

DREAMS AMERICANOS

A Chamber Opera in One Act

Music by Chris Pratorius Gómez

Libretto by Alan Olejniczak and Chris Pratorius Gómez

Loosely Based on *Cyrano de Bergerac*

By Edmond Rostand (1897)

Chris Pratorius Gómez

2426 Oriole Lane

Santa Cruz, CA 95062

cpratorius@gmail.com

831.247.5424

www.pratorius.com

Alan Olejniczak

672 Teresita Blvd.

San Francisco, CA 94127

alanlolen@gmail.com

415.728.1111

www.alanolejniczak.com

CHARACTERS

DANI	<i>Mezzo Soprano</i> - Dani is a queer songwriter and performer from Guatemala. She's got swagger, looks in her twenties, and has a scar on her cheek. Latina.
MADDIE	<i>Soprano</i> - Madeline is a college student who works as a waitress in the pub. She is finishing her Master's Degree in French Literature at UC Santa Cruz. Twenties. White or Asian
CRISTIAN	<i>Tenor</i> - A charming second-generation, bilingual Mexican-American who is a barman but is studying computer science. Twenties. Latino
MATEO	<i>Bass-Baritone</i> - The pub manager and gay man from the Dominican Republic. He looks forty. Black or Latino
TAYLOR	<i>Soprano</i> - She sings and plays guitar in the pub. She is in her twenties, Cast non-white
DARCY	<i>Speaking Role</i> - He is Maddie's old boyfriend. He in his twenties, white

SETTING

Scenes 1-4: The interior of a pub called *Castillos de Arena*, a college haunt in downtown Santa Cruz. It's charming and inviting with a dated beach theme décor. There is a door to the kitchen and one that goes onto the street. There is a large window that looks onto Pacific Avenue. It has bar stools and a small stage for performers. The tables and chairs of the pub extend past the stage for the audience to sit on. Scene 5: Outside, in front of the Roller Coaster at the Boardwalk.

TIME

Present-day

SUMMARY

Dreams Americanos is loosely based on *Cyrano de Bergerac* but rooted in the contemporary immigrant experience. Sung in English and Spanish, this bilingual opera is set in a pub in the oceanside town of Santa Cruz. It features young characters not easily defined by their identities: Latinx, Caribeño, white, college-educated, LGBTQ+, working-class, first and second-generation immigrants. *Dreams Americanos* presents the complex social fabric that is found in America. It follows the character's dreams and challenges while tracing a classic love triangle with heartbreaking results.

Dani, a queer, singer/songwriter, and recent immigrant from Guatemala, sings on open-mic night at *Castillos de Arena*, a college haunt in downtown Santa Cruz. Maddie, a fellow server and university student, is working but is approached by her cheating ex-boyfriend, Darcy. He wants a second chance. Angry words are exchanged, and Dani intervenes to throw Darcy out. A scuffle breaks out, and Dani punches Darcy, who is thrown to the floor. Mateo, the pub manager, eventually tells Darcy to leave. Dani's hand is bleeding, and Mateo asks Maddie to bandage her hand. Dani has to ask, "Why him?" Maddie sings about fleeting summer romances and the promise of lasting love. It becomes clear that Dani has fallen silently in love with Maddie. But Dani has another rival, Cristian, the pub's barman. Cristian wants to impress Maddie with a song and asks Dani to write one for him in exchange for English tutoring. Dani reluctantly agrees.

It will be a slow day at the pub and Mateo might have to cut a server. Maddie has midterms and could use the time to study. It's revealed that Maddie and Cristian have been seeing each other, and Dani is quietly heartbroken. Mateo reminds Dani she must improve her English and gave up too much to come here. Mateo advises Dani to embrace her new life and the American Dream. Alone, Dani recalls why she left Guatemala, a country she loves. She immigrated to America to escape the crushing poverty, the drought, the corruption, and prejudice. Dani hoped she could help her family she left behind. Cristian enters and lets Dani know he has been practicing the guitar and the song she wrote to impress Maddie. Cristian wants to sing to her tonight but has not yet translated the song into English; he'll figure it out as he goes.

It's later that evening, and Taylor is singing for the crowd. As she wraps up, "last call" is announced. Mateo asks Cristian to close for him, as he has a planned date night with his husband. This leaves Cristian, Dani, and Maddie alone to close up for the night. Cristian seizes the opportunity and insists on singing Dani's love song, though it quickly becomes clear he knows neither the words nor the melody. Dani must feed him the lines one by one, singing each line in Spanish, which he translates to Maddie in English. Eventually, Dani sings the love song herself. The ballad works its magic and Maddie falls for Cristian; Dani watches as they kiss.

