



A NEW MUSICAL

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HABANA CARNAVAL

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LYRICS:
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FIRST ACT

SCENE I

A Street in Havana

(The lights come up on two IREMES, both sides of the proscenium.)

The IREMES make noise with the bells tied to their waist. They perform a ritual dance, which arouses the intrigue over the story. Their dancing brings a Conga in.

(The music of the Conga begins.)

A Carnival is performed by men and women in disguise, they all dance to the rhythm of the Conga, there is a virtuoso “Hand to Hand” between dancers and musicians.

Marianne, dressed as a rich American tourist, covered from the sun in a straw hat and wearing sunglasses, enters and takes photographs of the carnival dancers.

The carnival performs for a while and then exits. The Conga music fades in the distance.

The carnival leaves. Only one of the IREMES stays on stage with Marianne.

SCENE II

Dance School

(The scene changes as dance bars and mirrors surround Marianne.)

(Congo music is played in the distance.)

Marianne looks into the mirror. One of the IREMES is with her trying to help her. She cannot see him, since Iremes are spirits. She takes a picture of herself as a last gesture of who she is at present. She takes her hat off. She tries to imitate the Conga dance and the Latin movements. She takes off her high heel shoes and tries again to move in bare feet as a Latino dancer.

(Fade out of the Conga music, which mixes with the sounds of the springs of a mattress.)

(The lights cross fade as the scene changes.)

SCENE III
Caridad's Bedroom

(The sound of the springs of a mattress gets louder.)

Caridad and Miguel, both naked, are making love on a bed. Abruptly Miguel pushes Caridad away. He sits at the edge of the bed beginning to get dressed. Caridad tries to embrace Miguel.

CARIDAD.

(Upset) What's wrong with you Miguel?!!

Miguel stands up and starts to dress.

Caridad stands up, covers herself with a robe and looks to Miguel, almost begging him.

MIGUEL.

(Very upset) Leave me, leave me alone?

He pushes her away.

CARIDAD.

Has anyone told you some gossip?

MIGUEL

What do you think, Caridad? Haven't you joined the "girl scout club"?

CARIDAD.

What are you talking about Miguel?

Miguel grabs her by her shoulders and pulls her towards him violently.

MIGUEL.

I'm talking about what you are up to!

Caridad looks at him and utters no words.

CARIDAD.

(Imploring) Let's talk, sweetheart. Let me tell you what this is all about. Things are not always what they look like.

Miguel throws her onto the bed.

MIGUEL.

To talk with you, that's what I came here for, but I realize I can't stand this any longer. It's too late, Caridad.

Miguel leaves.

CARIDAD.

(Shouting after him) It's not too late, Miguel. It's not late!! (Hysterically) Even if you become a priest, I won't let you go Miguel Montalvo. You are mine, coñoóóóóó, and no one else's...!!!

SCENE IV

Night Club

(Voice in off announces Abel. Musical introduction of the song "Tierra y Son".)

(Spotlight comes up on Abel with two dancing models.)

ABEL.

(Sings) "Inspired on a street of Havana
With details of the Western Baroque
Portraying the shape of a black girl
Brought from another culture in angelical gown
I come up with this song
My Guaguanco turned into son.

The models dance during the song.

Watching from the Morro and its cannons
From the Prado and its lions
All over Malecon walls
I saw the deceiver, the peanut man,
In the corner of the store man
An old man danced danzon
I come up with this song,
It's how my son was born"

Marianne enters the cabaret. While singing, Abel holds out his hand to her and she takes it and dances across the floor to the bar. Abel looks to the customers and ad lib's "YUMA" and the customers applaud Marianne, who smiles back in appreciation. She sits in the bar and asks for a drink.

CHORUS

(Sings) "With this son that was born
there's no abyss
Between the bongo and the guitar
That is what good syncretism is.

Miguel enters the cabaret, and Abel tries to wave hello but Miguel is in a bad mood and sits down at the bar and asks for a drink.

CHORUS

(Sings) “With this son that was born
 there’s no abyss
 Between the bongo and the guitar
 That is what good syncretism is.

Abel finishes singing. Abel and the models bow to their applause. Musician friends of Abel and Miguel, who just played for Abel’s song, go to join their dates at the tables.

(A Danzon musical introduction is played as a background.)

ABEL.

(Staring at his brother) Everything ok, Miguel?

MIGUEL.

(Brief pause) Caridad and me. It’s over.

The musician friends from across the floor applaud Miguel’s termination from Caridad.

ABEL.

(Surprised) Did you break up with the “Doña”? Ave Maria, brother, finally you are having some self-respect (to the Barman) Jose, two rums and one for yourself.

The barman obeys and serves Miguel a drink.

ABEL.

Hey! What if we paint the town red tonight?

MIGUEL.

(Refuses) I’m not feeling well. I have a headache.

ABEL.

(With discretion points to Marianne) What if you take that Aspirin?

Miguel ignores what Abel had just said. Abel crosses over to Marianne.

ABEL.

Ms, do you allow me? (Extends his hand and she accepts. Abel walks Marianne towards Miguel.) My brother is very interested in getting to know you.

Abel walks over and forces Miguel to turn around and come and meet Marianne. From the moment Miguel sees Marianne, he becomes dumbfounded. Abel walks Miguel over to Marianne. Marianne puts out her hand and he puts his into hers to shake it.

MARIANNE.
Hi.

Miguel is speechless. Marianne looks to Abel.

ABEL.
(Prodding Miguel on) Hola.

MIGUEL.
(Staring into Marianne's eyes) Hola.

MARIANNE.
Hello.

MIGUEL.
Hello.

MARIANNE.
Hola. Marianne Fowler

MIGUEL.
Miguel Montalvo. On a tour?

MARIANNE.
I enrolled in a "Cubadanza" workshop.

They look at each other still holding hands, without saying a word.

ABEL.
Alabao! Brother, let her hand free, you are going to wear it out!

