El Matador

By

Krista Pino
**Cast of Characters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senora Rosa Garcia</td>
<td>Ignacio’s mother, older female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ignacio Garcia</td>
<td>future matador, younger male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Hefe</td>
<td>A bull</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tati Torres</td>
<td>trainer to Ignacio/ owner of El Hefe/ cross-dressing matador, female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Rudolfo Sanchez</td>
<td>Bookie and cantina owner, older male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karamia</td>
<td>Betrothed to Ignacio/ Flamenco dancer, younger female</td>
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**Scene**

A country divided

**Time**

During war
ACT I

All characters should be played by people of color or colorful people.

The Spanish dialogue should be delivered with integrity and not translated for the audience.

Director and choreographer must be approved by the playwright prior to obtaining rights for this production.

SETTING: PLAZA DE TOROS

The Bullring.

The Dressing Room.

The Cantina (Rudulfo’s lair).

The Bull Pen (el toril - Hefe’s prison).
ACT I

THE BULLRING 1.1

Lights up on Tati. She is dressed as a man in a traditional matador costume and a thin mustache painted or glued to her face. She bites a ROSE wrapped in a RIBBON.

She stands in front of the Bull Pen poised with a MULETA.

Music begins.

In a choreographed sequence, she shifts around slightly trying to find her perfect position.

TATI

Yo te espero.
Solo quiero amor.
Cuando llegaste a mi
regrese a la vida.
Y ahora yo espero todo los dias
para verte.
Yo te espero.
Solo por amor.

The Bull Pen gate opens and Hefe, a bull played by a human, charges toward her.

In slow motion, Tati repeatedly maneuvers out of his way flicking the MULETA with each movement.

The choreography becomes fragmented as it continues throughout the scene.

Ignacio enters.

He stands at the barrera (the fence surrounding the bullring) watching them fight.

Senora Rosa Garcia enters wearing the black dressing of a widow.

She joins Ignacio.

(CONTINUED)
Music fades to a quiet hum under the dialog.

ROSA
He’s pretty good.

IGNACIO
He doesn’t have the spirit of a matador.

ROSA
Perhaps. But he knows what he’s doing.

IGNACIO
His turns are choppy. He’s light on his feet. No tiene peso. And he’s pushing his chest out. Es como ver a una mujer.

ROSA
You will never appreciate another matador if you continue comparing them to your papa.

IGNACIO
People should not participate in an art if they cannot do it with integrity.

ROSA
It’s not art. Es vergonzoso.

IGNACIO
I hope you won’t say that about me when I’m in there.

ROSA
You promised you would never set foot in the ring.

IGNACIO
That was the promise of a child mama.

ROSA
You’re still a child.

IGNACIO
I’m a man now.

ROSA
You’re my child. I’ve told you as many times as I’ve kissed you goodnight, "I will die from grief to see you in the ring."

IGNACIO
Being in the ring is the only option left.

ROSA
Why would you say such a thing?
IGNACIO
The regime will not allow me to fight.

ROSA
Of course they won’t. You’re my only child. They know my weak heart can’t handle the stress of losing you.

IGNACIO
You should see a doctor mama.

ROSA
I’ve seen a doctor.

IGNACIO
Do you take the medicine they give you?

ROSA
It doesn’t matter if I do or not. There is no cure for a broken heart.

Karamia enters.

She joins Ignacio and Rosa.

KARAMIA
Ignacio? I thought you began with the regime today.

IGNACIO
They discharged me as quickly as they admitted me.

ROSA
Gracias a Dios.

KARAMIA
What will you do Igancio? There’s no one left here but the old and the wounded.

ROSA
A son’s job is taking care of his mother not fighting in a battlefield.

KARAMIA
He’s not a doctor. What can he do for you?

ROSA
Just his presence makes me feel better. Maybe you should become a medico.

KARAMIA
If he becomes a doctor, we wouldn’t be allowed to marry. Or have children.
ROSA
    There are plenty of other things he can do.

KARAMIA
    Like what?

ROSA
    How about un sastre.

KARAMIA
    Un sastre? Mis tias work at the sastreria. That is women’s work.

ROSA
    Or un zapatero.

KARAMIA
    That is work of los viejos.

ROSA
    It is work for honorable men.

KARAMIA
    My papa would never let me wed a sastre or a zapatero. He would never be able to provide for us.

IGNACIO
    I’m not going to be a doctor or a tailor or a shoemaker. I’ll figure out something else.

    Rudulfo enters.

    He joins Ignacio and the women.

RUDULFO
    Handsome isn’t he?

IGNACIO
    He’s small.

RUDULFO
    I was talking about the bull.

KARAMIA
    He’s ugly.

IGNACIO
    He’s magnificent.

RUDULFO
    I know that bull will always give us a good show.

(CONTINUED)
ROSA
You mean the bull will kill the matador.

IGNACIO
That toro doesn’t have the spirit to kill.

RUDULFO
Why do you always think the worst of me Rosa?

ROSA
Because you’ve never done anything respectable.

IGNACIO
Be nice mama. Sanchez has always been there for us.

ROSA
He puts innocent men to face their death.

IGNACIO
Do they ever get gored?

RUDULFO
My matadors only get nicked on occasion.

ROSA
A nick from those horns is enough to change the lives of everyone who witnesses it.

KARAMIA
Nobody has been gored in this plaza since it reopened.

RUDULFO
Porque I only let the best matadors in my ring.

KARAMIA
Is he the exception?

IGNACIO
He’s good Karamia. He doesn’t have the experience of your papa, or live up to the legend of my papa, but he knows what he’s doing.

RUDULFO
The only reason I let him in my ring is because I always win against all odds with him. He is willing to take a hit instead of give me a kill.

KARAMIA
He doesn’t deserve the title of matador.

ROSA
If that’s true, it won’t take long before his ghost haunts this plaza.
CONTINUED:

RUDULFO
You’re being sentimental Rosa.

ROSA
The smell of the toro awakens my memories.

KARAMIA
Ugh. The smell. It reminds me when I was a little girl. Do you remember Ignacio?

The choreography begins to rapidly escalate becoming more percussive, intimate, and physical.

IGNACIO
The memories from those days have become my fantasy. It’s so vivid: The gentle earth embracing a ravishing beast.

KARAMIA
Feeling the power of the toro all around us.

IGNACIO
He would claim his territory with every stride.

ROSA
Your father described it the same way. Los toros were his mistresses and the ring como un brothel.

KARAMIA
Que bruto.

IGNACIO
Que suerte.

Music rises slowly forcing Rosa to increase her volume accordingly.

ROSA
It was like a love affair. Every time he stepped into the ring, I was a witness to its seduction. Then he would come home and obsess over those toros even in our most intimate moments. Their presence continues to force its way into my life. Against my will, their essence has penetrated my existence. Their musk permeated our bed worse than the cheap perfume of the putas in the cantina.

Another paso and Hefe nicks Tati forcing her to the ground. She drops the MULETA. The ROSE drops from her mouth and falls beside her.

She rolls out of the way.

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
He got hit! Somebody help him!

Without hesitation Ignacio jumps the barrera catching Hefe’s attention.

ROSA
Ignacio! Get out of there!

Hefe charges at Ignacio.

Ignacio dodges him gracefully.

Hefe stops in his tracks and faces Ignacio.

IGNACIO
Come on toro. Take a break in el toril.

HEFE
Nuh uh.

ROSA
Do something Rudulfo! Help him!

RUDULFO
I’ll get the banderillos.

ROSA
Andale!

Rudulfo exits in a hurry.

KARAMIA
You look like you belong in there Ignacio.

Ignacio erects his posture into a matador pose.

IGNACIO
Come on boy. They’ll stab you if you keep fighting.

HEFE
Argh.

Hefe stomps the ground and bucks several times.

He charges Ignacio again. Ignacio dodges.

Hefe charges. Ignacio dodges.

They have a standoff staring at each other.
ROSA
Get out of there Ignacio. My heart cannot handle it.

_Hefe eventually resigns to his bullpen spitting toward Ignacio on his way._

_Ignacio strides toward the gate with a forced ease and closes it behind Hefe._

_During Hefe and Ignacio’s standoff, Tati has risen and stumbles out of the ring toward the Dressing Room._

IGNACIO
Are you okay companero? Espera. I’ll help you.

TATI
It’s not necessary. Estoy bien. Gracias.

ROSA
Por favor Ignacio. I cannot handle this pain.

_Rosa falls against the barrera strangled by the ROSARY that hangs around her neck._

_Ignacio notices and rushes to her._

IGNACIO
Tranquila. Esta bien.

ROSA
Get me out of here!

_Ignacio retrieves the MULETA. He exits the ring, helps Rosa to her feet and guides her offstage._

_Karamia picks up the ROSE and rushes after them._

THE DRESSING ROOM 1.2

Music continues.

_Lights up on Tati._

_She stumbles into the dressing room and kicks off her slippers._

_She takes several deep breaths and stands upright._

_She removes her hat then unpins her hair._

_She carefully takes off her vest, tie, sash, and shirt hanging each piece with great care._

(CONTINUED)
Tati painfully unwraps the binding of her chest that has transformed her into the acceptable image of a matador.

In a choreographed ritual, Tati continues the removal of the trajes de luces with the heavy embroidered pants and thick stockings revealing the strong legs of a horseback rider.

She finally removes the mustache from her face.

She then reverses the ritual by putting on a dress, make up and high heels.

She stares at her reflection in a mirror.

TATI

Soy una mentirosa.
Mi papa tiene verguenza de mi.
Pero no me importa
porque tengo una vida rica
tengo la pasion de un toro.
Puedo luchar con mi toro.
Puedo amar a mi toro.

Karamia enters holding the ROSE.

The music stops.

KARAMIA

Where’s the matador?

TATI

What do you want with him?

KARAMIA

I want to be sure he’s not hurt.

TATI

I’m sure he’s fine.

KARAMIA

Let’s hope. I don’t recognize you. De donde eres?

Karamia walks around the room doing a somewhat thorough inspection of the space. She places the ROSE on the bench beside Tati.

(CONTINUED)
She fondles with Tati’s matador costume.

Tati makes the effort to put space between Karamia and the costume without being obvious.

TATI  
I live at the corrales.

KARAMIA  
The corrales?!

TATI  
The corrales and the bullring are my life.

KARAMIA  
You must know my papa then.

TATI  
Quien?

KARAMIA  
I am Karamia Aragon. My father is Paquin. The most famous bullfighter the world has ever known.

TATI  
I know Paquin. I’ve been watching him fight since I was a little girl. He’s very good.

KARAMIA  
Soon my novio will get into the ring to continue the family tradition.

TATI  
Who is your novio?

KARAMIA  
The savior of the matador.

TATI  
He’s not a savior. He put himself and the matador in danger by jumping into the ring. He’s lucky he didn’t get us killed-- them killed.

KARAMIA  
Getting in that ring proves he is a man with honor and ganas.

TATI  
Bullfighting isn’t about being a man.

KARAMIA  
It is the epitomy of manhood.

(CONTINUED)
TATI
A woman could do it.

KARAMIA

TATI
Of him getting gored?

KARAMIA
Of the excitement that comes in the bedroom after.

TATI
I think I’d prefer being in the ring.

KARAMIA
Pues, my papa says the only place a woman has in bullfighting is to keep the bed warm for the matadors.

TATI
I think the bullfights force people to face their humanity. It shouldn’t matter if it’s a man or a woman. The matador is the human.

KARAMIA
You may be right. But so far as I can see, this place attracts nothing but the desperate; the nonhumans: widows, wounded soldiers, displaced citizens and putas.

TATI
You may become one of them some day.

KARAMIA
Never. They all share a survivor’s mentality.

TATI
These days, it’s hard to think about anything but surviving.