It's months later, and it's now approaching Spring Break. The young couple has been dating for a time. Maddie is about to leave for the airport to visit family in Chicago. They both wonder if their love will last with time apart. Maddie leaves, and after closing, Cristian plays the guitar and sings to himself. Taylor soon joins him. The song ends and they kiss. Dani walks in on the two and is shocked and angry. We learn Cristian has been cheating on Maddie all along. Dani asks, why? Cristian says he is still young and didn't want to be tied down. He also believes Maddie is naïve regarding love and would never seriously date outside her race or gender. Cristian tells Dani he knows she is secretly in love with Maddie but warns her, "When you're brown, you're always on the outside." Dani calls him a hypocrite. Maddie returns from Chicago and Dani tries to comfort her. Dani sings to Maddie the words she always wants to express and is compelled to kiss the woman she has longed for. They kiss, and Dani tells Maddie that she loves her. Maddie apologizes for leading her on. She tells Dani she keeps making the same mistakes and needs time alone. She's moving back home to Chicago. She exits. Dani is left alone and heartbroken. She learns that to love, one must take the risk, but love is not always required.

MUSICAL BREAKDOWN

SCENE ONE

- No. 1: Prelude** – Instrumental
- No. 2: Aria** (A Kiss) – Dani
- No. 3: Spoken Dialogue** – Maddie, Darcy
- No. 4: Ensemble** - Taylor, Dani, Cristian, Mateo
- No. 5: Spoken Dialogue** – Maddie, Dani
- No. 6: Aria** (Summer Romances) – Maddie
- No. 7: Duet** – Dani, Maddie
- No. 8: Duet** – Dani, Cristian

SCENE TWO

- No. 9: Trio** – Maddie, Mateo, Dani
- No. 10: Aria and Duet** (American Dream) – Mateo, Dani
- No. 11: Aria** (Guatemalan Reality) – Dani
- No. 12: Duet** – Dani, Cristian

SCENE THREE

- No. 13: Aria** (A Kiss Reprise I) – Taylor
- No. 14: Ensemble** – Mateo, Dani, Cristian, Maddie
- No. 15: Trio** (The Balcony Scene) – Dani, Cristian, Maddie
- No. 16: Aria** (Sonnet 105) – Dani
- No. 17: Duet** – Cristian, Maddie

SCENE FOUR

- No. 18: Ensemble** – Mateo, Cristian, Dani, Maddie
- No. 19: Duet** – Cristian, Maddie
- No. 20: Aria and Duet** (Reprise of Sonnet 105) - Cristian, Taylor
- No. 21: Ensemble** –Taylor, Dani, Cristian, Maddie
- No. 22: Aria** (Stereotypes) – Cristian
- No. 23: Duet** – Dani, Cristian

SCENE FIVE

- No. 24: Transitional Music**
- No. 25: Duet** – Dani, Maddie
- No. 26: Aria (A Kiss Reprise II)** – Dani, Maddie
- No. 27: Duet** – Dani, Maddie

No. 1: Prelude**SCENE ONE**

[DANI is up on stage for open-mic night. There is a good crowd of people, eating, drinking and chatting. Her eyes follow MADDIE as she waits tables.]

No. 2: Aria (A Kiss)**DANI:**

Quiero que oigas mis palabras,
que sepas unas cosas...
Si tomas un poquito
de mi humilde corazón,
no tengas pena,
mi corazón crecerá.
Como necesito un corazón para sufrir,
mándame el tuyo, que tu tienes el mio.
Tu tienes el mio.
Y si besos fueran melodías,
escucharías con tus labios.
Un beso, al final de todo, que és?
Un secreto que a la boca,
no al oído, es susurrado.
Un roce al ala de una abeja eterna.
Una abeja eterna.
La comunión perfumada
de las flores silvestres / del verano.
El alivio del corazón al respirar,
cuando sube a la boca
¡El diluvio del

*I want you to hear my words,
to know some things...
If you take a piece
of my humble heart,
don't worry,
my heart will grow.
Since I need a heart to suffer
send me yours, as you have mine.
You have mine.
And if kisses were melodies,
you would hear with your lips.
A kiss, after all, what is it?
A secret that to the lips,
not the ear, is whispered.
A brush from the wing of an eternal bee.
An eternal bee.
The perfumed communion
of spring's wild flowers. [Start of No. 3]
A heart's relief as it sighs,
when the soul's flood
rises to the lips!*

No. 3: Spoken Dialogue

[DARCY enters and approaches MADDIE; they speak loudly over DANI's song. DANI continues singing, but looks on with growing concern.]

DARCY:

Hey.

MADDIE:

Why are you here?

DARCY:

I had to see you.

MADDIE:

Go see that other girl.

DARCY:

Look! Guys make mistakes.

MADDIE:

I need to get back to work.
Nothing is just handed to me.

[MADDIE walks away, but DARCY grabs her arm and draws her back. DANI rushes from the stage and intervenes. The music stops.]

DARCY:

What do you mean by that!?

[DANI pries DARCY'S hand off of MADDIE'S arm and gets up in DARCY's face. CRISTIAN and TAYLOR join the group.]