Abel separates their hands. They smile and walk to the bar looking at each other.

(The Danzon music begins.)

Caridad and Pupi perform the Danzon very professionally and impressively. During the dance Caridad tries to seduce Miguel with every move she makes. Pupi tries to prevent her from doing this. When the dance is over, they bow to the audience, and then go to the bar.

CARIDAD.
(To Miguel) What about a double to celebrate goodbye?

ABEL.
(To Caridad) I'll pay for that because this celebration is also mine. (Goes to Pupi) Hi Pupi!
Caridad's procurer as always?

CARIDAD.

(Upset to Abel) Tell you what. I've never liked you!

ABEL.

Reciprocal feelings. I feel the same for you.

Pupi pulls Caridad away from Abel. They are both very upset and go to the other side of the bar.

MIGUEL.

For God's sake Abel, don't let her raise hell out of her mouth!

ABEL.

Put some music to this "bro" to let the evil go away.

Abel encourages Miguel to sing.

(The music of the song "Se de ti" begins.)

Miguel crosses to Caridad but then, pointedly, goes back and looks directly into the eyes of Marianne. He stands between both women.

MIGUEL.

(Sings to Marianne) "I know you
Because your eyes turned back to me
And discovered that thirst in you
I know I was attracted to you.

Marianne blushes for the sudden seduction of the young man. Then Miguel turns to sing to Caridad.

(To Caridad) I know you
Because you were moon in night
The one your body betrayed
Though there was plenty and the heat
Was not me who you wanted.

(Back to Marianne) I know you
In the nostalgia of your days
If my voice gets to you as a flower
My love will turn clouds into sun

(To Caridad) And also,
Wondering I found it was the taste
I went on seeking and
Found it wasn't love

I even felt pain,
I didn't want you.

CHORUS.

(Sings)

I found out
There was indescribable pain in my heart
This afternoon when I looked at you.

MIGUEL.

(To Caridad)

In the picture of your eyes
In the look of your face I realized
You didn't want me.

Miguel invites Marianne to dance, while the chorus keeps on singing. Some couples dance. Caridad is jealous. She continues to drink.

MIGUEL, to Marianne, AND CHORUS.

(Sings)

As time passed by I felt
You hold on to me
I could feel your warmth
I want to feel the taste of you.
It was the picture of your eyes
Who told me I attracted you.

(Musical bridge of the song.)

Miguel and Marianne get closer when dancing. She puts her head on his shoulder.

Suddenly Caridad grabs a bottle of rum and runs over and hits Miguel on the head with the bottle. Everyone screams. Music stops. Miguel falls to the floor.

(Blackout.)

SCENE V

Malecon

(Moonlight)

A fisherman is sitting on the wall, in front of the sea and giving his back to the street. The man wears a cap and on one side there is a basket full of fish. The fisherman takes one fish from the basket, puts it in the hook, and throws it to the sea. After a while he gets the hook out of the sea empty. He repeats this sort of inverted fish operation.

Marianne and Miguel enter. Miguel, with a patch on his head, walks in with Marianne, laughing happily together.

MIGUEL.

(To Marianne) Tell me more about you...Why are you studying here?

MARIANNE.

I took other summer courses in New York, but this year everything changed. My mother died.

MIGUEL.

I'm sorry.

MARIANNE.

Mom and I were very close. After her death I felt so sad and depressed. If I hadn't decided to come, I wouldn't have got over it. People are so different here.

MIGUEL.

In what sense?

MARIANNE.

They have given me their support and tried to help me as if they knew me my whole life. They are so simple, so practical and spontaneous that they amaze you.

MIGUEL.

(Takes his hand towards his head) Yes, sometimes we are quite amazing.

Three drunk carnival people in customs walk towards Marianne and Miguel and stop to greet them. One of them puts his hat on Marianne to try it on and another gives her a carnival shawl. Marianne enjoys the fun of wearing a carnival costume. The carnival people try to take her with them but Miguel does not allow them to do it. Then Marianne returns her costume and the revelers leave. Miguel points to the fisherman and he and Marianne walk up to the wall to watch the fisherman. Then a quartet of Miguel's friends from the bar enters to serenade him and Marianne. Before the serenade ends Michel, one of the quartet, sells Marianne some jewelry, then the quartet exits.

MARIANNE.

(Pointing to the patch) Who is she, Miguel? Who did this to you?

MIGUEL.

Caridad gave me much of her support when my brother Abel disappeared and we thought him dead, that's how we started to get in touch.

MARIANNE.

Disappeared?

MIGUEL.

He is a crazy guy who dreams to be a famous International singer; that's why he went off on a boat and stayed a week in the open sea. Fortunately, he was rescued at the edge of sinking.

(A phone rings...Marianne's cell.)

MARIANNE.

(To the cell) Hi, dad! Yes, I'm ok... (To Miguel) He phones me everyday (to the phone) Classes? Perfectly ok, dad... Well, I just went out for a walk. I'm at Malecon with a friend who is a musician and a singer. Yes, Senator at your commands! (Blows him a kiss, hangs up and keeps the cell)..... Pause... (To Miguel) Do you feel fine here?

(Musical introduction of the song "Real dream".)

MIGUEL.

Ok, (Sings) "When I was a boy I used to walk by here
I sat on this wall and talked to the sea

MARIANNE.

(Sings) When I was a girl I dreamed to
Find a twin soul

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

Someone who was like me

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

I've always had that illusion
(The same happens to me)
Now I feel the passion
If I find a twin soul
I keep the hope
(The same I say of me)
And looking into your eyes
(And looking into your eyes)

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

I see my dream come true"

(Musical bridge. Some of the song stanzas are repeated.)

Miguel and Marianne look at each other steadily. A sudden attraction arouses them and they are about to kiss, when the quartet of Miguel's friends enters and interrupts singing "Besame, Besame Mucho." Miguel and Marianne look at each other and start laughing.

QUARTET.

