks at the representative with defiance. The representative calmly looks at his paper.

REPRESENTATIVE:

But isn't there a Lourdes Romano that lives here? **Acaso no es esta su casa?**

The representative looks around the room trying to spot Lourdes. Luciano looks at Lourdes with a face of anger.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Puedes explicar porque estas aqui. (look of skepticism)

The representative looks down to his paper and reviews his notes.

REPRESENTATIVE:

Well, it says here that Lourdes Romano signed your family up for Eva Peron's program and that your daughter is taking part in our dance classes. **Esto es una gran oportunidad para su hija.** Which one is Esperanza.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Decime mas sobre estas clases para Esperanza.

REPRESENTATIVE:

De acuerdo con la información que tengo... It says here that Esperanza Romano will be performing at the cultural festival in Buenos Aires tomorrow. I wanted to discuss that procedures for the festival with her this evening, so if I may-

LUCIANO ROMANO:

(cuts representative off short) I think that's enough, **ya te puedes ir.**

Luciano walks the representative to the door.

REPRESENTATIVE:

Oh but Sir-

Luciano slams the door in the representative's face

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Lourdes and Esperanza, how could you both do this behind my back? You both knew how I felt about that stupid program! You could guys have at least made a good argument to persuade me! I thought you were better than that. Dance classes?! What will people say of us taking from that program? I will look like a failure of a father! And Julieta. **Como puedes hacerme esto? Mi propia familia!!!**

JULIETA ROMANO:

(quietly) **Si, papa?**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Luciano begins to walk off stage.

No escondas nada de mi okay?! I work so hard to provide for this family!

Luciano exits through stage right leaving his guilty family onstage. Lourdes looks at Esperanza and Julietta. Lourdes picks up the shoes from the floor.

LOURDES ROMANO:

I'm serious now I'm leaving you

They exit through stage right.

Scene 7:

SETTING: NEXT MORNING IN ROMANO HOUSEHOLD

Lights turn on. Luciano sitting on the couch. Lourdes enters through stage left and goes to sit down next to him.

LOURDES ROMANO:

Luciano? Dear? I hope you're not angry anymore. **Te pido que me perdones!**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Well, that depends. *(brief pause)* Lourdes, **Porque lo hicistes?** Why did you go against everything that I told you?

LOURDES ROMANO:

I... just wanted Esperanza to get the chance to live out her dreams. She loves dancing, Luciano. It's all she can ever think about. **Es lo único que la hace feliz y ella se merece ser feliz.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Ya se eso. It's not like I don't know. I also want her to live out her dreams, but only on my expense. Only if it's me that she's depending on. **Yo soy su padre y pedir ayuda es una humillación.**

LOURDES ROMANO:

I don't think you should be telling all of this to me. Esperanza should know how you really feel about all of this. She's out front. **Habla con ella. Ella esta muy preocupada.**

Lourdes gets up and walks off the stage through stage right. Luciano walk to the edge of stage right.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Esperanza, can you come in here please.

Esperanza enters stage right and stands next to Luciano. They both walk to the chairs and sit down.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Esperanza, Por que lloras?

Esperanza looks up to Luciano and tries to stop crying.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

It's just that I didn't think you were that opposed to dancing. And you were so mad I felt that I've really failed as a daughter to you. I'm so horrible for doing things behind your back. I didn't even tell you about it. I'm so sorry, papa. The last thing I wanted to do was disappoint you. **Solo quiero que te sientas orgulloso de mi.**

Esperanza starts sobbing again.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

No, no, no, hija. You're an amazing dancer. I was just...just angry with myself with not being able to let you reach your goals. We live on the poverty line and I can hardly sustain my family with this immeasurable guilt that I have. Do you know how humiliating that can be as a father? I hope you can forgive me for my childish attitude to the situation. **Te adoro y quiero ser yo el unico quien te de todo.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

It's okay, papa. I forgive you. **No quiero causar problemas entre ustedes.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Well now that we're a part of that program... (*sighs*) I guess I could let you focus on your dream. Your mother can worry about your chores, go fulfill that dream of yours of becoming an incredible dancer... which you are already. **Esperanza puedes participar en este programa, te doy mi permiso.**