DANI:

Get out!

DARCY: *(to MADDIE)*

Tell your girl to back up.

[DANI grabs DARCY'S arm to throw him out and CRISTIAN laughs. DARCY takes a swing at CRISTIAN and misses. DANI punches DARCY across the jaw. DARCY falls to the floor, and MATEO rushes up. Music begins again.]

DARCY: *(shouts at DANI and CRISTIAN)*

Go back to your shit-hole country!

No. 4: Ensemble

MATEO: *(to DARCY)*

Are you all right, sir?

[DARCY stands up and looks at them all angrily.]

CRISTIAN / TAYLOR:

The guy was causing trouble.

CRISTIAN:

He pushed Maddie.

TAYLOR:

He took a swing at Cristian.

MATEO: *(to DARCY)*

Is that what happened?

DARCY: *(Shouting)*

I want her fired!

MATEO:

Maybe you need to leave.

[DARCY looks at them all with contempt and exits quickly.]

MATEO: *(to DANI)*

No puedes golpear a un cliente,
incluso si golpean primero.
Serás detenida.

*You can't hit customers,
even if they hit first.
You'll get arrested.*

[MATEO becomes more understanding when he notices DANI'S knuckles are bleeding. He sighs.]

MATEO:

¡Dios mío!
Maddie, get the first-aid kit.

[MADDIE quickly exits. TAYLOR returns to the stage to pack her guitar.]

MATEO: *(with warmth)*

Tienes que pensar antes de actuar.

You need to think before you act.

DANI:

Lo siento.

I'm sorry.

[MATEO puts his hand on her cheek and gives her a sympathetic smile.]

MATEO:

Siento que te hayan herido.

I'm sorry you were hurt.

DANI:

No es nada.

It's nothing.

MATEO:

Siento que te hayan herido.

I'm sorry you were hurt.

[MATEO walks away. TAYLOR exits. MADDIE returns with the first aid kit.]

CRISTIAN: *(to DANI)*

¡Fue sin querer queriendo!

Sorry, not sorry!

[CRISTIAN and DANI laugh. CRISTIAN returns to the bar, and MADDIE and DANI move to a downstage table and sit. MADDIE begins to clean DANI'S knuckles. DANI can't help but stare at her adoringly.]

No. 5: Spoken Dialogue

MADDIE:

Does it hurt?

[DANI shrugs nonchalantly. MADDIE cleans DANI'S knuckles]

MADDIE:

How's your English classes?

[DANI shrugs with less bravado. MADDIE is unimpressed.]

MADDIE:

You're not in class anymore?

DANI:

I know enough.

[MADDIE sighs and continues to bandage her hand.]

DANI:

Tell me?

Why him?

No. 6: Aria (Summer Romances)

MADDIE:

Summer romances

are only for a season.

A time of freedom and youth

when love seems possible.

When summer suns set slowly

and the night and moon resist.

But these romances are fleeting.

Warm breezes fade

and autumn never waits.
Breezes fade
Breezes fade
Autumn waits

No. 7: Duet

[MADDIE puts everything back in the first-aid kit. DANI is smitten.]

DANI:

I'll do it again.

MADDIE:

I have no doubt.
May I ask you a question?

[DANI shrugs]

MADDIE:

Your scar?

[MADDIE lightly touches the scar on DANI'S cheek. DANI gently takes her hand away but continues to hold it.]

DANI:

We all have a past,
not all our scars show.

MADDIE: *(spoken)*

I shouldn't have asked.
I'm sorry...

DANI: *(with sincerity)*

I'm not.
Maybe one day,
but not today.

[DANI squeezes MADDIE'S hand and they smile.]

DANI:

Thank you.

[She lets go, and they both return to work. CRISTIAN beckons DANI to the bar.]

No. 8: Duet

CRISTIAN:

Darcy had that shit coming.
 ¡Tiene cojones chiquititos!

He has small balls, dude!

DANI: *(put out)*
 ¿Cojones?

CRISTIAN: *(spoken)*

You know what I mean.

[DANI looks at him like “really?”]

CRISTIAN:

Look!
 Maddie deserves better.
 She’s amazing,
 beautiful, smart, kind.

DANI: *(spoken)*
 ¿Te gusta Maddie?

You like Maddie?

CRISTIAN:

I kinda’ do.
 Pero ella se le enamora con artistas
 poetas y músicos

*But she falls for artists,
 Poets and musicians.*

DANI:

¿A sí?
 ¿Puedes tocar la guitarra?

*That so...
 Can you play the guitar?*

CRISTIAN:

Más o menos.
 ¡Pero puedo cantar!
 ¡Ya se, ya se! *(spoken)*
 Si tú me escribes una canción
 y me la yudas con al guitar
 ¡Yo te ayudó con el inglés!
Deal? (spoken)

*More or less
 But I can sing.
 Get this...
 If you write me a song
 And you help me on the guitar,
 I can tutor you in English!*

[CRISTIAN puts out his hand. DANI hesitates.]