(Sings “Besame, Besame Mucho”)

They walk behind Marianne and Miguel and go on playing until they all exit the stage, except Michel sneaks back to the wall where Marianne left her cell phone and knowing that no one is looking he steals it, then exits the other side of the stage.

(Blackout)

SCENE VI

Night Club (Daylight)

The bar seats are picked up. The barman sweeps the floor, Abel reads a song score as he sings it, and two musicians sharpen their instruments. Four dancers do some exercise.

ABEL.

(To the others) Pay attention folks. If Miguel doesn't show up, the rehearsal is over.

DANCER.

What if he comes?

ABEL.

Well, if he comes, I don't know you, but I don't feel like rehearsing any longer.

The barman starts moving the tables and the chairs as he cleans the floor. Automatically, all the dancers stop doing their exercises and start to pick up their staff. Two of them have carnival costumes in their hands as Miguel enters and says hello.

MIGUEL.

Hi everyone! Waiting for me?

Abel comes over to Miguel.

ABEL.

Hey man, you are overdoing it! You are late for the rehearsal; you don't visit me at my little house in Luyanó and take no time to talk with anybody. What's going on with you?

MIGUEL.

(Smiles) Curiosity kills you, doesn't it?

ABEL.

I must catch up with you, I'm your brother and I want what's best for you, as I told you once, Caridad is not convenient for you, the same with this new girl, don't take it so seriously.

Miguel walks away from Abel trying to ignore him. Abel insists.

ABEL.

Take it easy, if the girl gets very deep into you, breaks your soul, makes a scar on your face and then leaves you, that won't be a big deal, just get on my boat and off we go for her.

MIGUEL.

On your boat, do you insist on killing mom?

ABEL.

I'm a Simple Materialist and a Skeptic Objectivist...Mom knows I expect to join the big leagues of Hollywood, to catch up with the famous ones.

MIGUEL.

Who in the world do you think you are, Abel?

ABEL.

Some people think I'm better than Ricky Martin, (his friends all laugh). Others compare me with Marc Anthony.

His friends laugh harder and Jenny runs over and throws herself on her knees to autograph her chest, mockingly.

MIGUEL.

Your vision of life is a disaster

(Musical intro of the song "My vision of life".)

ABEL.

Stop it! (Sings) "When I meet a girl at the end of the day
 With pleasure I take her to bed
 I let her go in the morning and with melody
 While I take a shower, she says she loves me
 But you, so romantic
 You waste your time while your
 Life goes away
 At this pace, you'll head into a gap
 Counting lost battles.
 At this pace, you'll head into a gap
 Counting lost battles

CHORUS.

(Sings) Don't miss the chance
 Life runs away
 Stories, women, a thousand
 Trips, pleasure
 Growing, changing, restarting...

ABEL.

Looking to the world without pessimism
I can possess all on this earth
Playing hard with optimism
I shall sing to the queen of England
The Vatican and beautiful Italy
They'd love my chants, my great spirit
I'll be famous in ancient Wales
From Puerto Rico to New York
I'll be famous in ancient Wales
From Puerto Rico to New York

CHORUS.

(Sings)

Don't miss the chance
Life runs away
Stories, women, a thousand
Trips, pleasure
Growing, changing, restarting..."

The barman stops the song abruptly by sending them all out of the bar. Some of them leave.

ABEL.

Miguel, I just came up with a wonderful idea. What if we go to the Dance School and give a surprise to your "Yuma", besides we can meet some rhythmic "muchachas", local or imported?

MIGUEL.

Forget it, don't count with me.

ABEL.

(Insists) We can invite the chosen ones for lunch; we need no money, because there is a Paladar in the family.

MIGUEL.

Mom is going to kill us.

ABEL.

Mom looks through your eyes, that's why she is short sighted. (To the others) Chicos, to the "muchachas"!

Miguel refuses. As Abel and the others start to argue with Miguel, the barman threatens to hit them with the broom, yelling.

BARMAN.

Get out! God damn it! (Mumbling to himself as they leave) Sing, sing, sing, all day long. I'll never get out of here. I have to go to the beach.

(The lights fade out.)

SCENE VII

Malecon (Daylight)

Abel, Miguel, Michel, Rayner and Ruben are sitting on the wall while Abel tries to hitch hike.

*The sound of a Coco-Taxi passes by and covers him with the smoke that comes out of the tail pipe.
Abel coughs and the troop laughs.*

(The music of the song “Hiker” begins.)

TROOP.

(Sings) “Hiker
Hiker Abelito, no one gives you a ride
Hiker, no one gives you a ride
From the corner, no one
Gives you a ride

ABEL.

(Sings) Hey, everyone I’m not going far
I’m so bored
Left alone on this corner
No one gives me a ride
I feel myself aging
They say it’s not this way
They say it’s that way
No one feels sorry for me
My brother is so anxious
It’s been two hours since then
No bus, no taxi, no lift
What a lift is there is no humanity!

TROOP.

(Sings) Listen, there is no heart
They have no kids
Listen, there is no heart
No one gives you a ride
Listen, there is no heart
Where is your humanity?
Who’s going to take me?
On a bike, oh no!
Running I go there...”

A muchacha, in short shorts and a T-shirt enters riding her bike. They all stop her and beg her to hitch hike for them. She gets off the bike and assumes a very attractive pose, as Abel and his friends hide. A car jams his brakes. The driver is the Barman. Abel and the troop jump in to the car.

BARMAN.

(Surprised and upset) You again!

The driver angrily drives away. While the Troop keeps singing the final stanza repeatedly. The young girl bikes off.

(The music and the light fade out simultaneously.)

SCENE VIII

Caridad's Bedroom

In the room an altar with the image of the Caridad del Cobre Virgin. Candle lights and amber atmosphere. Godmother, Caridad, Pupi and a group of Santeras are on stage.

(A cenital light comes upon the Godmother and Caridad...The light gets brighter.)