KARAMIA
It hinders progression.

TATI
Progression ceases to exist during wartime.

KARAMIA
We understand the world very differently. I’m not one to argue. Ya me voy. This place is all yours vaquera.

TATI
Gracias pequena.
Karamia exits.

Tati unwraps the RIBBON from the rose and ties it around her hair.

She leaves the ROSE, takes her costume and exits.

THE CANTINA 1.3

Rosa sits at a table expressionless.

Ignacio enters with two GLASSES.

Rosa throws back her drink like a shot.

Ignacio sits at a table and sips his.

ROSA
Vi una fantasma. The melody of my ancestors’ canción de la muerte deafened me the minute you stepped into that ring.

IGNACIO
You’re overreacting mama.

ROSA
I’ve seen this all before. Except it is no longer your papa. It is you flying toward me after being penetrated by the horns.

IGNACIO
You’re being reminded of that day. No te preocupes. Everything will be fine.

ROSA
You must promise you won’t set foot in that ring again.

IGNACIO
Calm down mama. Rudulfo?! Bring her another drink.

Rudulfo enters and fills Rosa’s GLASS from a pitcher.

Rosa sips it.

RUDULFO
Are you okay corazón?

IGNACIO
She doesn’t want me in the ring.

(CONTINUED)
RUDULFO
It’s your legacy.

ROSA
It’s not his legacy! Being a bullfighter was only a part of your papa, Ignacio. The worst part.

IGNACIO
I’ve heard the legend of matador "Garcia el Grandioso" since I was a little boy. Since I’ve stood the height of a man, I have been asked why I’m not in the ring.

RUDULFO
Why aren’t you? Perhaps you should try.

ROSA
You are a fool Rudulfo. Don’t listen to him.

IGNACIO
I never felt I was ready.

RUDULFO
When will you ever feel ready?

ROSA
Nunca!

IGNACIO
I’ve never thought I had the gracia to be in the ring.

ROSA
Porque no tienes gracia. You haven’t grown into your body yet.

RUDULFO
That kind of talk will hurt a man’s pride.

IGNACIO
I always thought it should be my calling. Maybe now it’s time I see if it is. There’s nothing left for me here.

ROSA
I am here. Karamia is here.

RUDULFO
This could be the opportunity for you to make a real difference. You will be the protector of a cultural treasure.

ROSA
Bullfighting is not a cultural treasure. It is another senseless battle that is guaranteed to end in the death of a living being.

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
You complain about what the bullring has become. You say it’s not the same as it once was.

ROSA
I complain about what the bullring is. But, it’s not your responsibility to fix it. It’s best to let it disappear from our reality.

RUDULFO
That will never happen.

IGNACIO
I cannot allow that. If I let the bullring disappear, all the memories of my papa will go with it.

ROSA
He wanted you to pursue something else.

IGNACIO
You know that’s not true mama.

ROSA
I should fall to my knees right now and mourn for you. My prayers were answered when they spared you from fighting in this war. Why are you still looking for a way to gamble your life?

RUDULFO
He’ll be fine Rosa. I’ll look after him. I will be sure he is trained by the best.

ROSA
I don’t believe anything you say. Ignacio, please, you’re engaged to a beautiful woman. Don’t risk your future. Your future with Karamia.

IGNACIO
Our future isn’t promised. Nobody’s is. I need to do my part. At the least, I can protect our culture.

ROSA
I won’t let my son have an affair with a toro bravo!

IGNACIO
I’m not going to have an affair with any toro -- toro bravo, toro rana, toro nada.

RUDULFO
Toro rana? I hope not.
ROSA
Nobody cares about the bullfights.

IGNACIO
Of course they do! The soldiers and civilians alike appreciate the entertainment.

ROSA
You will be laughed out of the ring Ignacio. You don’t belong in there.

RUDULFO
I won’t let that happen.

IGNACIO
Once they hear I’m fighting, aficionados from all around will come to cheer for me because I am my father’s son.

ROSA
What about your betrothed? What will her family think about you being in the ring?

IGNACIO
Karamia wants me in the ring. She has begged me for years to do it. Now I have no excuse.

ROSA
She doesn’t know what she’s supporting.

IGNACIO
She’s been around matadors her entire life. They are her ideal of a man.

RUDULFO
You will be the grandest title this plaza has had in years. Hijo de Garcia el Grandioso returns to avenge his father’s death while his esposa, daughter of Paquin, Karamia Aragon watches anxiously from her seat. They would come from all over to see you.

ROSA
She will hate it. Nobody will pay attention to her. They’ll be waiting to see if Ignacio gets gored to death like his papa.

IGNACIO
I’m not going to get gored mama.

ROSA
I saw it Ignacio.
CONTINUED:

IGNACIO
Your visions of me have always been wrong.

ROSA
What if this time they are not?

IGNACIO
I’ve had the dream of being like my papa since I was a young boy.

ROSA
Your dream was never to be un matador. It was that he will return.

IGNACIO
I thought if I stayed here long enough, he would walk out of the arrastre, and back into the ring. He’d wave for me to join him and teach me how to do his veronicas.

RUDULFO
He was so graceful in there. Best matador por siempre.

ROSA
He became possessed. He would share his most intimate thoughts with those toros as though they were lovers.

IGNACIO
This isn’t only about him mama. When I get between those walls, my blood pulses in excitement and my body moves without inhibition. Within those walls I am in ecstasy.

ROSA
This is a curse.

IGNACIO
There is no such thing.

RUDULFO
There were rumors your papa was cursed by a woman he had left scorned.

ROSA
They weren’t rumors. She thought her sorcery could get him to forget me and go against his heart. When he turned her away, she put a curse on him. He was young and didn’t realize she was una bruja.

IGNACIO
Religion is a woman’s concern.

(CONTINUED)
ROSA
   It’s not religion. It is sorcery.

IGNACIO
   Either way, I don’t believe in curses. And I’m sure he
didn’t either.

ROSA
   That’s an ignorance you men share. I was able to
deflect her. Until I began to feel spiteful. I
despised him being in the ring.

IGNACIO
   Maybe your spite is what threw him off that night.

RUDULFO
   Your mama was always supportive of him.

ROSA
   The bruja came that night. She gave him un beso de
muerte right before he entered the ring. I remember it
so well. Immediately after fear penetrated the air.

IGNACIO
   That happens in every fight. Whether it be woman
against woman, man against man, man against beast, or
man against woman.

RUDULFO
   It was different. The air became thick. It was
laborious to move. Everything became slow motion.

ROSA
   Perspiration soiled his body before the gates opened.

IGNACIO
   Otra vez. That happens with any fight.

ROSA
   I’ve done everything I can to keep you out of there.

RUDULFO
   It’s something he should experience for himself.

IGNACIO
   Papa brought pride and joy to our country. There is
nothing wrong with wanting to do the same.

RUDULFO
   Your father would be proud of you.
ROSA
You know nothing Rudulfo.

RUDULFO
It’s an honorable profession. The fights are a place where a country divided reunite to cheer for the survival of humans as a species. We need that.

ROSA
Your father wanted to stop fighting when you were born.

IGNACIO
But he didn’t.

RUDULFO
He had no choice but to fight again.

ROSA
Callate Rudulfo. He chose to go in the ring and he left as a corpse.

IGNACIO
I think this is something I need to do for myself. I should have a choice in how I will be remembered.

Ignacio exits.

ROSA
Stop putting these ideas into his head.

RUDULFO
They’ve always been there. I’m encouraging him.

ROSA
Well stop. It is only an option if you provide it.

Rosa rushes after Ignacio.

Rudulfo clears the table and exits.

The Bull Pen 1.4

Tati enters dressed as a woman and opens the gate.

El Hefe stays put. He snorts, bucks around.

Tati leans against the fence cooing gently as she speaks with El Hefe.

TATI
What’s all the fuss Hefe?
I don’t want to be here.

I take good care of you, don’t I? You always eat from the best of the crops.

I miss my heifers.

After the next fight I’ll let you see your herd.

Don’t make me fight.

But you are so good at it. The way we move together leaves everyone wanting more. It leaves me wanting more. I fantasize about those intimate moments.

You force me to do it.

If it wasn’t me, someone else would make you do it. And they’d kill you.

They couldn’t kill me.

They can and they will. I choose not to kill you because I’m your protector. That’s why I get dressed up for you.

You dress up for yourself.

I do it for us. No one but me gets to be with you. They can’t hurt you as long as I’m your matador.

You’re not a real matador.

I choose not to be like them. Men are monsters.

I could kill them.
TATI
   No Hefe! If you kill a man, you will be slaughtered.

EL HIFE
   I prefer death over slavery.

TATI
   You’re not a slave. You can come out of your pen.

EL HIFE
   I’m not free from you.

TATI
   If you leave, someone will capture you. They will fight you and kill you.

EL HIFE
   They won’t catch me.

   Tati sits on the fence with her legs dangling inside the corral.

TATI
   Yes they will Hefe.

EL HIFE
   I’ll get away.

TATI
   I always catch you.

EL HIFE
   That’s because you try.

TATI
   It’s because I can’t let you go. I need you.

EL HIFE
   Why?

TATI
   You let me be true to myself.

EL HIFE
   You should be scared of me.

TATI
   I’m not scared of you. I know you. And I have no reason to be scared of you.

   El Hefe charges the fence and hits it close to where Tati is sitting barely missing her.

(CONTINUED)
EL Hefe
You should be scared.

*El Hefe charges again and knocks Tati off the fence into the ring.*

Tati falls unconscious for a moment.

*When she sits up El Hefe erects into a minotaur.*

Tati rises shakily trying to make sense of the illusion.

*El Hefe stalks Tati occasionally snorting and bucking.*

Tati
Hefe? That wasn’t nice to do.

El Hefe
Let me leave.

Tati
I can’t let you leave me.

El Hefe
Why?

Tati
You understand me better than anyone else.

El Hefe
I don’t understand you.

Tati
You listen to me and never question why I do this.

El Hefe
I want to stop fighting.

Tati
We can’t stop. You elicit passion in me that I cannot find with anyone else. I have to keep you here.

*Tati approaches Hefe without fear or hesitation.*

El Hefe
I don’t want to live like this.

Tati
Neither do I.

*El Hefe nuzzles against her. She breathes him in.*

(Continued)
He suddenly begins to buck in circles around her and snorts loudly.

Tati puts her hand on his back and pets him gently. He stills.

TATI
You are mine. No one else can have you. You’re too gentle for what they will make you do.

EL HIFE
I can kill them.

TATI
No. They will take you from me.

EL HIFE
I don’t want this life.

Tati hugs Hefe and cries.

TATI
They will torture you and kill you. They will take you from me so I know the price of unacceptable love.

HEFE
I have to leave you.

TATI
I’m not ready to let you go Hefe.

Hefe pushes Tati away forcing her to fall down.

He leaps over the barrera.

Tati gets up and chases him.

THE DRESSING ROOM 1.5

Ignacio enters with the MULETA and places it next the the ROSE.

Rudulfo enters holding a garment bag.

RUDULFO
I held on to this until you were old enough to appreciate it.

Rudulfo hangs the bag and unzips it revealing a matador costume.
IGNACIO
Is that my papa’s?

RUDULFO
It was the first vestida he ever wore.

IGNACIO
Why do you have it?

RUDULFO
Your father bet everything he had that he would win that fight. He promised a slaughter that would go down in history.

IGNACIO
That doesn’t sound like something he would do.

RUDULFO
It wasn’t like anything he would do. People were excited. There were more bets that night than ever before.

IGNACIO
Everyone lost that night.

RUDULFO
No one lost more than your family. He bet his house.

IGNACIO
If that was true, mama would have taken me to the cuevas.

RUDULFO
I knew if anything happened and he lost the house, Rosa would have to leave. There was no way I could let that happen.