Stands up excitedly.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Really? Are you being serious? Thank you so much, papa! I never thought this day would come! But... I'm supposed to be in Buenos Aires today. And to make matters worse, Hector left me so I don't have a dance partner. So what's the point of even going? **Desafortunadamente ya es muy tarde!**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

I'm sorry, hija... I don't know what to say...**Todo por mi culpa.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

It's fine. Maybe I could dance at the festival next time...**Seguramente habrá otra oportunidad.**

Stands up.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Or... We could catch a train in Rosario and... you can ask Enzo to be your partner. Problem solved, right? **Debemos dar prisa.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

That would be great but... **No se...**

They both sit down.

LUCIANO ROMANO

What's wrong? Is there something bothering you? You know you can tell me anything, right? **Espero que me tengas confianza.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Si papa, I know. I trust you... So, Enzo and I aren't exactly getting along right now. We had a fight a few weeks ago. **No quiero molestarlo.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

But you and Enzo are friends! How could have a fight and still be mad at each other? You were supposed to make up with him weeks ago. Besides, what were you guys even fighting about in the first place? **Creo que deberias de hablar con el mi amor.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

A guy...

LUCIANO ROMANO:

What? Enzo? Oh... I didn't... expect that from him... Not that that's bad... I always thought he-

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Papa! It's not like that. **No pienses mal.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Oh, are you sure?

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Of course I'm sure! We were fighting about a guy, who was my previous dance partner, because he thought that he was a jerk. And turns out, he was right. Tenia toda la razon.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Really? **Que te hizo ese pibe?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Well.... When I told him that I don't think we would be able to go to the festival, he said... (*brief pause*) That he regrets wasting his time in being my dance partner when he could have been with someone else who didn't have to do things behind their dad's back. And the only reason he agreed to be my partner was to take advantage of my feelings for him. **Fue un error pedirle que fuera mi pareja.**

LUCIANO ROMANO:

Oh... Wait a minute, **si te gusta?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Well.... kind of! But all I wanted was a good dance partner and I figured he'd be the one for that. Anyway, I already felt bad that I was going behind your back, but after he said those words I felt even worse. **Me siento humillada papa.**

Luciano pats Esperanza on the back as he talks.

LUCIANO ROMANO:

I'm sorry you had to go through that. I can talk to his parents if you like. (brief pause) But I really think you should go and work things out with Enzo. And don't worry about getting to Buenos Aires. I'll take care of that. Consider this a better apology for being a little too restrictive. Just do your best. We all know you're the best dancer who will be there. **Todo nos va a salir bien pero debemos apurarnos.**

Esperanza and Luciano exit stage right together.

Scene 8:

SETTING: VILLAGE SQUARE

Lights turn on. Esperanza enters through stage left and tries to find Enzo. She sees Enzo sitting on the bench and approaches him.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Hey, Enzo che?

Enzo looks up and is surprised to see Esperanza.

ENZO ORTIZ:

(sad voice) Umm... Hey Esperanza... **Como esta todo...?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

I... just wanted to say that I'm sorry about our fight. I should've just listened to what you were saying. Sorry...**tu tenias razon..**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Yeah. I'm sorry about that too. I didn't mean to say those mean things about Hector. I was being over dramatic about it all. If you want to be his partner, then I shouldn't stand in your way. **Me importa es tu felicidad.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

No, Enzo. Turns out you were right. Hector is such an idiot. He always made fun of my dancing and he was just so mean to me. Look there he comes.

Hector enters through stage left and trips center stage. While two girls come to help him.

El es muy arrogante.

ENZO ORTIZ:

Really? I'm sorry he turned out to be that way for you. **Que terrible! Como se atreve!!**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Entonces...are we friends?

ENZO ORTIZ:

(grins) Of course we are. **Necesito tu amistad.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Y otra cosa... my dad is finally letting me go and dance at the festival. Now I don't have to go behind his back. And since Hector's gone, he said that he would take me and my new partner to the festival.

Enzo stands up.

ENZO ORTIZ:

Really? **que maravilloso!!** But who's the new partner? Hector's out of the picture so...