Pupi and a group of Santeras watch the ceremony. One of the Santeras sings a ritual song. The Godmother has religious props as elements to do her work.

GODMOTHER.

Oh, Caridad, Caridad! The Itá is never wrong and what it says scares me to death. There is an Osá involving you. The hole is open! Did you hear that? You are capricious and that is going to be your disgrace! Oh, Caridad del Cobre!

CARIDAD.

I want that woman away from what is mine! Tell me Godmother what I must do.

GODMOTHER.

Caridad, you are lighting a candle to God and one to the Devil....Treason has a bad price and you have to pay for it, daughter!

CARIDAD.

No, Godmother, no...

GODMOTHER.

(Interrupts her) You disobey and never listen to the Saints and this would bring you much pain!

CARIDAD.

I love Miguel, that's why I want him by my side.

GODMOTHER.

So, who are the shadows you let touch your body so gently.

CARIDAD.

Nobody!

GODMOTHER.

Don't lie to me Caridad, don't lie to me!

CARIDAD.

They are just men who offer me their money and treat me like a queen, just that!

GODMOTHER.

You are prostituting yourself! (To Pupi). Your sister is prostituting herself! Don't forget Yemayá punishes injustice and treasons. Your guardian angel will turn his back on you. Let us pray on your head.

The Godmother prays on Caridad's head.

(Bata drums start.)

Caridad falls into a trance, and wildly dances with Caridad's Santera helpers. At the end Caridad screams furiously.

CARIDAD.

Miguel is mine Godmother. I won't let anyone take him away from me! He is mine! Mine! Mine!

Pupi bends down on his knees and embraces Caridad trying to persuade and protect her. They both remain like this in front of the altar of the Virgin until the act is over. The Godmother leaves scolded by the Santeras.

SCENE IX

Ballet School's Room

Marianne and some dancers perform some dancing steps as dictated by the "maestro". Abel, Miguel, Rayner, Michel and Ruben enter the room singing and each grabs a muchacha to dance as they sing the song "Rain of Hearts".

GUYS.

(Sing)

"Rainfall, rainfall of hearts

A thousand hearts are falling, they cover the city

Abel, the troop and the dancers dance. Miguel and Marianne join the funny choreography.

MIGUEL.

(Sings) I want you, don't let me drown
I'm saturated; open your door to me
Babe if you know I want you
That you mean a shelter to me
From the heavenly rain
This rain is killing me
If it keeps on falling
I believe I drown

GUYS AND GIRLS.

(Sing) Rainfall, rainfall of hearts
A thousand hearts are falling, they cover the city

GUYS.

(Sing) I want you, don't let me drown
Babe, I'm saturated, open your door to me
You know coming in is not that easy
First I find the key so you let me in

GUYS AND GIRLS.

(Sing) My rhythm is tasteful and fast
What it provokes in me
You wouldn't stand it.

EVERYONE.

(Sing) Rainfall, rainfall of hearts
A thousand hearts are falling. They cover the city
Come on, join me
I'll open my door and dancing you'll have my love
Come on everyone let's have fun.
Rainfall, rainfall of hearts
A thousand hearts are falling and cover the city
We get wet and we are not saturated.
If you follow our steps
You'll be happier.

ABEL.

Girls we want to invite you to lunch!

The Girls accept and begin picking up their things. And suddenly the sound of a cell phone is heard. Marianne recognizes the sound as being her lost cell phone. Then everyone realizes the sound is

coming from Michel's pocket. Michel is caught as the culprit. He takes it out and gives it to Marianne joyfully embarrassed. They all exit happily.

SCENE X

Paladar

The tables and their chairs are picked up. The room is empty. Mom folds the table clothes.

Abel, Miguel, Marianne and their friends enter.

ABEL.

(Takes mom's hands) Folks, it is my pleasure to introduce to you the main author of this beauty, me!!(Kisses her) Mom we have guests for lunch, but we have no money.

MOM.

As always! But don't worry, it goes on the house.

They all clap their hands and laugh.

MIGUEL.

(Kisses Mom) Mom, I would like you to meet my friend Marianne.

MOM.

I'm glad to meet you!

MARIANNE.

I'm glad to meet you too!

MOM.

Where are you from?

ABEL.

She is Yuma, a red blooded American! (To Mom) Hold it, mom. There is no rush (To the others) Are you hungry?

EVERYONE.

Yes!

ABEL.

Wrong answer, you just have a reasonable simple appetite. Take your seats we'll soon start serving!

The pupils and the troop sit down in a rush. Abel joins them.

MARIANNE.

(To Mom) Wait for me. May I help you in the kitchen?

MOM.

Don't worry. It's not necessary; excuse me (She goes into the house).

MARIANNE.

(To Miguel) I think your mother doesn't like me.

MIGUEL.

Don't worry about that. She gets nervous when there are too many people to eat.

Miguel and Marianne look at each other so sweet.

(The lights focus on Miguel and Marianne and they sing "Owner of my soul".)

MIGUEL.

(Sings) "I had always the hope
When my nights were only to think
As an innocent child I only believed
It was possible to love in the end
That obsession grows like fire
It's not easy to explain
Like a guardian angel to me
I found out, you are that love
Living in you and be your eyes
The look in your eyes, your blessing
Give all I never gave to anyone
Feeling you in my heart
I discover that the light in your eyes
Is what makes my heart beat
That strength, that makes me love,
Today your warmth conquers me.

MARIANNE.

(Sings) All my fears go away
What a great joy
To let the heart guide me
For I will understand I live only for you.
Thanks God for this love
That makes my passion grow.

MIGUEL.

Owner of my soul, I'm happy.

MARIANNE.

Owner of my soul, I'm happy.

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

(Duet) Owner of my soul, I'm happy
 Owner of my soul, I'm happy...

Their friends shout "Kiss, kiss, kiss". Miguel and Marianne kiss each other.

(Lights dim out.)

SCENE XI

Caridad's Bedroom

(Candle lights and amber atmosphere.)