IGNACIO
So you bet my father would lose his life?

RUDULFO
He had never lost a fight. It was a huge gamble but I could afford to lose.

IGNACIO
But he did lose the fight. And you won his house? And his vestida?

RUDULFO
Your mama threw everything that reminded her of him away. When I arrived to tell her she could stay in the house -- I rescued what I could.

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
She never told me anything about this.

RUDULFO
I’m sure she has her reasons. But I thought you’d want to finally know the truth.

IGNACIO
Why now?

RUDULFO
You have a chance to fulfill your destiny. And I want nothing more than for you to have the opportunity to get your mama her home back.

IGNACIO
So what are you proposing? You’ll give my mama her home if I agree to get into the ring?

RUDULFO
There is nothing more for you to think about is there? During a time when having a roof over your head is a luxury. How could you say no?

IGNACIO
What if I die?

RUDULFO
I won’t do that to Rosa. You won’t set foot in that ring until you’re ready.

IGNACIO
How can you guarantee I’ll be ready?

RUDULFO
I’ll arrange that you train with the best. You’ll let me know when you’re ready to get in the ring. Don’t take too long to decide.

Rudulfo exits.

Ignacio takes the vestida from the bag.

He tries on the jacket. It’s a perfect fit.

He puts on the hat and looks at himself in the mirror.

He uses the MULETA and does a couple poses replicating the images of his father that have burned into his memory.

He puts the vestida back in the bag, zips it up, puts the MULETA on the bench and exits.
26.

THE CANTINA 1.6

Rudulfo enters.

He sits at a table counting COINS.

Tati enters.

Rudulfo doesn’t look up.

TATI
Sanchez?

RUDULFO
Who’s asking?

TATI
Tati Torres. My father sent me in his place.

RUDULFO
The Torres girl huh?

Rudulfo finally looks at her.

RUDULFO
Oye estas guapa carino. Riding those horses has done you some good.

TATI
Si senor.

RUDULFO
You ever get tired of chasing them cows, I’ve got a job for you entertaining soldiers here at the cantina.

TATI
I prefer working at the corral. Thank you.

RUDULFO
If you say so.

TATI
That’s what I say sir.

RUDULFO
So your father sent you? He tell you about his bad luck then?

TATI
Bad luck? No sir.

(CONTINUED)
RUDULFO
I’m not one for chisme, pero, he sent you so he must not care if you know.

TATI
Know what?

RUDULFO
Your papa had a bad streak in his bets lately. He owes me quite a bit of money.

TATI
That’s not any of my business.

RUDULFO
He mentioned you’ve been taking care of that toro bravo we’ve had in the ring.

TATI
He’s my best toro. He’s never too rough. I know he didn’t mean to cause any harm.

RUDULFO
He’s not living up to his potential.

TATI
He’s a seed bull. He shouldn’t be fighting men.

RUDULFO
Ha! I hate to tell you carino, anything that spreads it’s seed is naturally ready to fight.

TATI
Hefe’s different.

RUDULFO
I won’t argue. But, it’s time he be slaughtered.

TATI
You can’t slaughter him.

RUDULFO
A toro is worth more butchered than in the corral.

TATI
That’s not your decision.

RUDULFO
You’re right. It’s your papa’s. He’s chosen Hefe to pay off his debts.
TATI

There has to be another option.

RUDULFO

The life of a bull is to follár, pelear y morir. And it’s time your matador gives me a slaughter in the ring.

TATI

What if he refuses to slaughter him?

RUDULFO

A man will do anything you ask if the compensation is worth it.

TATI

But I’ve only trained him for show not to kill.

RUDULFO

You trained the matador? I thought he was pretty good. Obviously soft, but he had good technique.

TATI

Soft?

RUDULFO

That’s not your fault. Not everyone who gets in the ring can be a real matador.

TATI

He is a real matador.

RUDULFO

Until he gives me a kill, he hasn’t earned the title. But you trained him well.

TATI

I’m the best trainer around. And I could be the best matador as well.

RUDULFO

There’s no such thing as a female matador.

TATI

Not yet.

RUDULFO

I appreciate your romanticism. But let’s get back to settling this debt.

TATI

You should discuss that with my papa.

(Continued)
RUDULFO
I’d like to offer you a chance to help out your papa. Train a real matador to give me a slaughter. The toro can be used to get him ready for the fight.

TATI
I’ll do it for the toro’s life. You clear my papa’s debt and give me my toro in exchange for training him.

RUDULFO
You have to put Hefe in the ring.

TATI
A matador will never kill the bull they have trained with.

RUDULFO
Is that so?

TATI
Yes. If you agree to have the matador train for show, with no slaughter, I’ll accept your deal.

RUDULFO
I suppose that could make everyone happy and I can make a substantial gain.

TATI
How do you plan to do that?

RUDULFO
I’ll be in touch with the details. You just go on home and keep that bull corralled so he’s ready for the ring.

TATI
Si senor.

RUDULFO
And Tati... I expect you to keep this between us.

TATI
Whatever you say Sanchez.

Tati exits.

THE DRESSING ROOM 1.7

Music begins.

Ignacio re-enters wearing pants and nothing else. He puts on the jacket and begins buttoning it up.

(CONTINUED)
Rosa enters. She stares with a mix of emotion before approaching him to help complete the buttoning.

ROSA
You are the vision of death. Just looking at you makes my heart stop beating. Please Ignacio. What can I do to change your mind?

IGNACIO
There’s nothing mama. I’m doing this for us.

ROSA
You have not considered me in this decision.

IGNACIO
Sanchez told me the truth about the house. And my papa.

ROSA
He had no right to speak of your father.

IGNACIO
It’s about time someone told me what happened.

ROSA
He knows nothing. He wanted to be there for you.

IGNACIO
But that’s not what happened.

ROSA
This will bring nothing but pain to everyone you love.

IGNACIO
I’m doing this out of obligation and passion.

ROSA
I will use every last breath to talk you out of it.

Rosa exits.

Ignacio stares at himself in the mirror.

He exits with the bag, the ROSE and the MULETA.
ACT II
THE BULLRING 2.1

Music begins.

Tati, dressed as a matador, enters with the MULETA.

She stands at the bull pen gate with the MULETA in place. She goes through the ritual of preparing for the fight.

Ignacio re-enters now dressed in normal clothing.

He stands on the other side of the barrera and copies Tati’s movements.

The gate opens and Hefe, as a bull, charges her.

Tati dodges Hefe with every paso. The choreography is rapid and rigid.

Ignacio copies Tati with each paso.

Hefe becomes more aggravated and each pass gets closer than the one before.

TATI
Easy boy.

HEFE
Let me be free.

Hefe charges.

Tati dodges him.

Ignacio stops copying.

He now listens and watches with curiosity.

TATI
I don’t want to hurt you Hefe. But if you gore me, they’ll send someone to kill you.

HEFE
Let them kill me.

TATI
They’ll choose another to replace you.
HEFE
He’ll fight to the death.

*Hefe charges again this time knocking Tati to the ground and trampling on her.*

TATI
Hefe! You hurt me.

HEFE
We’ll all fight to the death.

TATI
I’ve had enough Hefe. Please! Stop.

*Hefe erects into a minotaur and pulls Tati up.*

*Ignacio is too stunned by the sudden vision of the minotaur to help.*

HEFE
Let me be free.

TATI
I can’t be without you.

HEFE
Your selfish.

*Hefe drops Tati and returns to being a bull.*

*He snorts at Tati, kicks up dirt, and returns to his pen.*

*Tati rises still holding the MULETA, and tries to walk away but she is lame.*

*Ignacio finally comes out of his shock. He jumps over the barrera and helps her into the dressing room.*

THE DRESSING ROOM 2.2

*Ignacio helps Tati sit. She puts the MULETA on the bench.*

*In an unknowingly intimate way, Ignacio helps her remove her vestida.*

*Tati, in shock, allows it appreciating the gentle seductive salvation after the brutal attack.*

*He removes the shoes and socks running his hand along the length of her calves.*

(CONTINUED)
He unbuttons the jacket relieving the first layer of her constrained bosom.

Tati gasps in relief.

IGNACIO
I’m being as gentle as I can. Tell me if it’s too much.

Ignacio unbuttons the shirt revealing her binding.

IGNACIO
What is this?

He gently touches the binding and feels her soft womanhood beneath.

He quickly pulls his hand away and drapes the shirt to cover up her secret.

IGNACIO
Do you have pain anywhere?

TATI
He trampled my leg.

IGNACIO
Can I look?

Tati is still in shock and doesn’t respond.

He pulls her pant leg higher.

Ignacio runs his hands up her leg gently searching for a tender spot.

TATI
Ow!

IGNACIO
I’m sorry. Can I check to be sure it isn’t broken.

TATI
It’s not broken. Just battered.

Ignacio hesitates before removing his hand.

IGNACIO
You need to put something on it.

TATI
I’ll survive.
IGNACIO
Okay.

Tati realizes she is busted with her shirt unbuttoned. She turns away from Ignacio to button it up.

Music fades.

TATI
Did they call out the banderillos?

IGNACIO
I don’t think so. Your bull returned to his pen.

TATI
Good.

IGNACIO
They should slaughter him.

TATI
No!

IGNACIO
He could have killed you.

TATI
But he didn’t.

IGNACIO
Why are you defending a brutal beast?

TATI
He didn’t mean any harm.

IGNACIO
He’s a bull.

TATI
You should go now.

IGNACIO
Do you need help getting home?

TATI
No thank you. I’ll stay here.

IGNACIO
Do you mind if I wait for you?

(CONTINUED)
TATI
Yes I do. I need to be alone.

IGNACIO
I’ll worry about you.

TATI
There’s nothing to worry about. Please leave.

Ignacio leaves the dressing room lingering outside for a beat.

Tati bursts into a sob.

She recovers as quickly as she loses control. She gathers the pieces of her vestida and the MULETA before exiting.

Ignacio exits shortly after.

Music ends.

THE CANTINA 2.3

Rudulfo sits at a table drinking.

Rosa enters toward Rudulfo in a fury.

ROSA
How could you Rudulfo?

RUDULFO
What did I do now?

ROSA
You’re putting ideas into Ignacio’s mind that will kill him.

RUDULFO
I’m not going to hurt the boy. I think of him like a son.

ROSA
He’s not your son. If you cared, you would not encourage him to do this.

RUDULFO
You should be proud of him.

ROSA
He’s never even trained. He knows nothing about fighting.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RUDULFO
I’ve arranged for him to be trained by the best. He won’t go into the ring until he’s ready.

ROSA
No es un asesino. He was spared being killed by a fellow man and now you’re asking him to risk his life for the slaughter of an animal.

RUDULFO
I’m providing him the opportunity to follow his passion; find his place in the world.

ROSA
He’ll hate every minute of it.

RUDULFO
You know that’s not true.

ROSA
If I say it enough, it will manifest.

RUDULFO
It will never be true.

ROSA
Those bulls are beasts with horns and the taste for blood. And you are asking him to throw himself in front of them.

RUDULFO
He’ll be fine Rosa. This is what he was meant to do. You have to stop clutching him to your bosom as though he is a babe.

ROSA
How could you Rudulfo? How could you tell him those stories about his papa?

RUDULFO
He has a right to know the truth.

ROSA
If I thought it mattered, I would have told him.

RUDULFO
It does matter.

ROSA
You offer him my home as a reward.
RUDULFO
He should have the security of a home. You’ve seen how many people have been displaced. Just walking through town you can smell the desperation and misery. I cannot see you and Ignacio end up that way.

ROSA
I am from the cuevas. I will always have a home.

RUDULFO
But what about Ignacio and Karamia?

ROSA
They are young. Desperation and misery is inevitable.

RUDULFO
I’m giving him an opportunity for a good life.