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Umm... I was thinking that you could be my partner, **no quieres bailar conmigo....** right?

ENZO ORTIZ:

Really? Me, as your dance partner? **Hablas en serio?**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Ya lo sabia. I shouldn't have mentioned it. *(brief pause)* I should probably leave now before I say something stupid and embarrass myself even more. **Lo siento mucho ya me voy.**

Esperanza tries to walk away but Enzo stops her.

ENZO ORTIZ:

I would love to be your dance partner. *(smiles)* **Quiero mucho bailar contigo.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Really? That's great! *(brief pause)* **Estas seguro?**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Of course I'm sure.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

That's good. But what are we going to do about a dance? Hector and I practiced a routine for weeks. **Tu y yo por el contrario no hemos practicado.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Don't worry about it. We'll just flow the music... like we always do. Thanks for choosing me to be your new partner, Esperanza. **No te voy a faiar.**

The both of them hug each other tightly. Enzo was too happy that he impulsively kissed Esperanza's cheek as they were embracing. As soon as Esperanza felt that kiss, she took a step back and stared at him, shocked. Her hand reached up to the place Enzo just kissed her. Enzo starts panicking.

ENZO ORTIZ:

Oh... um... o-ok s-so... I'll s-see you in a b-bit at your house. **Voy a estar listo en una hora.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Y-yeah... S-see you...

They both turn swiftly and go their separate ways. Enzo is seen beating himself up for doing something weird while Esperanza is seen smiling at the fact that Enzo just kissed her.

Scene 9:

Lights turn on and a bright spotlight is shining down on a microphone stand. The representative is seen at center stage.

REPRESENTATIVE:

Welcome everyone to the Buenos Aires Cultural Festival. Sorry for the delay Eva Peron will be here shortly.

***Audience* fades out**

The representative exits. Enzo and Esperanza walk to center stage.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Enzo, estoy nerviosa...

ENZO ORTIZ:

Don't be, you'll do fine. **Recuerda que eres la mejor.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

But I've never danced in front of so many people before... What if I mess up?

ENZO ORTIZ:

Just pretend that no one's watching.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Easier said than done. **Y como lo hago?**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Es facil. Just focus on me and I'll guide you through it. Isn't this the moment you've been waiting for? **Esta noche será inolvidable.**

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

Yeah... but still, there's just so many people. **Mira el escenario como esta.** I'm pretty sure I'm going to trip and fall.

ENZO ORTIZ:

Forget them. Solo somos tu y yo ahora. And if you do fall, I'll be there to catch you. Don't worry. Just trust me.

ESPERANZA ROMANO:

(smiles) Okay, fine. I'm trusting you to make sure everything goes well, okay? **Tratemos de disfrutar entonces.**

ENZO ORTIZ:

Of course. What could go wrong? **Disfrutemos pues.**

Enzo and Esperanza go to the edge of stage right and Eva Peron appears at the Center.

EVA PERON:

(clears throat) Hola, everyone! I'm Eva Peron and I'd like to welcome you all to Buenos Aires! Thank you all so much for being here **en la casa de el Tango.** It means so much to me to be able to see so many people here. The history of Tango dates back to the 19th century. With influences from the African and European tango gained popularity from the poor people. I am glad to introduce the next dance duo who gained this opportunity from my foundation. As you all know I was diagnosed with Cancer and soon I will die. Juan will no longer be in power and tango will be banned, during the Coup of 1955. *(brief pause and smiles and winks at the audience)* Well, without further delay, I'd like to introduce our first dance of this fine festival: **Con ustedes,** Esperanza Romano and Enzo Ortiz! Dancing the Argentine tango! **Espero que lo disfruten.**

***Audience* fades out**

Eva goes over to Esperanza and Enzo. She hugs them both before exiting through stage left. Enzo and Esperanza get into their starting position and wait for their cue to begin. Music is heard and they immediately begin dancing.

Music Plays

After a while, lights fade to black as the couple is dancing. The music is still playing in the background. While the lights are off, the whole cast gets on stage and wait for the lights to turn on before taking a final bow.