There are candles in the room, Caridad is lying in front of the Virgin, and she makes sounds with a bell. Pupi enters the room.

PUPI.

Caridad. (Pause) Caridad, are you so upset because Miguel is still with the Yuma?

CARIDAD.

Blame it on Abel. Miguel is not the kind of man who looks for foreigners.

PUPI.

Maybe he doesn't look for them, but what if he finds them. Oh, Caridad, why do you complain so much...? I dream of meeting a Swiss guy like yours.

CARIDAD.

He is not Swiss, Pupi, he is Swedish.

PUPI.

Well, the important thing is not the country, but the money the subject has.

CARIDAD.

Their relation won't last long. I'll manage to put an end to it! I'm going to go there right now and finish it!!!

PUPI.

Listen girl, how many times do you need for a man to throw you away to feel yourself thrown away? Don't be silly, I'm sure he knew about you and the Swiss, and he threw you away.

CARIDAD.

Damn it, he is not Swiss, coño, he is Swedish!!

PUPI.

Let's go. May the Virgin protect us!!!! You pray and pray, but you don't listen to the Itá, the Godmother or even me, your brother!!!!

CARIDAD.

If you want, stay here but I am leaving.

Caridad and Pupi exit.

(Blackout.)

SCENE XII
Miguel's Bedroom

(The illumination gets lighter until it creates a romantic atmosphere in the room.)

Marianne and Miguel on the bed. Miguel plays the guitar and sings while Marianne smiles.

MIGUEL.

What are you laughing at?

MARIANNE.

I was wondering that after so many years of hearing about Cuba, I find myself naked and in love, on the bed of a Cuban.

MIGUEL.

It shows you are alive. (Smiles). Saved and sound yet.

Both laugh and kiss each other repeatedly.

A panel of the building that covers Miguel's room flies in.

SCENE XIII
The Street

(Night)

Pupi and Caridad stand in front of Miguel's house. Caridad screams from the street.

CARIDAD.

Miguel, open the door!!!! I know she's there!

Abel enters the scene and is surprised of what is happening.

ABEL.

(Annoyed) What's going on, Caridad, why are you making so much noise in front of my house?

CARIDAD.

Don't talk to me Abel, I came to take off the bandage you put on Miguel.

ABEL.

There is no patch because he knows you are a cheater.

Caridad takes a step to slap Abel and Pupi stops her.

PUPI.

Don't cause a scandal, Caridad, don't!

Miguel comes into the street and faces Caridad.

MIGUEL.

(Very angry) Listen Caridad, we have nothing to talk about!! You go your way and I go mine.

Marianne enters the scene and walks towards Miguel.

CARIDAD.

(She gets upset when she sees Marianne) What's your way, Miguel? Is she your way? You sentence me as a hooker, so what about you two?

MARIANNE

(Taking Miguel's hand) I must go, come with me.

CARIDAD.

(Calls Marianne away from the others) Listen girl, don't you realize they are both using you to take them out the country?!

Caridad goes away with Pupi.

MIGUEL.

That's a lie Marianne, don't believe what she says, she wants you away from me!!!

MARIANNE.

How can I know who is telling the truth? Leave alone, I don't feel well.

Marianne separates from Miguel. Miguel goes after her.

MIGUEL.

Marianne!!!

ABEL.

Let her go, Miguel, let her go. Her doubts are obvious. Caridad confused her.

Miguel so sad watches Marianne exit.

(Spotlight hits Miguel isolating him from the rest.)

The carnival Comparsa begins, it moves with choreographic movements from one side of the scene to the other. They surround and envelop Miguel.

Curtain

(End of the Act I)

SECOND ACT

SCENE I

A Street in Havana

A young man stands in front of the building smoking a cigarette from the opposite side of the stage. An older male European tourist enters, spots the young man and surreptitiously walks over to speak to him in private. They walk off together. From another part of the street a rich American man with two girls enters and crosses to the opposite street and exits. While they are crossing Marianne enters alone, depressed. A spotlight hits her as she begins to sing.

(The song “Obscure” begins to play.)

While she is singing other people cross the street including Miguel who is also depressed.

MARIANNE.

(Sings) “Dark, everything is so dark,
Solitude is hurting me,
Nothing is safe
I have no one to trust
Who am I suppose to believe
This doubt is killing me
I don’t know what to do.

MIGUEL.

(Sings) It can’t be so
Don’t leave her alone
Love, don’t leave her alone
Make her understand
She is my woman
The one my soul adores
She is so gifted
She is my sea, she is my way.

MARIANNE.

Maybe it was a dream, an illusion.
When I woke up he was in my heart.

MIGUEL.

It wasn’t an illusion
What we had was real
Only with you I could love.

MARIANNE.

Dark, everything is so dark.

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

(Duet) Solitude is hurting me.
What a pain, it's so hard!"

(The scene fades away.)

SCENE II

Paladar

Miguel sits at a table, his face buried in a pillow. There is a bottle of rum on the table. Mom enters carrying a tray, a cup of coffee and a wet rag. Abel comes in with her.

MOM.

(To Abel) Look at your brother. He looks so awful! I've tried hard to cheer him up and it's been useless. I hope you are not responsible for this. I don't even want to think about it!

Mom hands in the rag to Abel and leaves.

ABEL.

(Walks towards Miguel and squeezes the water out of the wet rag on Miguel's head.)
Come on lazy guy, get up, it's late!

MIGUEL.

(Wakes up). Late for what?

ABEL.

To live my brother, to live the life. Take that prehistorical depression out of yourself. You look like a vegetable in winter. Come up, will you!?

MIGUEL.

(Changes his pose) Do you know whom I dreamed of all night? Dad.

ABEL.

Did you tell him that the house grandma left me in Luyanó is almost falling apart?

MIGUEL.

(Upset.) You always think about material things!

ABEL.

Don't worry, brother, I wouldn't think about anything when the ceiling falls on my head. Oh, yes! You told him that your greatest love left you!