ROSA
You are tempting him with false promises of hope.

RUDULFO
I’m here to keep him from repeating the mistakes of his father.

ROSA
I knew that’s what this is about. You always had it out for his papa.

RUDULFO
I had nothing against Garcia.

ROSA
You smiled at his funeral and spat on his grave.

RUDULFO
It wasn’t his fault you chose him over me.

ROSA
You were never an option.

RUDULFO
When will you admit I am your only option. No one has ever loved you more than me. Regardless of your disdain for me, I’ve made sure you and Ignacio have been taken care of.

ROSA
Spare me your narcissism San Rudulfo. Let my husband rest in peace and stop putting foolish ideas into my son’s head.

(CONTINUED)
The idea has always been there. He should be rewarded for working toward his passion. Let me give him that.

There is no reward for doing the devil’s work.

Rosa begins to exit.

There’s something you should know.

Que quieres Rudulfo?

We’re taking bids on the fights.

She stops in her tracks.

Absolutely not. How dare you ask him to participate in your crooked ways. Tiene honor.

He’ll be judged on his performance.

He will never agree.

He already has. I assure you there will be no harm to him.

You cannot guarantee that.

If I could guarantee it, would you agree?

His father was the best matador the world has ever seen and he’s gone. If his life was not guaranteed in the ring, than nobody’s life is.

I cannot let this opportunity go. I will fill the plaza if an audience gets to see the son of the best matador the world ever knew.

He won’t do it! I’ll make sure he refuses this ridiculous idea and that everyone knows what a horrible person you are.
RUDULFO
Don’t get nasty Rosa. I’d hate for Ignacio to hear about your conversation with el coronel.

ROSA
Don’t threaten me Rudulfo. I can destroy you.

RUDULFO
How would Ignacio feel if he knew you personally bartered so el coronel would not admit him into the regime.

ROSA
Keep pushing me Rudulfo and I will find another plaza for Ignacio to fight in.

RUDULFO
How will he train? Who’s going to show him how to keep the bull from pushing his intestines into his throat. They won’t care whether he lives or dies.

ROSA
I have no reason to believe you do either.

RUDULFO
He’s a good boy. He should have been my son. I don’t want to see any harm come to him.

Rudulfo approaches Rosa and takes her hand and kisses it.

Rosa pulls her hand against his grip.

He holds on.

RUDULFO
You have to trust me Rosa. I won’t let you suffer anymore.

Rosa falls to her knees in an extreme effort to release his grip.

ROSA
Porque Dios? Why must this continue? I have lived by the word of God... dedicated my life to doing the right thing. What more can I do to free us from this life of torment?

Rosa gives a heartbreaking sob.

Rudulfo kneels beside her and embraces her.
THE BULLRING 2.4

Ignacio enters and stands by the barrera. Karamia enters.

KARAMIA
Ignacio.

IGNACIO
Mi amor.

KARAMIA
Are the rumors true? Are you getting into the ring?

IGNACIO
I am.

KARAMIA
You’ve argued with me for years that you couldn’t do it. Why the change of heart?

IGNACIO
I want to do something I will be respected for. I’m tired of people feeling sorry for me because of my mama and papa.

KARAMIA
They only see you as their son. You are your own man.

IGNACIO
I need to make my own decisions. You’ll support me right?

KARAMIA
You sound very desperate.

IGNACIO
Will you promise me you’ll stay by my side no matter what?

Awkward beat.

KARAMIA
Do you remember coming out here to watch the matadors train when we were children?

IGNACIO
How could I forget. You would straddle the fence and whisper seductions to the toros.

KARAMIA
I loved when they would charge at me. The fence would pound against me every time they slammed it.

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
   I was always ready to rescue you if it got too rough
   and you were knocked down.

KARAMIA
   I want to straddle it while you’re inside.

IGNACIO
   You would distract me. It would be dangerous.

KARAMIA
   A little danger is exciting.

IGNACIO
   Do you worry I’ll be gored?

KARAMIA
   You’re stronger, smarter, and swifter than any toro.

IGNACIO
   I hear about visions of my death in one ear, and how
   amazing this will be in the other. I don’t know what
   to believe.

KARAMIA
   What does your mind tell you?

   Ignacio gestures to the ring.

IGNACIO
   This is where I belong.

KARAMIA
   What does your heart tell you?

   Ignacio pulls Karamia into an embrace.

IGNACIO
   This is where I belong.

KARAMIA
   What does your body tell you?

   Ignacio turns Karamia around so her back is
   resting against him and they both face the ring.

   He looks longingly at the ring while holding her
   tightly against him.

IGNACIO
   This is where I belong.
KARAMIA
Then it shouldn’t matter what anyone else says.

IGNACIO
So many people have lost their lives here for nothing.

KARAMIA
They don’t lose it for nothing. Accidents happen. Death happens.

IGNACIO
My papa went in there on a false promise and with greed in his heart. He died for it. Is it really worth the risk?

KARAMIA
His name is famous all over the country. He will never lose that.

IGNACIO
That’s all that is left: his name. And eventually it will be forgotten.

KARAMIA
You have a home where we will make babies and raise them to know the legacy they come from.

IGNACIO
It’s not our home. Sanchez won it and has let us live there as an act of charity.

Karamia pulls away from Ignacio.

IGNACIO
Don’t worry. We’ll find somewhere to stay.

KARAMIA
Where Ignacio? I won’t live the life of a gitano.

IGNACIO
We can find a casita near the barracks.

KARAMIA
The barracks?! People are dying there every day.

IGNACIO
It will only be for a while. Until we can find something better.

(Continued)
KARMAIA
I’ve heard what happens to the women who live there. They are no longer part of the living.

IGNACIO
Maybe we can stay with your papa until I settle things with Sanchez.

KARAMIA
We’re not welcomed there anymore. He rescinded his blessing now that you’ve planned to enter the ring. It’s clear he’s disowned me.

IGNACIO
I’ll talk to him--

KARAMIA
No Ignacio! All you can do is begin training. Prove to everyone that you belong in there. I’ve always believed in you. Don’t make me question myself.

IGNACIO
I begin training today.

KARAMIA
You’re going to be great. Our names will be known all around the country. I can hear the chanting now. Los grandiosas Garcias con gracias.

IGNACIO
We’ll see.

Tati enters using a cane to steady her limp. She is wearing riding pants and a dirty shirt.

TATI
You? What are you doing here?

IGNACIO
I’m waiting for Torres.

KARAMIA
The trainer. Do you know him?

TATI
I’m Torres. You can call me Tati.

IGNACIO
You’re Tati?
That’s right.

You’re a woman.

Yes she is.

How is a woman supposed to train a matador?

Is this going to be a problem?

I think it’ll be okay.

Is she going to be a problem?

Excuse me?

I’ve seen what you can do. I’m willing to try.

Ignacio! You can’t be serious to train with her.

They say Torres is the best.

There must be someone else. What could she possibly know about fighting a bull?

Rudulfo set it up. We should trust him. Right?

If you’re staying, say your farewells now. It’s best not to have any distractions your first time in the ring. She can come back later if you want her here.

Of course he’ll want me here. We should find someone else.

If I wait, I might change my mind.
KARAMIA  
But you can find someone better.

IGNACIO  
I have to do this now.

TATI  
Great. You know your way out?

IGNACIO  
I’m going to make everything right.

Karamia gives Ignacio a long passionate kiss.

Tati doesn’t pay them the least bit attention.

KARAMIA  
I’ll keep the bed warm until you return.

Karamia exits.

TATI  
So you want to be a matador huh?

IGNACIO  
It’s in my blood.

TATI  
What’s taken you so long? Real bullfighters begin training when they’re young boys.

IGNACIO  
I’ve been encouraged to stay away from the ring.

TATI  
Mind if I ask why you decided to do it now?

IGNACIO  
Yeah, I do. Mind if I ask why you dress like a man to get in the ring?

TATI  
Yeah, I do.

IGNACIO  
Let’s stick with the training.

TATI  
Just so you know, there are easier ways to get out of a marriage.

(Continued)
IGNACIO
I suppose I could dress up like a woman and dance in the brothel.

TATI
All right carino. No need to be coy.

IGNACIO
So how does this work?

TATI
We’ll start with the basics. Later, we’ll bring in my toro, El Hefe.

IGNACIO
That seems too soon.

TATI
He needs to get used to you. When I know he’s comfortable with you, and you’re comfortable with him, I’ll put you in the ring together.

IGNACIO
Will I get hurt in there?

TATI
As long as you trust me and do what I say, you’ll be fine. None of the matadors I’ve trained have been gored.

IGNACIO
I’ve just met you. How can you expect me to trust you?

TATI
This isn’t going to work.

Tati walks away.

Ignacio runs after her and grabs her arm. He gently turns her to face him.

IGNACIO
I’m scared I’ll either be killed or look like a fool trying to be something I’m not.

TATI
Y que? If you think it’s worth it, get over your fear and swallow your pride. Having humility is the only way you’ll survive this.

Tati looks Ignacio up, down and around.

(CONTINUED)
TATI
It’s time to grow up.

Tati walks back toward the ring.

Ignacio watches her with admiration before following her in a trance.

TATI
The most important thing for you to remember is that Hefe is like any man. His instinct is to protect his territory.

IGNACIO
I understand that.

TATI
You’re going to get very comfortable with him the more you train.

IGNACIO
Great.

TATI
--But you shouldn’t. You must always be prepared for him to gore you at a moment’s notice.

IGNACIO
I’ll never get too comfortable to forget about what those shanks can do to me.

TATI
You have to find a way to hide your fear. He’ll use it against you.

IGNACIO
How do I do that?

TATI
You’ll have to find out when you get in there.

IGNACIO
How do you hide your fear?

TATI
I see him differently. He appears to me as a human. Sometimes I feel I’ve fallen in love with him.

IGNACIO
Ha!

(Continued)
TATI
Things will change when you realize how powerful he is beyond the thickness of his flesh. One day you’ll be in awe of his every movement.

IGNACIO
Are you really in love with him?

TATI
It’s my punishment for being a woman. It’s too easy for me to love.

IGNACIO
What else should I know about him?

TATI
You have to move as little as possible when he’s around. You want him to remember your spirit and energy, not you as a physical being. Don’t talk loudly. Eventually you will connect and your bodies will move as one.

IGNACIO
This is nothing like I thought it would be.

TATI
This is a lifestyle. An art. A meditation. Give yourself to him, and it will change you forever.

IGNACIO
I think that’s what I need.

TATI
Do you remember everything I told you.

IGNACIO

TATI
If you’re lucky, you’ll understand everything soon enough.

IGNACIO
All right. Let’s see if I can fall in love with your bull.

Music begins.

Tati motions for Ignacio to be outside the ring.

He obeys.

(Continued)
Tati opens the gate to the bullpen.

El Hefe enters slowly. He stops at the outer edge of the corral and watches them.

TATI
Come on out Hefe. I want you to meet someone.

IGNACIO
He’s huge.

EL HFEF
He’s ugly.

TATI
They’re going to put you in the ring with him.

EL HFEF
Does he want to kill me?

TATI
I’m not training him to kill you.

EL HFEF
Argh.

TATI
He’s going to play with you.

EL HFEF
He’s scared.

TATI
I know.

El Hefe charges toward Ignacio and slams into the barrera directly in front of him.

Hefe turns in circles and spits at Ignacio. Hefe snorts loudly.

TATI
Don’t react. Just be still.

IGNACIO
Holy shit.

TATI
Why are you trying to scare him?

EL HFEF
He doesn’t belong here.
IGNACIO
I belong here.

*El Hefe charges.*

EL HEFE
Leave.

IGNACIO
I’m not leaving. We’re going to train together. And we’re going into the ring to fight.