CRISTIAN: *(spoken)*

You know your English sucks, right?

DANI:

I understand most.

CRISTIAN:

You need to speak too.
If you write a song for me,
I can help you learn to speak.

CRISTIAN:

If you write a song for me,
I can help you learn to speak.
If you write a song for me,
I can help you learn to take control.
If you write a song for me,
I can help you learn to speak.

DANI:

Si te escribo una canción, *If I help you write a song,*
me ayudas das con Inglés. *you'll help me with English*

Si te escribo una canción,
Me ayudas das con Inglés

DANI:

¿Si te ayudo a conquistarla,
Me ayudas con Inglés?
Okay. *(spoken)*

If I help you woo her,
You'll help with English?

[They shake on it.]

SCENE TWO

[It's now late morning, a few weeks later. It's the quiet time before the lunch rush. MATEO is at the bar with his laptop, doing the accounting. DANI is preparing mise-en-place by filling ketchup squeeze bottles. Half-empty salt and pepper shakers are on a nearby table. MADDIE rushes in from the front door with her backpack.]

No. 9: Trio

MADDIE:

Sorry Mateo.
Morning classes ran late.
And then the bus.

MATEO:

Tranquila, it's another slow shift.

MADDIE:

Winter is always slow.

MATEO:

Payroll will be tight.

MADDIE:

You always make it work.

[MATEO gives her a fatherly kiss on the cheek.]

MATEO:

I may have to cut someone.

MADDIE:

I'll be first.

I have exams to study for.

[MADDIE places her backpack behind the bar and exits in the kitchen, and returns with her server's apron. She walks over to DANI.]

MADDIE:

Let me help you.

[DANI smiles and nods.]

MADDIE:

Let me see your hand?

[She takes it.]

It's almost healed.

[DANI smiles and returns to filling the ketchup bottles. MADDIE works on filling the saltshakers. DANI cuts her eyes on her.]

MADDIE:

Hey, Mateo.

Is Cristian working today?

MATEO: *(spoken slyly)*

Ah, ha.

I see the way you look at each other.

[DANI watches them, suspiciously]

MADDIE: *(playing innocent)*

What are you talking about?

[MATEO laughs]

MATEO:

You can't fool Mateo!
Maybe I was not born in the U.S.A.,
but I was not born yesterday.

[MADDIE and MATEO laugh.]

DANI:

¿Por qué se ríen?

Why are you laughing?

MATEO:

A Maddie le gusta Cristian.

Maddie has a crush on Cristian.

DANI:

Wow!

[DANI is lost in her feelings while MATEO and MADDIE chit-chat and laugh. MADDIE then exits into the kitchen.]

MATEO:

Daniela...

DANI: *(spoken)*

Do I look like a "Daniela"?!

[MATEO smiles and motions for DANI to come closer.]

MATEO:

Oí Mija

¿Tu viniste para empezar de nuevo, no?
You came here to become a singer.

You came to start over, right?

DANI:

¡Estoy cantando!

I'm singing!

MATEO:

Not enough!

Make your dreams happen!

¡No vas rumbo a las estrellas
si solo cantas aquí!

*You're not starbound
if you're only singing here!*

DANI: *(with sincerity)*

Me gusta trabajar aquí.
Tu eres mi familia ahora
Aquí me siento segura.

*I like working here.
You are my family now
This is where I feel safe.*

[MATEO smiles and hugs her, then points to his ear for her to listen.]

No. 10: Aria and Duet (The American Dream)

MATEO:

Tu tienes sueños más grandes que este
¡Tu eres vida, libertad y felicidad! Ah!
Yo deje la República Dominicana
Vine por una vida mejor.
Vivir aquí es un esfuerzo
Hay que trabajar para demostrar nuestro valor.

*You have bigger dreams than this
you are life, liberty and happiness!
I left the Dominican Republic
I came for a better life.
Living here isn't easy,
We must work to demonstrate our value.*

Yo tengo sueños más grandes que este,
¡Yo soy la vida, la libertad, la felicidad! Ah!
Sin embargo, ahora estoy en casa,
y amo mi nuevo país.
Estamos en el paraíso,
Si puedes nadar y no ahogar tus sueños.

*I have bigger dreams than this,
I am life, liberty, happiness! Ah!
Nonetheless now I am home,
And I love my new country.
We are in paradise,
If you can swim and not drown your
dreams.*

MATEO and DANI

Tenemos sueños mas grandes que este
¡Somos la vida, la libertad, la felicidad!
¡Tenemos vida, libertad, y tenemos felicidad!
Ah!

*We have bigger dreams then these
We are life, liberty, happiness!
We have life, freedom,
and we have happiness! Ah!*

[MATEO puts his hand on her shoulder and spells it out.]