MIGUEL.

Don't piss me off, Abel!

Miguel gets the cushion to hit Abel. Abel avoids him and laughs.

ABEL.

Be honest with me brother. Do you feel attraction for her because of her sensuality or because she is a foreigner? (He laughs.)

MIGUEL.

Because I'm in love with her.

ABEL.

And how do you know that? The fact you can't take your eyes and hands off her doesn't mean it's love. It may be lust.

MIGUEL.

Every time I see her, my heart beats.

ABEL.

Heart beating fast and arrhythmia have the same symptoms. Do you have cardiac problems?

MIGUEL.

I just can't take her out my mind.

ABEL.

That's not love. You believe in a lie!

MIGUEL.

Don't play with me or you'll regret it!

ABEL.

Like father like son. You are genetically identical to dad, with the same silly passion for everything.

(The song "Papa said" begins.)

MIGUEL.

(Sings) "Papa said that our dreams could
Be real with love
They give us wings to make the
World a better place.
Place your hands towards the sun
Try to smile
Thank God for your life.

ABEL.

(Sings) Wake up from those dreams
Life is not dreaming

Live reality
There's no way than the truth.
Take good care of your heart
Don't offer it so much
It might get sick
This relation might hurt you.
Think more about yourself.

MIGUEL.

How could you?!

ABEL.

Avoid failing.

MIGUEL.

You shouldn't!"

ABEL.

Dreaming doesn't fill your pocket.

MIGUEL.

Think less in material stuff
And try to change.

ABEL.

Don't get higher

MIGUEL.

Think that love
One day love will knock at your door,
Love will come to your life.

MIGUEL AND ABEL.

(Duet) Is so good to remember
Papa's dreams."

Abel hits Miguel with the cushion and runs to hide behind Mom, who is coming from the kitchen in that moment. Miguel throws the cushion to Abel, but hits Mom in the stomach instead.

(Blackout.)

SCENE III
Night Club

(Cabaret light.)

An Emcee announces Caridad and Pupi's mambo dance.

(Musical introduction of a Mambo.)

Pupi and Caridad run on stage and show their professional way of dancing. Marianne watches the dancers while drinking from the bar.

The Mambo finishes. Pupi sneaks over to the bar as Caridad goes to the dressing rooms.

PUPI.

(To Marianne) Do you remember me? I must admit that I feel sorry for what happened. That's why when I saw you I decided to tell you everything.

MARIANNE.

What's everything?

PUPI.

Excuse me, but I'm so thirsty. (Touches his throat).

MARIANNE

Order yourself a drink.

PUPI.

Thanks. (To the barman) Julian, a double. (Julian indicates "money?") She pays, pal!

The barman serves him a drink.

MARIANNE.

What's all you have to tell me?

PUPI.

(Looks back to see if Caridad is there) My sister Caridad told you that Miguel was using you to leave the country, but I know it's not true. She made up this story to take him away from you. He is good, very good .

Marianne thoughtfully thanks Pupi for what he told her.

After a brief pause, Pupi touches her very tenderly.

MARIANNE.

Pardon?

PUPI (to Marianne)

Can I ask for another drink?

MARIANNE.
Sure!

PUPI.
Thirst damages me more than alcohol. (To the barman) Juli, one more drink.

Caridad comes in from the dressing rooms and crosses over to the bar.

CARIDAD.
Pupi! What are you doing talking with the one who steals husbands?

PUPI.
Don't start, Caridad. She is Americana and she doesn't need to steal husbands, she can buy them!

Caridad blows some witchcraft powders over Marianne without noticing that Miguel was watching. Pupi takes her away. Miguel tries to go after her. Marianne walks towards Miguel.

MARIANNE.
Miguel, don't!

(Musical introduction of the song "Me da igual".)

(The lights change.)

MARIANNE.
(Sings) "If you talk about love, I forgive you
Please, don't tell me about your past
If you had a carnal past
I don't care
I just want to be honest with you
When I first met you I felt myself new
If you really love me
That past has no sense to me.

MIGUEL.
(Sings) All the love you are giving
Your tenderness and the way you forgive
Have turned my heart into a new world
I don't feel lonesome, I will never leave you.

MARIANNE.
You came to my life and took my nest
You healed a wounded bird,
There's no need to look back.

MIGUEL

If you talk about love, I forgive you.
Please, don't tell me about your past
If you really love me
That past has no sense to me.

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

(Duet) All the love you have given
Your tenderness and the way you forgive
Have turned my heart into a new world
I don't feel lonesome, I will never leave you.
You came to my life and took my nest
You healed a wounded bird,
There's no need to look back.

MARIANNE.

If you talk about love, I forgive you
Please, don't tell me about your past.

MIGUEL AND MARIANNE.

(Duet) If you really love me
That past has no sense to me."

(The music fades away.)

Marianne and Miguel hug.

(The light fades away.)

SCENE IV

Hotel Nacional Suite.

A bellboy comes into Charles room and sets the table. Then he asks him to sign a check. The bellboy waits for a tip but he is upset because Charles pays him with a very cheap coin.

BELLBOY.

Thanks. (as he exits)

Marianne comes in smiling. She's dressed and combed very differently from the last time Charles saw her in America.

MARIANNE.

Dad!

CHARLES.

Marianne! Look at you!

MARIANNE.

Do you like it?

CHARLES.

(Smiling) You may ask yourself about what I'm doing here. I just came for one reason. You! Last time we talked on the phone I found you different, irritated or worried.

MARIANNE.

Everything is ok, don't worry.

CHARLES.

Darling, I didn't send you here to do anything different from dancing.

MARIANNE.

What do you mean, dad? Everything is fine, sure.

Charles leads Marianne to the table and helps her with the chair.

CHARLES.

I want what's best for you, Marianne.

MARIANNE.

I know.

CHARLES.

Wonderful! Some days ago I phoned Havana and talked with your teacher.