*El Hefe charges.*

IGNACIO
Should I move to the other side?

TATI
Be still! You can’t move. Just relax. He’s reacting to your energy.

IGNACIO
How do I relax when a bull is charging me?

TATI
Think about him differently. Appreciate his body. His spirit--

IGNACIO
I can’t fall in love with the bull.

TATI
Can you think of him as a friend?

IGNACIO
Calm down amigo. Let’s get to know each other.

*El Hefe charges.*

EL HEFE
I’m not your friend.

IGNACIO
Come on big boy. I really want to get in there with you.

EL HEFE
Why?

IGNACIO
My papa was a matador.
EL HFE
So?

IGNACIO
He never killed any of his bulls. They would dance around the ring until the bull went back to the toril.

TATI
Is that true?

IGNACIO
He would do pasos until the bull got tired.

EL HFE
I never get tired.

TATI
That’s amazing. What’s his name?

IGNACIO
Garcia el Grandioso.

EL HFE
He’s stupid.

IGNACIO
He died in the ring when I was a baby.

TATI
I heard about him. The entire country mourned him. That was before war desensitized us to death.

EL HFE
He deserved it.

TATI
Hefe! You don’t mean that.

EL HFE
I mean it.

IGNACIO
Maybe you’re right Hefe. Maybe he did deserve it.

EL HFE
He did.

IGNACIO
And maybe if I go into the ring with you I’ll deserve getting killed just like him.

(CONTINUED)
EL HÉFÉ
You will.

IGNACIO
But I have to try. I want to take care of my family like a man is expected to. Will you help me Héfè?

EL HÉFÉ
No. I’d rather gore you.

TATI
If you gore him they’ll eat you for supper.

IGNACIO
Come on amigo. We can help each other.

EL HÉFÉ
Why should I help you?

TATI
Please, work with him. They want you to fight, but you hurt me and I can’t protect you anymore. I’ll weep in blood if you die.

EL HÉFÉ
I won’t promise.

IGNACIO
Just don’t gore me.

EL HÉFÉ
Don’t make me mad.

IGNACIO
I don’t want to make you mad amigo.

EL HÉFÉ
I’m not your friend.

Héfè charges him again.

IGNACIO
I want us to be friends.

EL HÉFÉ
Stop. That makes me mad.

IGNACIO

(CONTINUED)
EL HEFÉ
Ask again when you’re ready.

Hefe returns to his toril.

TATI
He usually only reacts that way to me.

IGNACIO
Hefe knows we have to save each other in order to save ourselves.

TATI
Let’s see if you can keep it up.

Music begins.

Tati begins by showing Ignacio how to hold the MULETA.

She fixes every inch of him in minute detail observing his stance after each adjustment.

This continues throughout the next scene.

THE CANTINA 2.5

Music fades out.

Mr. Sanchez sits at a table counting COINS and writing down bets.

Karamia enters and watches him for a beat.

She sits on the table on top of his work and fondles the COINS.

KARAMIA
What are you doing Sanchez? Up to no good as always?

RUDULFO
The day has come that you’ve surpassed your mother’s beauty.

KARAMIA
Spare me the flattery. I keep hearing about your deceptions.

RUDULFO
Deceptions about what?

(CONTINUED)
KARAMIA
Ignacio’s father... the house. And there are rumors about your motivation for putting Ignacio in the ring.

RUDULFO
What have you heard?

KARAMIA
You’re planning to set up the bullfights.

RUDULFO
It doesn’t matter. The stakes are low.

KARAMIA
You have a woman training him. I think you might be setting him up.

RUDULFO
I wouldn’t do that.

KARAMIA
What if he becomes gored and lame? Are you willing to take care of his responsibilities?

RUDULFO
Ignacio will be sure you are taken care of. He’s an honorable man.

KARAMIA
He suggested we move to the barracks.

RUDULFO
The barracks? You can always run back to your papa if you think he’s serious.

KARAMIA
Papa won’t have anything to do with us now that Ignacio is fighting in your plaza.

RUDULFO
You can stay with Senora Garcia. I offered him the home as long as he fulfills our deal.

KARAMIA
And if he doesn’t?

RUDULFO
Rosa and I will have to revisit her options.

KARAMIA
She thought she was so lucky marrying Senor Garcia. And she’s spent her life blaming his death on a stupid curse.
RUDULFO
You should be more respectful to your suegra. Seems she may be your only hope of staying out of the barracks.

KARAMIA
She’s a fool. We have no way of being sure she won’t put us out of her home too. And as long as you are the owner, none of us know what a man like you is capable of.

RUDULFO
A man like me?

KARAMIA
A man without morals.

RUDULFO
I’ve done all I can for Rosa and Ignacio.

KARAMIA
This isn’t about them.

RUDULFO
No? What is this about then?

KARAMIA
I want my own security. I can’t rely on anybody anymore.

RUDULFO
Good for you.

KARAMIA
I’d like you to make me a proposal.

RUDULFO
A proposal? You’re a little young for me carino.

KARAMIA
I want the house. And I want you to propose how I can get it.

RUDULFO
Why would I give you the house?

KARAMIA
I am the best motivation Ignacio has to get into the ring. And if you’re nice to me, I can help change Rosa’s feelings toward you.
RUDULFO
I can handle Ignacio and Rosa myself.

KARAMIA
I’ll be your ally. We both love them. There’s no reason we shouldn’t work together.

RUDULFO
I’ve always found allies to be more of a liability. However, I am looking for something special that will bring more patrons to the cantina. Something that elicits sensuality.

KARAMIA
You can’t be proposing I work in this brothel.

RUDULFO
This is hardly a brothel. If it were, I’d be asking you to do a lot more than dance for my customers.

KARAMIA
No one in my clan will set foot in your plaza.

RUDULFO
Hire musicians outside of your clan to play for you.

KARAMIA
If I agree to dance for you, what exactly do I get?

RUDULFO
If you want the house, work for it. Or you can place your bets on Ignacio.

KARAMIA
You’ve guaranteed Ignacio would be okay.

RUDULFO
There’s always a gamble when man fights against a wild animal.

KARAMIA
Put the home in my name.

RUDULFO
I’m not giving a home to a single woman.

KARAMIA
If I have to sell myself, I won’t let anybody else benefit.

RUDULFO
I’m beginning to see you in a different light carino. Does Ignacio know what he’s marrying into?

(CONTINUED)
KARAMIA
Ignacio knows what’s expected of him as my husband.

RUDULFO
Do you know what’s expected from you as his wife?

KARAMIA
My ability to fulfill my wifely duties should never be questioned.

RUDULFO
Go find your musicians. You can start performing tonight.

KARAMIA
It’ll be your pleasure Sanchez.

Karamia exits.

THE BULLRING 2.6

Music fade in.

Hefe enters the bullring from the toril and watches Ignacio.

Tati uses her cane to teach Ignacio veronicas possible keeping a rhythm for him to follow, possibly using it on occasion to adjust his position. It is purposeful and elegant.

Ignacio practices them several times until they are perfect with Tati correcting every movement.

Tati finally gives her nod of approval.

Ignacio faces Hefe in the bullring.

Hefe ignores him.

Rosa enters. She joins Tati at the fence.

Music fades.

ROSA
I don’t know why I came.

TATI
He wants you here.

ROSA
I never went to see his papa train. It made me too nervous.

(CONTINUED)
TATI  
A matador needs all the support they can get.

ROSA  
How do I support him when I can’t bare to see him in there. He doesn’t belong in a bullring.

TATI  
Yes he does. I’ve trained plenty matadors and I promise you, he belongs in there.

*Hefe snaps to attention. He snorts and paws.*

TATI  
Here we go.

ROSA  
I have to leave.

TATI  
Stay still! You’ll distract him.

ROSA  
I can’t watch.

TATI  
Then close your eyes.

ROSA  
I can feel them. I can see it even more vividly through closed eyes.

*Rosa closes her eyes and clenches her ROSARY.*

ROSA  
Protege a mi dulce nino  
Mantenlo feliz como lo fue una vez  
Ayudarle a olvidar su idea estupida  
Devuelvelo a su inocencia

*Hefe bucks.*

IGNACIO  
Ready amigo?

EL HIFE  
I’m not your friend.

*Hefe charges Ignacio.*

(CONTINUED)
Ignacio ungracefully moves out of the way just in time.

IGNACIO
Right. We’re companeros.

EL HEFE
If you say so.

Hefe charges again.

Ignacio is too slow. He is knocked to the ground.

Hefe snorts a laughter.

ROSA
Is he hit?

TATI
He’s fine. Just got knocked down.

ROSA
Aye Dios mio!

Ignacio rises slowly.

IGNACIO
Easy boy. You almost hurt me.

EL HEFE
I will hurt you.

IGNACIO
Why do you want to hurt me?

EL HEFE
Because I’m mean.

IGNACIO
You’re not mean.

Hefe charges. Ignacio turns around him somewhat more gracefully this time.

EL HEFE
I shouldn’t be caged.

IGNACIO
Is that because you think you’re a human.

Hefe charges. Ignacio dodges.
EL HEFE
   No! Humans are ugly.

IGNACIO
   I think you want to be a human.

EL HEFE
   Humans smell bad.

IGNACIO
   Ha! Says the bull.

     Hefe charges. He hits Ignacio with his flank. Ignacio falls.

EL HEFE
   Get out.

     Hefe turns on him and charges to trample him.

ROSA
   Ignacio! Get up mijo!

     Tati leans into the ring.

TATI
   Hefe! Over here boy.

     Ignacio rolls out of the way just before Hefe tramples past him.

     Hefe turns to charge again. Ignacio rises and dodges him.

EL HEFE
   I’m going to kill you.

IGNACIO
   You won’t Hefe. We’re companeros. Recuerdas.

     Hefe charges again. Ignacio dodges.

EL HEFE
   I don’t like you.

IGNACIO
   I’m sorry Hefe. I didn’t mean to get you upset.

EL HEFE
   You laughed at me.
IGNACIO
Please forgive me Hefe. I’m sorry.

*Hefe charges. Ignacio dodges.*

EL HEFE
You’re ugly.

IGNACIO
You’re right.

EL HEFE
Get out.

IGNACIO
We were just starting to have fun.

EL HEFE
You’re mean. You smell. Get out!

IGNACIO
Come on, buddy. A couple more pasos? What do you say?

*Hefe moves to the other side of the corral by Tati snorting at her as he passes.*

*Hefe returns to his bull pen.*

TATI
I can’t believe he let you walk away. He only does that with me.

*Ignacio jumps over the fence to join Rosa.*

ROSA
It’s like seeing a ghost.

IGNACIO
Did you see me mama?

ROSA
You look too much like your papa.

IGNACIO
Really? Do you think I’ll be as good as him?

ROSA
I can’t bare to think about it.

IGNACIO
I understand him. And he understands me. I’ve never felt this close to anyone before.
TATI
I think you’re wanting it to be something it isn’t.

IGNACIO
He’s amazing.

ROSA
I’m shivering with fear. Get me out of here Ignacio.

Ignacio exits with Rosa.

Tati walks to Hefe’s pen and leans against it.

She stays here for a beat.

She exits during the next scene.

THE CANTINA 2.7

A guitarist and singer enter the corner of the cantina and begin warming up.

Rudulfo sits at a table.

Karamia enters wearing a Flamenco costume, the RIBBON as a choker and the ROSE in her hair.

She approaches Rudulfo.

RUDULFO
I knew this would work out.

KARAMIA
Promise me nobody will find out about this.

RUDULFO
I can’t make a promise for another man.

KARAMIA
You have to deny it if anyone asks.

RUDULFO
Are you asking me to lie?

KARAMIA
Don’t act like you’re above lying Sanchez.

RUDULFO
Fine. You’re secret is safe with me.

KARAMIA
Until you need to blackmail me?