MATEO:

So listen to Mateo ¿Verdad?
Aprenderás el Inglés,
y encontrarás una buena chica.
No seas como Cristian.
Who knows? *(speaking)*
Maybe Maddie will tame him.

*You'll learn English.
And you'll find yourself a nice girl.
Don't be like Cristian.*

[DANI laughs. MATEO gives DANI a hug and exits into the kitchen, leaving DANI alone.]

No. 11: Aria (The Guatemalan Reality)

DANI:

Vine a los Estados sin esperanza.
 Creyendo que podía ayudar a mi familia.
 Escapando la pobreza.
 Escapando la sequía.
 Escapando el prejuicio.
 Mi padre le paga la cuota a la pandilla
 por su librería.
 ¡Y luego lo extorsionan para que no
 violen a mi hermanita!
 La policía hace nada
 y la jueza asesinada.
 Guatemala, belleza herida.
 Encima de todo las lluvias que venían
 como brisa del mar ya no caen.
 Aun así, me aferro a la esperanza.
 Vivir en libertad.
 Amar a quien me plazca.
 Me atrevo a creer en la libertad.
 Me atrevo a creer en la justicia.
 Me atrevo a creer en la igualdad,
 y a soñar estos sueños Americanos.

*I came to the States with hope.
 Believing I could help my family.
 Escaping the poverty
 Escaping the drought
 Escaping the prejudice
 My father pays the gang
 for his bookstore.
 Then he pays them to not
 Rape my little sister!
 The police do nothing
 And the judge was murdered.
 Guatemala, wounded beauty.
 On top of that, the rains that came
 like ocean breezes no longer fall.
 Even then, I dare to hope.
 To live in freedom.
 To love whom I please.
 I dare to believe in liberty.
 I dare to believe in justice.
 I dare to believe in equality,
 and to dream these American dreams.*

[MADDIE enters from the kitchen and grabs her backpack.]

MADDIE: *(spoken)*

Mateo cut my lunch shift.
 I'll see you tomorrow.

[MADDIE waves as she exits through the front door and DANI watches her leave.]

DANI:

Cristian podría tener cualquier mujer,
 ¿Por qué tiene que ser Maddie?

*Cristian could have any girl,
 Why does it have to be Maddie?*

[CRISTIAN enters with his backpack and a guitar. DANI notices him.]

DANI:

No. No. Aprenderé inglés,
 Maddie sabrá que soy sincera,
 Cuando le digo que la amo.

*No. No. I will learn English
 Maddie will know I am sincere,
 When I tell her that I love her.*

No. 12: Duet**CRISTIAN:**

A pesar de los exámenes parciales,
He estado practicando “la guitarra.”

*Despite the mid-term exams,
I've been practicing my guitar.*

[CRISTIAN uses exaggerated strumming motion as he says “guitar.” DANI shakes her head and pulls a folded piece of paper out of her back pocket. She hands it to CRISTIAN.]

DANI:

Tiene las letras y los acordes.

It has all the lyrics and chords.

CRISTIAN:

No puedo cantarle en español.
Nolentendera.

*I can't sing to her in Spanish.
She won't understand.*

DANI:

Tu me dijiste que “My English sucks!”

You told me my English sucks!

CRISTIAN:

Tendré que traducir.

I'll have to translate it.

DANI:

Pero el inglés no es lírico.

But English is not lyrical.

CRISTIAN:

Lo sé. Lo sé. Aun así.
La emoción no se pierde,
está en la canción.

*I know. I know. Even so.
The emotion won't be lost,
it's in the song.*

DANI:

Pero al inglés le falta poesía y pasión.

But English lacks poetry and passion.

DANI:

Pero al inglés le falta poesía y pasión.
Pero al inglés le falta poesía y pasión.

CRISTIAN:

La emoción no se pierde está en la canción.
La emoción no se pierde está en la canción.

[CRISTIAN waves DANI off. He's unconcerned.]

CRISTIAN: (Spoken)

We'll work it out.

SCENE THREE

[It's late evening, and on the stage, TAYLOR is singing with her guitar.]

No. 13: Aria (A Kiss Reprise I)

TAYLOR:

A kiss, after all, what is it?
A ratified oath,
A sealed promise,
A kiss what is it?
A brush from the wing of an eternal bee.
Of an eternal bee.
A kiss, after all, what is it?
A secret that to the lips,
Not the ear, is whispered.
A heart's declaration,
Begging confirmation.
The perfumed communion
of spring's wild flowers.
A heart's relief as it sighs,
When the soul's flood rises to the lips.

[TAYLOR finishes. DANI enters from the kitchen and starts wiping down tables.]

No. 14: Ensemble

[TAYLOR exits the stage with her guitar. CRISTIAN rings a bell twice.]

CRISTIAN: *(calls out)*

Last call!

[MATEO approaches CRISTIAN at the bar.]

MATEO:

Can you still close up for me?
It's date night with my husband.
Emilio, always the romantic.

CRISTIAN:

Love is in the air!