MARIANNE.

What did she tell you?

CHARLES.

That you are an excellent student but you are not the same lately. She thinks something is happening to you. What is it all about? What's his name?

MARIANNE.

One thing doesn't have to do with the other.

CHARLES.

What is his name!?

MARIANNE.

His name is Miguel. I'm not a girl any longer!

CHARLES.

(Angry) Anyway you are still my daughter although you have lost your mind! I thought this trip would help you to get rid of the ghosts of your mother's death, but I never thought you would get involved in anything different. I'm not going to weaken this time! You come back to me!

MARIANNE.

(Upset) America would be the perfect place to be part of your ego!!

CHARLES.

You are talking nonsense!!! (He sings.)

When I was seven I left this place
Leaving all my memories behind
Returning was not possible
I left my nest, my roots.
I consented to let you make this trip
Flying against my best judgment
So on this island you would understand
My departure was the right thing to do.

I was Peter Pan within the shadows
Exile was my religion
Don't destroy your fate
Listen to your heart.

Now I know Marianne, darling
That you love the life of this people
With your stubbornness you are opening a wound
Very difficult for me to heal.

I was Peter Pan within the shadows
Exile was my religion.
Don't destroy your fate
Listen to your heart."

MARIANNE.

I understand you, dad. You never told me any of this before. *(She kisses the top of his head in support of his vulnerability, as an Ireme enters to bolster Marianne's power to stand up for herself.)*
But you don't understand me. Even if you kidnap me and take me with you, I will come back to Cuba.

CHARLES.

How could you challenge me!? I swear, I'll take you with me!

MARIANNE.

You were very sensitive before being Senator, but there is nothing left. What do you want from me, dad?

CHARLES.

I want understanding and respect. You are not the same girl I sent here three months ago.

MARIANNE.

I haven't changed. I'm the same girl. It's just that I'm in love.

CHARLES.

Of a goddamn musician!

MARIANNE.

Of my independence! I love you dad, and nothing you do will change that, but now I realize that I can live without your protection.

CHARLES.

What in the world are you talking about, Marianne?

MARIANNE.

I need to make mistakes and learn how to correct them.

CHARLES.

You've already made your first mistake. I hope it will be the last one.

MARIANNE.

Dad! I have decided to stay here after the course is over!

CHARLES.

It would never happen! If you don't come with me, I will ask them to cancel your visa extension!

MARIANNE.

Please, dad, I ask you to meet Miguel and his family.

CHARLES.

What could this people offer you? I know the reality of this country, Marianne!

MARIANNE.

Everything that lives changes. Only death is the same. It's my life, dad....I'll be the woman I want to be and live the reality that I decide!

(The song "The place that I belong" begins to play.)

MARIANNE.

(Sings) "I am like a free leaf in the wind
I've always wanted to touch the sky
I could finally get there
I fly like a bird to immensity

My broken wings healed
And lost all my fears
When I look around I see
There is life and love where my heart breathes.
It is light inside myself
You understand that
Because you loved a woman with passion

I am like you are
Someone who laughs, love and fight
With the strength to win
Facing the truth
With the right to happiness
I've always wanted
And you can't stop me
I must walk my way
Searching for love."

CHARLES.

(softened) Ok. I'll go there with you to meet them, but I will never understand you.

Charles gets his jacket.

MARIANNE.

I hope one day you'll understand me.

Marianne and Charles exit.

SCENE V

Paladar

There are some customers in the place. Mom is tendering the tables. Abel comes into the paladar. His head and clothes are covered with dust and plaster pieces.

MOM.

(Shocked) What's happened to you son? Look at your clothes!

ABEL.

A piece of the ceiling of the house in Luyanó fell.

The clients in the paladar star laughing.

MOM.

Ave Maria Purisima! This is the last thing we needed. How did it happen?

ABEL.

That's what happens when money is not enough.

(Musical introduction of the song "Derrumbe".)

CHORUS.

(Sings) "It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.
It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.

ABEL.

(Sings) I had so much work last summer
Using sand, cement, I fixed it everywhere
I used to live happily at my parents'
Why did I get myself into this?
I lost everything compadre.

While he sings the clients feel pity for him and stand up to give him money.

CHORUS.

It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.
It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.

ABEL.

When I saw the wet walls
It reminded me the day they were painted
As I sweat repairing the ceiling
The strong wind destroyed my house.

CHORUS.

It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.
It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.

ABEL.

If there are so many ways to pay for my sins
Why does it have to be this way if I'm discipline?

CHORUS.

It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.
It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.

ABEL.

If a man is brought to life from a good mother
Why then a sand house as punishment.

CHORUS.

It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.
It fell down,
The house of Luyanó fell down.

ABEL.

If there is a cyclone

CHORUS.

My house fells!!!

ABEL.

If there is snow storm
I can't imagine what could happen!!!"

The clients realize that the same thing that happened to Abel could happen to them. So they take the money they had given Abel back and start leaving the paladar.

(Music stops.)

ABEL.

(To Mom) I can't put up with this any longer, Mom, I know you'll suffer but I have no other choice.
I'll have to leave, Mom.

MOM.

What? Do you call a choice going to the sea and become a victim?

ABEL.

I have faith. That's all. I don't even have a house left for myself.

MOM.

(Worried) Don't do anything insane, son.

Miguel comes in very upset.

MIGUEL.

Abel, we have to talk. (To Mom) Hi, Mom.

Miguel walks towards Abel.

ABEL.

Why are you so upset?

MIGUEL.

Do you want to kill Mom, or kill yourself?

ABEL.

What is it all about?

MIGUEL.

I've just heard you are planning a new escape. Have you forgotten you were lost for a week and we didn't know where you were?

ABEL.

You enjoy playing the role of the right brother! (Starts to leave).

MIGUEL.

Your narrow way of seeing the world is what worries me!

Miguel walks towards Mom and tries to calm her down.

MOM.