(CONTINUED)
RUDULFO
I wouldn’t do that to you. I want you and Ignacio to have a happy marriage and a happy home.

KARAMIA
If you mean that, why not just give us the home? Why make me dance for you?

RUDULFO
A woman like you will appreciate things more if you have to work for them.

KARAMIA
A woman like me shouldn’t have to work for anything.

RUDULFO
Than why are you here?

KARAMIA
When times are hard, I have to look out for myself.

Music begins.

Karamia takes the stage and dances.

Tati enters with her cane. She sits with Rudulfo as they watch.

The music changes to a silencio with Karamia dancing without footwork and the melody of the guitar underscoring the dialogue.

RUDULFO
You come to enjoy the show?

TATI
Since when do you have dancers?

RUDULFO
Since I found one who agrees to my terms.

TATI
Does Ignacio know his fiance is dancing for you?

RUDULFO
That’s not my problem.

TATI
Does he know you covet his fiance?

Karamia finishes her choreography with a strong footwork pattern just as Igancio enters.

(CONTINUED)
She rushes off the stage before he notices her. The musicians stop playing in her absence.

RUDULFO
There’s my boy.

TATI
Did you notice the dancer Sanchez hired?

IGNACIO
I didn’t see them but they sound like amateurs.

RUDULFO
Careful what you say.

TATI
You don’t know who you might be insulting.

IGNACIO
I call it like I hear it. Besides nobody with any real talent would be working in your dirty cantina.

RUDULFO
You’re working for me.

IGNACIO
I don’t work for you. I’m performing in the bullring as a matador. And once I fulfill my obligation to you, I plan to go to a respectable plaza.

RUDULFO
Well you’re here now.

IGNACIO
Not for long. It’s time to set up a fight.

RUDULFO
You’re not ready. You’ve only been working with the bull for a short time.

IGNACIO
Schedule the fight and you’ll see.

RUDULFO
So you’re ready for a slaughter?

TATI
No! You said we wouldn’t slaughter Hefe.

RUDULFO
I never said that. If you’re not ready that’s fine. But you only go in that ring if I know you’ll be entertaining.
IGNACIO
I will be.

RUDULFO
Will you be able to slaughter him if it comes to it?

TATI
It won’t come to that.

RUDULFO
The crowd will want to see one of you win.

TATI
Ignacio will win if his bull walks away.

RUDULFO
Is that what your last matador tried to do? He was hit every time and it made him look ridiculous. I’ve only seen one matador make his bull walk away without contact.

IGNACIO
You’re looking at his son.

RUDULFO
So you think you can make your bull walk without any blood shed? What makes him different than your other fighter Tati?

TATI
I don’t know. Maybe Ignacio is more of a man.

RUDULFO
If you really think you’re ready, I’ll get you in front of an audience.

TATI
Good. Let’s get this over with.

IGNACIO
That’s right. One fight and I get the house.

RUDULFO
Things have changed since our last conversation. Someone else is interested in the house. I think it’s only fair you match their offer.

IGNACIO
You said one fight.

RUDULFO
I never said one fight. Besides, why are you worried? The bull is going to walk away right?
This time, yes. But he’s an animal. We have no guarantee he’ll walk every time.

Aha. Here’s the thing... I make my money when things happen that aren’t expected.

You’re scum Sanchez.

I’m not that bad. I’m giving you a chance to take care of your mama and that pretty little lady you’re planning to marry.

I now understand why mama despises you. Thank God she chose my papa instead of you.

You don’t know what you’re talking about. I suggest you get all the facts before making those kind of comments. Go on now. I need a word with Tati alone.

You okay Torres?

I’ll be fine.

See you in the corral.

Ignacio exits.

What do you want Sanchez?

I’m expecting a good show... from both of them. The last guy your bull fought limped out of that ring looking pathetic. I can’t let that happen again. This plaza will become a joke.

You won’t be disappointed.

Who will win the fight?
TATI
So far Hefe just leaves him alone.

RUDULFO
It sounds so boring. Nobody will come see a bull standing around ignoring a matador. They want pasos, veronicas, maybe a little nick of the horns.

TATI
You’ll get your action Sanchez. Hefe’s got spirit. But he knows when Ignacio has had enough.

RUDULFO
This makes me nervous Tati. Your bull had better be ready to fight. I’ll bring in banderillos if I have to.

TATI
You don’t need to torture Hefe to make him angry.

RUDULFO
I’m putting the odds with Ignacio.

Tati gives Rudulfo COINS.

TATI
I’ll take that bet. Ignacio is going to win.

RUDULFO
Just be sure the bull tries to gore him a few times. People can’t think we’re setting this up.

TATI
I can’t imagine anyone would think that about you.

RUDULFO
What happened to your leg carino?

TATI
It’s an old injury.

RUDULFO
Should I be concerned?

TATI
Are you ever really concerned about others?

RUDULFO
Remember, if the bull causes any problems, he goes to the slaughterhouse.

Tati exits.

Rudulfo grabs the COINS and exits.
Karamia enters still wearing her dance costume.
She stands in front of the mirror and spits at her reflection.
She removes her makeup.

Ignacio enters.

IGNACIO
Karamia? What are you doing here?

Ignacio hugs Karamia from behind and holds her.

KARAMIA
How did you know I was here?

IGNACIO
I was looking for Tati.

Karamia pulls away from him.

KARAMIA
Tati? I thought you were waiting for me to come home.

IGNACIO
I forgot you were performing tonight. What are you doing here?

KARAMIA
I came for a drink.

IGNACIO
Was the show that bad?

KARAMIA
It helps if I think about the future.

IGNACIO
What do you hope for?

KARAMIA
Same as always: You will become a famous matador. I will be invited to perform in the best tablaos. We’ll travel the world together sharing our bed with each other and our art with the world.

IGNACIO
I want to give you that.

Karamia embraces Ignacio but pushes him away immediately.

(CONTINUED)
KARAMIA
  Ugh! You smell horrible Ignacio. You smell como...
  como... un toro!

IGNACIO
  Really? I didn’t notice.

KARAMIA
  You have to wash up. It’s too much.

IGNACIO
  I did wash up.

KARAMIA
  You didn’t do it enough. Ugh! I can’t stand it.

IGNACIO
  Are you sure it’s not the cigarettes and cheap perfume 
  from your visit to Sanchez’s cantina?

KARAMIA
  It’s the smell of a nasty animal that singes my 
  nostrils.

IGNACIO
  He’s not nasty.

KARAMIA
  Are you defending the bull?

IGNACIO
  I shouldn’t have to defend being in the ring to you.

KARAMIA
  You’re right you shouldn’t. Maybe you’re defensive 
  because you feel guilty that you’ve been spending all 
  your time with the pinche toro. Or maybe you’re 
  defending being with her?

IGNACIO
  Her? Do you mean Tati?

KARAMIA
  I’m not stupid Ignacio. I can tell how much you admire 
  her. And her yearning for you is all over her body.

IGNACIO
  You’re crazy.

KARAMIA
  A woman knows when her man starts fantasizing about 
  someone else.
IGNACIO
    My only fantasy is trying to live up to your expectations of who I should be.

KARAMIA
    You haven’t touched me since you started spending time with her.

IGNACIO
    I come home every night with every inch of my body aching. All you can think of is forcing me to please you. I can’t do it. I’m exhausted.

KARAMIA
    You won’t condemn me for ensuring my desires are satisfied.

IGNACIO
    You’re oversexed Karamia.

KARAMIA
    I’m under appreciated.

IGNACIO
    Maybe I should go where I’m appreciated.

KARAMIA
    To her?

IGNACIO
    No. I’m going to spend the night with Hefe. I’m sure he doesn’t mind if I smell like him.

KARAMIA
    I’m not a fool Ignacio. A woman always knows.

    Karamia storms out of the dressing room.

THE BULLPEN 2.9

Ignacio enters.

He opens the gate.

Hefe ignores him for a beat.

IGNACIO
    Hi boy.

EL HEFE
    It’s late. Leave.

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
Do you mind if I stay with you tonight?

EL HIFE
Yes.

IGNACIO
How about just for a while?

EL HIFE
No.

IGNACIO
I need to talk.

*Hefe growls.*

IGNACIO
I’m glad you’re here. Tati said you escape sometimes.

EL HIFE
What do you want?

IGNACIO
I need a friend right now.

EL HIFE
I want privacy.

IGNACIO
We’re campaneros. I thought you’d welcome my company.

EL HIFE
I don’t.

IGNACIO
I’ve been thinking about you a lot.

EL HIFE
So what?

IGNACIO
Today was amazing. I’ve never felt that connected to anybody before.

*Hefe snorts.*

IGNACIO
Our pasos keep getting closer and closer. Every time you charge past me, your breath warms my skin.

(CONTINUED)
EL HFE
You stink.

IGNACIO
If only you can feel how hard my muscles have become. I lie in bed throbbing and thinking about you for hours.

EL HFE
Gross.

IGNACIO
Do you think about me after I leave?

EL HFE
No.

IGNACIO
I don’t believe you. I know you care about me. If you didn’t care, you would have already gored me.

EL HFE
Fine... I’ll gore you.

Hefe suddenly charges toward Ignacio hitting the fence next to him.

Ignacio jumps over the barerra and hides from him.

Hefe continues to charge against the fence trying to knock it down.

Tati rushes onstage, jumps the barerra, and runs towards the bullpen.

TATI
Hefe?! What’s wrong boy?

Hefe calms.

Ignacio peeks out from hiding.

IGNACIO
I got him excited.

TATI
What are you doing here?

IGNACIO
I couldn’t sleep. I wanted to be with Hefe.

EL HFE
He’s bothering me.
TATI  You have to leave. Why do you think it’s okay to come here anytime?

IGNACIO  This is the only place I feel I can be myself.

TATI  That’s not okay. You need to leave.

IGNACIO  I don’t want to leave yet. Do you mind if I stay?

TATI  I do mind. This is the only time I get to be alone with Hefe these days.

Karamia enters unnoticed.

She listens.

IGNACIO  I feel the same.

TATI  I don’t think you understand. This is where my fantasy becomes a reality.

IGNACIO  Aren’t you scared of being ravished by a beast?

TATI  Maybe that’s what I want.

IGNACIO  Maybe that’s what we all want.

EL HIFE  You need to leave.

TATI  Don’t come here again unless I tell you it’s okay.

IGNACIO  I can’t promise that.

TATI  You don’t have a choice.

EL HIFE  I don’t want you here.

(Continued)
IGNACIO
   Why don’t you want me here? You’re breaking my heart.

EL HFEF
   You’re ugly. So is she.

   Karamia charges toward Ignacio.

KARAMIA
   How dare you Ignacio! I knew you were up to no good
   with this... this... puta.

TATI
   Excuse me? You’re the one selling your flower to a
   room full of men.

KARAMIA
   At least I was given that option.

TATI
   You both need to leave now. I’m getting really tempted
   to get my gun and use your ass as a target.

KARAMIA
   How could you choose her over me?

IGNACIO
   There’s nothing going on with me and Tati.

KARAMIA
   Don’t lie to me! You want to be ravished by
   her? She’s breaking your heart?

IGNACIO
   I wasn’t talking to her.

KARAMIA
   I’m not stupid! You were expressing your love to
   someone and it’s only her and this stupid bull.

   Hefe charges toward Karamia.

EL HFEF
   I’ll kill you.

KARAMIA
   Control your cow Tati.

TATI
   It’s part of his mating ritual. He thinks you’re a
   heifer.

(CONTINUED)
EL HENE
   I don’t like her.

IGNACIO
   I came to see Hefe. He understands me.

KARAMIA
   You’re going crazy Ignacio.

  *Hefe charges Karamia again.*

TATI
   LEAVE!

EL HENE
   Yeah leave.