[They laugh. MATEO hands CRISTIAN the keys and begins to exit.]

MATEO:

Good night, niños!

[MATEO exits. The pub is empty except for CHRISTIN, MADDIE, and DANI. CRISTIAN gallantly jumps across the bar and locks the front doors and turns off the “open” sign. MADDIE sits at a table to count her tips with her back to others. CRISTIAN grabs his guitar case and opens it. DANI drags out the mop out of the kitchen.]

DANI:

¿Qué estás haciendo?

What are you doing?

CRISTIAN: *(in a forced whisper)*

Tengo que cantarle
Tonight’s the night!

I have to sing to her.

DANI: *(In a forced whisper)*

No hemos traducido la canción.
Ni siquiera conoces la letra en español.

*We haven’t translated the song.
You don’t even know the lyrics in Spanish.*

CRISTIAN:

Por eso te necesito
I’ll translate as I sing.
Just stay close!

That’s why I need you.

[DANI slips into the kitchen and MADDIE counts her tips. CRISTIAN strums his guitar.]

MADDIE: *(with amusement)*

What are you doing?

CRISTIAN:

I wrote this song for you.

MADDIE:

That’s very sweet, but not tonight.
I still have hours of studying.
Let’s close-up the pub.

CRISTIAN:

Let me sing for you.

[MADDIE is charmed, but she shakes her head and continues counting her tips. CRISTIAN begins to play the guitar and stops at the first line of the song. He’s already forgotten the words. DANI opens the kitchen door and CRISTIAN looks at her with panic. CRISTIAN starts the opening again but stops again at the same place.]

No. 15: Trio (The Balcony Scene)

DANI (spoken):

Dile: mi alma torturada...

Tell her: my tortured soul

CRISTIAN (spoken):

And the melody?

DANI, sung:

Mi alma torturada...

CRISTIAN, sung:

My tortured soul...

DANI:

Dio a nacer un amor...

CRISTIAN:

Gave birth to a love...

DANI:

Que crece cada día.

CRISTIAN:

That grows every day.

MADDIE: (*still looking away*)

If your soul is so tortured,

Why let love grow?

DANI:

Intente cerrar la puerta,

Al corazón pero el amor es mas fuerte

Que yo.

CRISTIAN:

I tried to close the door.

But my love is stronger than I.

[MADDIE stands and starts to turn around. CRISTIAN pushes DANI into the kitchen.]

CRISTIAN: (*spoken*)

No! No! Don't turn around!

MADDIE: (*spoken*)

Why?

CRISTIAN:

I'm feeling exposed.

It makes me shy when you look at me.

Just let me sing.

[MADDIE is flattered and turns her back to CRISTIAN. DANI steps out of the kitchen.]

MADDIE:

Then sing to me.

DANI:

Un amor tan puro...

Que sin ningun esfuerzo...

Estranguló serpientes gemelas:

Miedo y duda.

CRISTIAN:

A love so pure...

That without any effort...

I strangled twin serpents:

Fear and doubt.

[MADDIE turns around, and DANI disappears again into the kitchen.]

MADDIE:

It's so beautiful.

I never knew you were a poet.

CRISTIAN:

Because I study computer science?

Coding is an art!

And though I am a poet,

It's difficult to express myself in English.

MADDIE:

Then sing to me in Spanish.

CRISTIAN:

But you won't understand it.

MADDIE:

The emotions come through

The beauty of the language,

And the passion of your voice.

[MADDIE turns back around, and CRISTIAN grabs DANI out of the kitchen pushes him into the pub. They knock over a bottle on the bar. They both freeze.]

MADDIE: *(spoken)*

Are you okay?

CRISTIAN: *(spoken)*

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Just don't turn around.

I need a minute.

[CRISTIAN hands DANI his guitar and motioning for her to play. DANI resists. They both use exaggerated gestures. Finally, DANI gives in.]

CRISTIAN: *(spoken)*
Okay. Here goes.

[CRISTIAN clears his throat as if to sing. DANI glares at him, CRISTIAN shrugs.]

No. 16: Aria (Adaptation of Sonnet 105 in modern Spanish)

DANI:

No llamen a mi amor idolatría,
ni a mi amado, idola mia.
Todo mi canto y poesía suena igual,
porque todos rezan en el mismo altar.
Fiel mi amada es hoy, mañana, fiel.
Constante como abeja, flor y miel.
Mis versos, al igual, constantemente,
lucen sin sentido diferente.
'Dulce, fiel y bella' es mi argumento,
'Dulce, fiel y bella' el sentimiento.
Con pocos cambios gasto mi invención,
los tres temas florecen, en mi corazón.
'Dulce, fiel y bella' unidos hoy,
Testigos de un milagro, también lo soy.