Do something Miguel, your brother has to make up his mind!

MIGUEL.

I don't know, Mom, if I could.

Marianne comes in with Charles.

MIGUEL.

Marianne!

MARIANNE.

(To Charles) Dad, this is Miguel, my boyfriend; and this is Mom.

CHARLES (to Miguel)

Hi! (Charles walks towards Mom) How are you madam?

MOM.

I'm glad you are here! Forget about the protocol and let's get comfortable.

MIGUEL.

(To Charles) Do you want to drink something?

CHARLES.

No, thanks.

MOM.

So, what about this pleasant visit?

CHARLES.

My daughter wanted me to know you, but I won't give her my consent about what she wants to do, because her home and future belong somewhere else and not here.

MOM.

I understand she won't find the happiness she deserves, we don't have much to offer. They are young and they don't understand, but that's the truth.

MIGUEL.

Mom, we want to get married and live together.

MOM.

Where?

MIGUEL.

Don't worry Mom, I need you and I won't leave you alone.

MOM.

That's what you say now, but for how long? (*Miguel does not answer*). As a mother I'm risking too much; don't count with me Miguel because I won't back you up!

CHARLES.

The lady coincides with me. Let's forget about this. Come on Marianne, let's go!

MARIANNE.

Happiness is a personal state, dad. No one will take it away from me.

MIGUEL

Don't worry about us, we are happy!

Marianne and Miguel exit. Charles and Mom look at each other. They do not understand.

SCENE VI
Coast (Night)

(The “Balseros” song begins.)

A group of balseros come in carrying some sailing implements. They dance the Balseros.

ABEL AND THE BALSEROS.

(Sing) “What a great nation
 We are leaving behind the great sea
 Where one day for sure our lives will change!

ABEL.

(Sings) We have the hope
 Of the American dream
 We trust in the Virgin
 We trust the oars to our hands.
 Maybe any of us
 Looses his soul on the way

BALSEROS.

 We go for our dreams
 Searching for a great destiny.
 Talent and luck will help
 I have a life’s time to succeed
 I’ll sail and my happiness
 Couldn’t drown in this sea.

ABEL.

 Oh, God, protect our lives,
 In the departure
 We leave our families
 This is our pain
 Breaking our hearts
 The fatherland isn’t easy to forget

BALSEROS.

 Protect our souls
 Light our departure.
 I will get there to succeed
 Talent and luck will help me win
 I will fight for the opportunity
 That awaits for me in America.”

(The song finishes.)

The Balseros Dancing finishes.

(The lights dim to darkness.)

(The sound of sea waves mix with the musical introduction of the song “Sueño hecho realidad”.)

(A light comes up on Mom.)

MOM.

(Sings) “How many sons will say good-bye
 How many will leave
 I will never understand
 Oh .God, why?
 The only thing I can do
 Is just waiting
 For a day to meet each other again
 To share that dream come true
 And live in a world with no frontiers
 To live in peace.
 Our future is
 Inside our hearts
 It’s only with love
 That my dream come true
 Will survive.
 I’m sure my boy
 Without his warmth
 Will come back
 His dreams will come true
 With so much passion
 With a new life
 His wound will heal
 And find himself.
 Our future is
 Inside our hearts
 It’s only with love
 That my dream come true
 Will survive.

The song finishes. Mom exits.

SCENE VII

Street-Solar in Havana

At sunset. Effect s of a noisy street begins. Caridad and Pupi are playing Dominoes. Caridad is drinking rum and hits on the table.

PUPI.

(Reprimands her) Caridad! Stop drinking. It doesn't do you any good. You are almost drunk!

CARIDAD.

Don't mess with me, Pupi. I drink what I want!

Charles and Marianne come in.

CHARLES.

What a mess of a city! So many buildings in ruins, so much mixture of styles lost, solares and dirt! Is this mess where you would like to live? Is that what you want for yourself?

MARIANNE.

No, dad, I don't even want this for this people; but they have faith that it will change, don't forget that we have ghettos in Baltimore on the way to Washington.

CHARLES.

Do you want to leave everything, to start with nothing?

MARIANNE.

I want to be part of it, not judge. There's much here left here to be done. I want to help.

CHARLES.

(Upset) You are crazy! (He exits).

PUPI.

Ave Maria Purísima, Caridad, look who's there!

CARIDAD.

(Angry) What is the bitch doing here?

Caridad very aggressively walks towards Marianne. Pupi tries to stop Caridad from walking. Caridad struggles with Pupi. Some Bata players enter. The background Rumba intensifies. Caridad pushes Pupi away and runs towards Marianne to face her.

Caridad and Marianne dance. Suddenly a neighbour throws a pair of sleepers. Everybody is observing the impressive rhythmic dance.

Caridad and Marianne dramatize a choreography as rivals. The neighbours act as chorus of rivals. At the end Marianne wins.

Caridad hurt and angry grabs a knife from a neighbor. The neighbors look afraid. Miguel enters. Caridad run to kill Marianne but Pupi interferes and Caridad stabs him to death instead.

CARIDAD.

(Cries with pain over Pupi and screams) Pupi!!! (Neighbors lead Caridad away.)

The Iremes start a funeral ritual. The Godmother appears and puts a mask on Pupi. The neighbors carry Pupi out of the stage. Miguel takes Marianne out.

(The Bata drums fade.)

The Iremes bring in the Carnival. The dancers perform a contemporary carnival dance. It's the end of the story.

In a certain moment, the Carnival brings in Marianne, Miguel, Mom, Charles, Caridad, Pupi and everybody sing a chorus.

EVERYBODY.

(Sing) "A magic story about love
Something to share
A whole world to change
A Carnival story
That shows the feelings
Of our souls with no owners.

A sky and a sea
That gives us the strength to love
A real paradise, for love.

Open your heart
Give your smile away and more
It doesn't matter if you think differently
It's time to change this story.

Love to eternity
Love and Peace
Peace."

THE END