KARAMIA
   I can’t wait to watch Ignacio slaughter him.

EL HENE
   I hate you.

TATI
   That will never happen. Hefe will gore him to death first.

IGNACIO
   I’m not going to slaughter Hefe. And Hefe isn’t going to gore me right boy?

  *Hefe charges toward Ignacio.*

EL HENE
   You never know.

KARAMIA
   How do you expect to get us the house? Sanchez will only give it to you if you fulfill your promise.

IGNACIO
   I have a plan. This will all be over soon and we’ll never have to set foot in this plaza again.

TATI
   Good. I’ll be elated to never see either of you again.

KARAMIA
   The feeling is mutual.

IGNACIO
   You know that if I hadn’t decided to fight Hefe, he would be at the market.
TATI
I don’t need you to save him.

KARAMIA
Why do you care Ignacio? You should only be worried about us right now.

TATI
She’s right.

KARAMIA
It’s time to go home.

Karamia wraps her arm around Ignacio’s waist and guides him away from the ring.

Ignacio glances back as Hefe transforms into a minotaur.

EL HIFE
Why is she that way?

TATI
She’s jealous.

EL HIFE
Of you?

TATI
It’s obvious he’s in love with you.

EL HIFE
Why?

TATI
Because you’re magnificent.

Hefe grunts.

TATI
Hefe?

EL HIFE
What do you want?

TATI
You need to try and gore him during the fight.

EL HIFE
Do you want me to gore him?

(CONTINUED)
TATI
No. Just make it look like you are trying to.

EL HEFE
Like I do to you?

TATI
Don’t do anything to him like you do to me.

EL HEFE
Do you want me to gore you?

TATI
You might kill me if you do.

EL HEFE
Is that what you want?

TATI
Do you like him more than you like me Hefe?

EL HEFE
Maybe.

TATI
You’re saying that to get me upset.

EL HEFE
It’s time to go to sleep.

TATI
Can I sleep with you?

EL HEFE
You always ask. I always say no.

TATI
I know. I love you.

*El Hefe transforms back into a bull and snorts.*

*Tati closes the gate and exits.*

THE DRESSING ROOM 2.10

Music begins.

*Ignacio enters wearing the full costume of a matador.*

*He stares at himself in the mirror.*

*Rosa enters.*

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Music fades.

ROSA
I will continue to hold my breath with a prayer on my lips that you will change your mind.

IGNACIO
You shouldn’t have come, mama.

ROSA
Of course I should be here. I don’t dare miss one last chance to see my son alive.

IGNACIO
I am meant to do this. Your blessing would be appreciated but I won’t wait for it.

ROSA
You look so much like him.

IGNACIO
I know he’d be proud of me.

ROSA
He is. He’s visited my dreams and told me he will protect you from the toro.

IGNACIO
Hefe won’t hurt me, mama. I know he won’t.

ROSA
He’s an animal Ignacio. He’s not your friend.

IGNACIO
Remember what you said about my father being in love with the bulls.

ROSA
I never said he was in love with them. I said he treated them as mistresses.

IGNACIO
Of course he couldn’t be in love with them because he was in love with you.

ROSA
Just as you are in love with Karamia.

IGNACIO
I don’t know if what we have is love. I feel different now.

(CONTINUED)
ROSA
It is because you are becoming a man.

IGNACIO
I feel alive when I’m with Hefe. I don’t feel that with her.

ROSA
You always feel alive when you are walking into the arms of death. Why do you think so many men go into the ring? Why do you think there is war? It’s a false promise of living. A false promise of purpose.

IGNACIO
It feels like the right thing to do.

ROSA
What is right is taking care of your mama. Waking in the arms of a woman who loves you. Seeing your child grow into a man.

IGNACIO
I’ve always believed this is supposed to be my destiny.

ROSA
This is not your destiny. You can leave right now and nothing will change.

IGNACIO
Yes it will. You know it will. We won’t have a home. Sanchez will continue to torture you if I go back on my word.

ROSA
I’m not worried about Sanchez. I have an army of angels looking after me. He is irrelevant.

IGNACIO
If anyone else fights Hefe, they will kill him.

ROSA
You don’t owe that toro anything Ignacio. He is not your concern.

IGNACIO
I wish you were proud of me mama.

ROSA
I want to be. But you leave me no choice but to return to my vigil.

Rosa exits.
Ignacio picks up the MULETA and stares at himself in the mirror.

THE BULLRING 2.11

Tati enters to the bull pen gate.

Begin music.

Rosa enters. She kneels in prayer with her back to the fight clutching the ROSARY.

Rudulfo and Karamia enter.

They stand next to Rosa facing the ring.

Ignacio enters the ring with the MULETA.

He practices his veronicas.

After a series of warm ups, Ignacio stands in front of the toril ready for the fight.

Tati opens the gate opens and El Hefe enters bucking and snorting.

Tati jumps to the other side of the barrera.

IGNACIO
Hi boy. You ready to put on a show?

EL HFE
Let’s fight.

Hefe charges. Ignacio veronicas.

IGNACIO
Careful. You got close that time.

EL HFE
Move faster.

Charge. Veronica.

IGNACIO
You’re making me nervous Hefe. I think you might be trying to hit me.

EL HFE
I am.
IGNACIO
    If you hit me, they’ll expect me to kill you.

EL HIFE
    So what?
        Charge. Paso.

IGNACIO
    I thought we were going to play until you got tired.

EL HIFE
    Not anymore.
        Charge. Ignacio is hit and falls to his knees.

IGNACIO
    You hit me!

EL HIFE
    That was fun.
        Rosa rises immediately.
        Ignacio gets up and hobbles toward the fence. Hefe bucks around and snorts.

ROSA
    Do something Rudulfo!

KARAMIA
    Ignacio are you okay?

RUDULFO
    Get the banderillos!

IGNACIO
    Okay. You won, Hefe. Go on and get back in your toril. They’re coming to stab you.

EL HIFE
    So what?
        Tati runs to the fence.
        Music fades.

TATI
    Hefe! You’ve got to get out of the ring.

KARAMIA
    Forget the bull. Get Ignacio out of there.

(CONTINUED)
EL HEFE
Fine. I’m going.

Hefe calms. He exits with a spring in his step.

Rosa, Karamia, and Rudulfo wait anxiously at the fence.

ROSA
You’ll kill me before you get yourself killed.

IGNACIO
It was just a nick. I’ll be alright.

RUDULFO
You did great son. How’d that feel?

IGNACIO
My organs are protesting that hit. But it was
amazing. Hefe is back in his toril?

ROSA
He tried to killed you.

TATI
He wouldn’t have killed him. He did exactly what he
was told to do and got out safe.

ROSA
Tonto!

KARAMIA
You were amazing Ignacio! Can you hear them? They’re
chanting your name.

RUDULFO
Next time you’re in the ring, they’ll be praising your
name through to the slaughter.

IGNACIO
We don’t need to slaughter him. He walked away.

RUDULFO
The crowd will want to see a slaughter after that
hit... they’ll expect it.

TATI
That wasn’t the deal Sanchez.

RUDULFO
The only deal I have with you is clearing your father’s
debt. If it takes a slaughter to do it... you’ll give
me a slaughter.

(CONTINUED)
TATI
You said if I trained him, Hefe would go free.

KARAMIA
They never let the bull go free.

TATI
I’ll tell Hefe to kill Ignacio before I let you kill him.

IGNACIO
Don’t worry Tati. We’ll bring in another bull.

RUDULFO
No way. Everyone will want a rematch.

KARAMIA
I don’t see what the big deal is... it’s a cow.

TATI
He’s not a cow. He’s my toro. He’s mine.

KARAMIA
It’s a steak dinner all the same.

RUDULFO
I just want one more fight and you can all return to life how it was before. You can run away to the pasture with your cow. You can marry this pretty little lady. And Rosa... you can have your life back, maybe this time, without the shadow of your husband’s foolish decision haunting you every day.

Tati leaves in a huff.

ROSA
Why are you doing this Rudulfo? For money? What is your price for the life of another man?

RUDULFO
You can’t blame me for what a man does out of desperation. Only he can set the price of his life.

ROSA
Yet you are always the beneficiary of his death.

RUDULFO
It’s because I know the risks. I’ll warn him, and try to prevent tragedy. If he refuses to listen, I will put everything against him. Because if I don’t take the bet... someone else will. And not everybody will take care of a mother and her child after that man loses his life.
IGNACIO
Why put us through this? Why not give her the house?

RUDULFO
You wanted a purpose and I gave you that opportunity. Your mama had a chance to get her house back long ago.

ROSA
Everything you offer is blood money. Your heart is as dark as the toro’s eyes.

RUDULFO
I’m giving you the life you always wanted son. You don’t realize it now, but you will. If you want to have your name known all over the country, let me know and I’ll schedule the rematch.

IGNACIO
There’s more to this than fame.

RUDULFO
I’ve given you your choices.

*Rosa helps Ignacio walk toward the dressing room.*

*Karamia stays back.*

KARAMIA
The house is still mine right Sanchez?

RUDULFO
If he agrees to the slaughter.

KARAMIA
Why does it matter what he does? I’ve been working for the home.

RUDULFO
I suppose we can renegotiate?

KARAMIA
Renegotiate?

IGNACIO
Karamia? You coming?

RUDULFO
Come to the cantina to get Rosa her medicine. We can discuss the details then.

(CONTINUED)
KARAMIA

Of course mi amor. Here I come.

Karamia grabs the MULETA and runs toward Ignacio and drapes his other arm around her shoulder to help him walk.

They all exit.

Rudulfo saunters off to the cantina.
ACT III
THE DRESSING ROOM 3.1

Ignacio enters with the help of Karamia and Rosa.

Rosa helps him remove layers of the costume.

ROSA
If he hit you any higher, you would have lost a lung.

KARAMIA
Or your life.

IGNACIO
He wouldn’t have hurt me.

ROSA
What is this then?

IGNACIO
You just said it could have been worse. I’ll be as good as new in a few days.

ROSA
And then what?

IGNACIO
Then I get back in the ring with another bull.

KARAMIA
You have to kill it.

IGNACIO
I won’t kill Hefe.

ROSA
Then there is no reason for you to go back in there.

IGNACIO
I have to mama. Sanchez said someone else wants the house.

ROSA
Let them have it. It’s time we leave that house and all the memories behind.

IGNACIO
Has he really tried to give it to you?

KARAMIA
When did he offer it to you?

(CONTINUED)
ROSA
He’s always offered. I refuse to accept his offer because he cannot be trusted.

KARAMIA
We wouldn’t be in this situation if you accepted it.

ROSA
I would have been indebted to him for the rest of my life. There is no part of him that is honorable. I don’t know why you or anyone would make a deal with him.

IGNACIO
It’s security.

ROSA
There is no security with him. My visions tell me secrets people don’t want known. He has already promised the house to someone else.

IGNACIO
He wouldn’t do that. He’d get caught.

ROSA
He knows if you’re dead, it won’t matter.

KARAMIA
Should I get you your medicine Rosa?

ROSA
If it makes you feel useful.

Karamia exits.

IGNACIO
She’s acting strange lately.

ROSA
Maybe it is because you are in love with that toro.

IGNACIO
I never admitted that to her.

ROSA
You don’t have to. It’s all you talk about.

IGNACIO
She’s more concerned about me and Tati.

ROSA
Tati?! She only cares about that bull. However, the idea of a man being in love with someone else is enough to make any woman crazy.
IGNACIO
Do you think I made papa proud mama? Did I make you proud?

ROSA
It pains me to admit it.

Ignacio smile. He exits.

THE CANTINA 3.2

Rudulfo and Tati sit at the table counting COINS.

Karamia enters unnoticed.

RUDULFO
He did pretty good for his first time in the ring.