*Do not call my love idolatry,
nor my beloved, my idol.
All my songs and poems sound alike,
since they all pray on the same altar.
Faithful, my beloved is today, tomorrow, faithful.
Constant like the bee, flower and honey.
And so, my verses constantly,
shine with undifferentiated meaning.
'Sweet, faithful and beautiful' is my argument,
'Sweet, faithful and beautiful' the feeling.
With few changes my fancies fly,
all three themes bloom within my heart.
'Sweet, faithful and beautiful' wed today,
witnesses of a miracle, as am I.*

No. 17: Duet

MADDIE:
Oh Cristian! *(spoken)*

[DANI hands the guitar to CRISTIAN. MADDIE stands up and turns, and DANI ducks behind the bar just in time. MADDIE walks towards CRISTIAN, and they meet in the middle of the stage]

MADDIE:
Your falsettos amazing!
Is this how you really feel?

CRISTIAN:
I guess falling in love.

[MADDIE is overwhelmed. He takes MADDIE in his arms, and they look into each other's eyes. DANI stands up and from across the bar and watches them kiss. She looks on with a broken heart.]

SCENE FOUR

[Weeks have passed. It's after lunch and before the dinner shift, and DANI and CRISTIAN are alone in the pub. MATEO enters through the kitchen and approaches.]

No. 18: Ensemble

MATEO: *(to CRISTIAN)*

I'm planning next week's schedule.
You have plans for Spring Break?

CRISTIAN:

I'm staying here in Santa Cruz.

MATEO: *(relieved)*

¡Gracias a Dios!
I still need a barman.

DANI:

Is Maddie staying here?

CRISTIAN:

She's visiting family.
Two weeks in Chicago.

MATEO:

Don't get lonely.
And find yourself in trouble.

CRISTIAN: *(jokingly)*

Don't worry about me, *viejo*.

[DANI and MATEO move to the bar. MADDIE enters with a rolling suitcase through the front door of the pub. She approaches and she gives CRISTIAN a kiss. DANI and MATEO watch from the bar.]

MADDIE:

I wanted to feel your lips, one last time.

CRISTIAN:

You'll miss your flight.

MADDIE:

I still have time.

No. 19: Duet

MADDIE / CRISTIAN:

This is our first time apart, ah.

Not knowing what to feel, ah.

MADDIE:

I'll long for your songs.

CRISTIAN:

I'll long for your kisses

MADDIE:

Some time away...

CRISTIAN:

It's not so long

MADDIE:

To leave you behind.

[CRISTIAN pulls out his phone.]

CRISTIAN:

You can always call me.

MADDIE:

I leave a part of myself.

[CRISTIAN is distracted with his notifications.]

CRISTIAN:

I'll be busy.

Better if we text.

MADDIE: *(Daydreaming, she sings to herself.)*

To know that I'm loved. Ah...

I'll cherish our nights. Ah...

My hand in yours.

With sand and stars,

we watch the waves

and wonder.
Will love last?

[MADDIE and CRISTIAN step to center stage, but angled away from each other.]

MADDIE:

Time will tell with time apart.

MADDIE:

Time will tell with time apart.

Time will tell with time apart.

Time will tell with time apart.

Time apart.

CRISTIAN:

Time will tell with time apart

Time will tell with time away.

Time will tell with time away.

Time will tell. Time will tell.

[MADDIE exits through the front door, and CRISTIAN exits into the kitchen. Lights change to indicate that it's now late and the pub is closed. DANI is finishing mopping the floor. CRISTIAN is sitting downstage with his guitar, noodling for a bit. DANI exits to the kitchen with the rolling mop bucket. CRISTIAN begins to sing a reprise of DANI's aria.]

No. 20: Aria and Duet (Adaptation of Sonnet 105 in modern English)

[Over the following, TAYLOR steps out of the kitchen, leans against the bar, and listens.]

CRISTIAN:

Don't say that my love is idle play.
Don't say that my lover is my idol for the day.
Ev'ry song I sing to her it sounds the same,
Cuz' she's my inspiration, that's no shame.
Don't say that my lover is untrue,
Don't say that my lover is a fool.
Both of us are sweet and loyal like the bees,
But both of us can sting, watch and see.

[TAYLOR walks over to CRISTIAN, picks up her guitar, and plays alongside him.]

CRISTIAN / TAYLOR:

Beautiful and sweet in morning light.
Beautiful and fierce, after midnight.
A broken record always spinning the same song.
I'm a broken record, filled with love so strong.

CRISTIAN:

Beautiful and sweet and loyal too.
Witness my true love as I do.

[They finish the song, and CRISTIAN leans in for a kiss. TAYLOR pulls back.]

No. 21: Ensemble

TAYLOR: *(spoken)*

Not here. At work.

CRISTIAN: *(spoken)*

Everyone's gone.

TAYLOR: *(spoken)*

When are you telling Maddie?

CRISTIAN: *(spoken)*

When she gets back.

I promise.

[TAYLOR acquiesces. They kiss, but DANI walks in unexpectedly. She's shocked.]

DANI: *(spoken)*

¿Qué haces?

What are you doing?

[CRISTIAN attempts damage control.]

CRISTIAN:

It's not what you think?

Calm down.

TAYLOR: *(shocked)*

Not what you think?

That's not what you said last night.

I hate being played.

(Looks over at Dani) She can have him.

[TAYLOR angrily grabs her guitar and exits. DANI is confused and upset.]

DANI:

Why?

Why would you cheat on Maddie?

CRISTIAN:

Can't I play the field?

I'm still young.

DANI:

She loves you!

No. 22: Aria (Stereotypes)

CRISTIAN:

This isn't really love, it's purely physical.
Fools like to fantasize.
I'll tell you all about woke girls like Maddie,
Filled with romantic notions.
They want to save the world, but they lead sheltered lives.
Fighting for justice with the laptop Daddy bought 'em.
They go away to school,
and date outside their race.
Date a girl, just to prove they're open minded.
Maddie will graduate next year
A Master's in Lit, but no job.
She'll want to settle down and raise a family.
But how will she afford it?
She'll marry white, a Jordan or a Jake.
Maybe a Tyler, to help her pay the bills.
They'll need some help, a nanny from Brazil,
A Mexican or two, to mow their lawn.
White picket fences aren't for you and me.
When you're brown you're on the outside.
When you're brown you're on the outside.

No. 23: Duet

DANI:

Hypocrite!
You'll have plenty of tech money.

CRISTIAN:

Hypocrite? Look at you.
You secretly love Maddie.
I've known this all along.

DANI:

You'll break her heart.

CRISTIAN:

She'll get it over it.
And if you're my friend, you will too.

[DANI is angry and gets up in his face. CRISTIAN becomes angry too.]

CRISTIAN: *(Spoken)*

What?!

You gonna hit me too?!

It's easy to punch a guy who won't hit back.

You're not so tough!

[DANI backs down, turns and exits, leaving CRISTIAN alone on stage.]

SCENE FIVE

No. 24: Transitional Music

[The stage is darkened, and set pieces have been moved aside. MADDIE sits center stage on a bench under a street lamp with shadows of a rollercoaster and the Santa Cruz boardwalk. She sits heartbroken and lost. DANI eventually enters on her skateboard with her guitar case. She stops and stands at a distance until MADDIE notices her. She gives him a sad half-smile, and DANI joins her on the bench.]

No. 25: Duet

DANI:

I'm sorry.

I didn't know.

MADDIE:

Of course not.

What can I say?

I keep making the same mistakes.

What is there to say.

DANI:

Maybe I can sing?

[MADDIE shrugs and looks away sadly, and DANI pulls out her guitar. She pauses as she summons the courage to sing.]

No. 26: Aria (A Kiss Reprise II)

DANI:

Si tomas un poquito
de mi humilde corazón,
No tengas pena,
Mi corazón crecera

*If you take a piece
Of my humble heart,
Don't worry,
My heart will grow*

como necesito un corazón para sufrir,
Mándame el tuyo, que tu tienes el mio.
Tu tienes el mio
Y si besos fueran melodías,
Escucharías con tus labios.

*Since I need a heart to suffer
Send me yours, as you have mine.
As you have mine.
And if kisses were melodies,
You would listen with your lips.*

[MADDIE puts her head on DANI's shoulder. DANI pours her heart out.]

Amanda: Si mis besos fueran melodías
escucharías con tus labios.

*Beloved: If my kisses were melodies
you would listen with your lips.*

No. 27: Duet

MADDIE:

You wrote those songs for Cristian?

[DANI puts down her guitar and takes MADDIE's hands.]

DANI:

I wrote those songs for you.
I wanted you to be happy.
Cristian sang my songs,
He sang my words.
The ones that came from my heart,
I was too scared to speak.
To love, one must take the risk.

[DANI and MADDIE look into each other's eyes and share a moment. They lean towards each other and kiss.]

MADDIE:

I've wanted to do that for months.

[DANI smiles and takes MADDIE's hand.]

DANI:

Does this change anything?

[MADDIE shakes her head.]

MADDIE:

I'm moving back home to Chicago.
I need a fresh start.

DANI:

We could start fresh here...

MADDIE:

You don't want to date me!

I'm a mess!

Plus, I need to be alone.

Alone. Alone for a while.

[DANI summons up the courage to finally say it.]

DANI:

I love you.

MADDIE: (*sadly*)

I didn't mean to lead you on.

DANI:

No. We both leaned in.

[Both smile. MADDIE lets go of DANI's hand and stands.]

MADDIE:

I should go.

[MADDIE bends down and kisses DANI tenderly on the forehead. MADDIE exits slowly without looking back. The music becomes tender as DANI looks on sadly. DANI eventually picks up her guitar and attempts to play, but she is unable. The heartbreak is too much, and DANI fights back the tears, Slow fade to blackout.

[END OF OPERA]