TATI
He got hit.

RUDULFO
It was a little nick. He’ll be good as new in a few days. We need to schedule a rematch immediately.

TATI
The odds will be against him this time. Once a matador gets hit, the chances of him getting killed increase.

RUDULFO
Everyone will bet on Hefe.

TATI
How will you place your bet?

RUDULFO
I expect Ignacio to be better this time. I’ll bet on the boy.

Karamia charges toward them in fury.

KARAMIA
Is it true if a matador is hit, he’s more likely to be killed the next time?

TATI
That’s the way the odds are figured.

KARAMIA
And you want to put him back in the ring?
RUDULFO
Ignacio knows what he has to do. He’s a sure thing.

TATI
Maybe.

Rudulfo gives Tati COINS.

RUDULFO
You got your cut. Go get him ready for the next fight.

KARAMIA
You bet on him?

TATI
I’m looking out for myself. You understand I’m sure.

RUDULFO
You girls have so much in common. I’m surprised you’re not the best of friends.

KARAMIA
I’m not her type. She likes engaged men and unavailable bovine.

Tati storms out of the cantina knocking Karamia out of her way as she goes.

RUDULFO
Have a seat.

Karamia sits on the table.

KARAMIA
You mentioned we could renegotiate.

RUDULFO
Would you consider being a mistress?

KARAMIA
Rosa says you don’t own the home anymore.

RUDULFO
It seems she’s figured you out. She’s trying to make you nervous.

KARAMIA
For what? I didn’t do anything wrong. I’m making sure we have a place to live. Every one in this country is doing what they can to protect themselves and their loved ones from poverty.
RUDULFO
    What will happen to Rosa and Ignacio when you have a change of heart? When you find a better option?

KARAMIA
    We’ll figure that out when it happens.

RUDULFO
    I might have a better option for you now.

KARAMIA
    Unless it’s a bigger house on the hill, I don’t know that I’d be interested.

RUDULFO
    I can grant your every desire Karamia. There’s a lot of desperate men these days whose misfortune become my boon. I like having a woman like you around. It’s exciting not knowing what you’re capable of.

KARAMIA
    Should I be flattered or offended?

RUDULFO
    I refuse to carry Rosa’s spite to the grave. Let them have the home. You are suited for bigger things.

KARAMIA
    I always thought you were in love with her.

RUDULFO
    I’ve never loved a woman I’ll admit to. I keep them for company and send them on their way when they become too needy. I doubt you’ll give me that problem.

KARAMIA
    What exactly are you proposing Sanchez?

RUDULFO
    Be sure Ignacio goes in for the kill on this next fight. Do that and I’ll set you up with your own place. A house on the hill.

KARAMIA
    Will Ignacio and Rosa get her house?

RUDULFO
    It’s only right. Don’t you agree?

KARAMIA
    As long as my reward is better.

(CONTINUED)
RUDULFO
Do you think he’ll kill for you?

KARAMIA
He knows what he has to do to keep me happy.

RUDULFO
You know how to get my blood flowing. Ignacio doesn’t know what to do with you.

KARAMIA
I’m not sure you do either.

Karamia blows him a kiss and exits.

Rudulfo exits.

THE BULLPEN 3.3

Tati opens the gate and leans against the fence. She is softly crying.

El Hefe transforms into her minotaur.

EL HIFE
Are you sick?

TATI
My heart is sick Hefe.

EL HIFE
Why?

TATI
If they take your life I will die beside you.

EL HIFE
He won’t kill me.

TATI
Sanchez is fixing the fight. He wants Ignacio to kill you.

EL HIFE
He won’t kill me.

TATI
His loyalty is to his mama. Sanchez is insisting he go in for the kill to get her house back. He’ll do anything to take care of her.
EL HEFE
   He’s not capable of murder.

TATI
   People are capable of anything when they are desperate and scared.

EL HEFE
   He’s different.

TATI
   Why do you think that?

EL HEFE
   He smells different.

TATI
   Do I smell different?
     Hefe smells her.

EL HEFE
   No.

TATI
   You don’t think much of me.

EL HEFE
   We have our moments.

TATI
   I love you so much.

EL HEFE
   I know. I’m your toro.

TATI
   What are we going to do Hefe?

EL HEFE
   I’m going to fight.

TATI
   What if he tries to kill you?

EL HEFE
   I’ll gore him.

TATI
   You can’t kill him. Just nick him again so he goes down. I’ll get you out so we can get away from here.

(CONTINUED)
EL HFE
   I don’t want to hurt him.

TATI
   Stop talking about him like that. It makes me jealous.

EL HFE
   Why are you jealous?

TATI
   I don’t want you caring about another human.

EL HFE
   You can’t control my thoughts.

TATI
   But It’s only supposed to be me and you.

EL HFE
   I’m going to sleep.

TATI
   Can I sleep with you tonight Hefe?

EL HFE
   No.

TATI
   Please? I love you. I need you.

   *He becomes a bull, snorts and walks away.*

   *Tati closes the gate and exits.*

   *Ignacio enters.*

IGNACIO

   *El Hefe snorts.*

   *Ignacio opens the gate to Hefe as a bull.*

EL HFE
   I’m trying to sleep.

IGNACIO
   I won’t keep you long. I just wanted to say goodnight.

EL HFE
   I’m tired.

(Continued)
IGNACIO
  Yeah. Me too... I had fun today Hefe.

EL HFE
  I hurt you.

IGNACIO
  I know you didn’t mean to hurt me.

EL HFE
  I got excited.

IGNACIO
  Me too... They want us to fight again.

EL HFE
  Okay.

IGNACIO
  They want me to kill you.

EL HFE
  So kill me.

IGNACIO
  I don’t want to. I don’t want to fight again.

EL HFE
  Why not?

IGNACIO
  I don’t like being told what to do. I only did this for my mama. Sanchez says I have to kill you so she can keep her house.

EL HFE
  He’s bad.

IGNACIO
  He is bad. But she doesn’t care about the house. I thought that would make her happy.

EL HFE
  A house makes her happy?

IGNACIO
  Probably not. I started this because I thought it was my legacy, my purpose in life... to be a bullfighter.

EL HFE
  Your legacy?

(CONTINUED)
IGNACIO
Yeah. I thought it would make the country proud. Make mama proud. Since I was discharged from the regime, nobody saw me as a man.

EL HEFE
Are they proud of you?

IGNACIO
I don’t think anyone even cares. And my poor mama. It makes her heart sicker every day.

EL HEFE
You shouldn’t fight.

IGNACIO
I know. But what about Karamia? I want everyone to be happy. My mama, Karamia, you. What would make you happy Hefe?

EL HEFE
To be free.

IGNACIO
What does that mean?

EL HEFE
I don’t know.

IGNACIO
You can come out of the toril.

EL HEFE
That’s not freedom.

IGNACIO
What if I let you out of the plaza? You could wander into the pastures and find some nice heifers to mount.

EL HEFE
She’d bring me back.

IGNACIO
Who? Tati?

EL HEFE
Yes.

IGNACIO
Have you told her that’s what you want? She loves you... I’m sure she would let you go.

(CONTINUED)
EL HFE
She won’t. She always brings me back.

IGNACIO
Humans don’t always think with their minds.

EL HFE
I know.

IGNACIO
I feel like I have to do one more fight to finish this.

EL HFE
Okay.

IGNACIO
But I don’t really want to. Do you think we could fake the slaughter? We’ll make it fast.

EL HFE
Why?

IGNACIO
If you act like your dead, they’ll drag your body out. Then right before they take you to the slaughter house... you can run away. Far away. You won’t have to come back.

EL HFE
Why would we do that?

IGNACIO
I could keep my word and make everyone happy. No one will question my honor or my manhood. And you can be free.

EL HFE
Will that work?

IGNACIO
We can try. I’ll use the muleta to cover up the shank.

EL HFE
What if it doesn’t work?

IGNACIO
I’ll look like a fool. Tati will bring you back here and we can figure out something else.

EL HFE
If you say so.
IGNACIO
   It will work.

EL HIFE
   You’re a romantic.

IGNACIO
   I want you to be happy too.

EL HIFE
   I want to be free.

IGNACIO
   I give you my word. I promise to set you free.

EL HIFE
   If you say so.

IGNACIO
   I’ll see you in the ring amigo. I mean partner.

EL HIFE
   Good night amigo.

   Ignacio smiles and exits.

   El Hefe returns to the toril.

THE DRESSING ROOM 3.4

Rosa sits on the bench fidgeting.

   Karamia enters with a GLASS of medicine.

ROSA
   It took you too long. Are you trying to kill me?

KARAMIA
   I’m sorry.

   Karamia paces.

   Rosa drinks.

   Ignacio enters.

ROSA
   Finally Ignacio. Where have you been?

IGNACIO
   I went for a walk.
ROSA
  I thought you were dead.

IGNACIO
  I got a bruise mama. I’m not going to die.

ROSA
  Bruises can be deceiving.

KARAMIA
  He’ll be fine. I’m sure he’ll be ready for the next fight in no time.

ROSA
  There isn’t going to be another fight.

IGNACIO
  I’m going to fight one more time.

KARAMIA
  I knew you wouldn’t let me down.

ROSA
  Why are you encouraging him Karamia? Do you want to live as a widow before you even marry?

KARAMIA
  He’s not going to die.

ROSA
  I said the same to my suegra before his papa’s last fight.

IGNACIO
  I gave my word and I am going to honor it

ROSA
  Don’t do this for me. I won’t accept the house.

IGNACIO
  This is about more than the home.

KARAMIA
  I have another home for us Ignacio.

ROSA
  What do you mean?

KARAMIA
  I’ve been dancing at the cantina. At first I was working for your house Rosa--
ROSA
  You scandalous puta.

IGNACIO
  Why would you do this behind my back? That home is
  where I grew up. It’s what my papa died for.

KARAMIA
  I did it for us. In case Sanchez backed out of your
  deal, I had to have a back up plan.

IGNACIO
  You didn’t trust me?

ROSA
  Or was it extra security in case he was killed.

KARAMIA
  You don’t understand what I’ve been offered. Anything
  we want, I can get. We will live like royalty.

ROSA
  She is willing to sell herself to Rudulfo and every
  other man who offers her something in exchange.

IGNACIO
  Why would you do this? I promised you I would take
  care of you.

KARAMIA
  How could I be sure? You seemed so scared to get in
  the ring.

ROSA
  So you chose to dance at the cantina? It is no better
  than waiting for soldiers by the barracks.

IGNACIO
  You’re not going back there Karamia.

KARAMIA
  I can’t give up now Ignacio. Don’t you see? Rosa can
  stay in her home. We’ll have our own place.

ROSA
  You call me Senora Garcia.

KARAMIA
  Don’t act as though you’re better than me. You’ve
  allowed another man to raise your child as his own.
ROSA
You know nothing. All these years my heart has been in captivity from the death of my husband. Everything Rudulfo does is of his own will. I never agreed to give that man a thing. And he’s never asked.

IGNACIO
I won’t let you take anything from him Karamia.

KARAMIA
You don’t get to make that decision.

IGNACIO
As your husband... I’ll refuse to accept the home.

KARAMIA
The home goes in my name.

ROSA
Sanchez would never allow that.

KARAMIA
That was our deal.

ROSA
You have a rude awakening if you think Sanchez will stay true to any deal he makes.

KARAMIA
We’ll see.

ROSA
No. You’ll see. I already know.

KARAMIA
You’re as scandelous as he is. Does Ignacio know that you’ve been taking the wrong dose of your medicine? She manipulates you by poisoning herself so you won’t leave her side.

ROSA
Did Sanchez tell you that?

KARAMIA
He didn’t have to. I studied alchemy with mi abuela. I know what you’re doing.

ROSA
Bruja!

IGNACIO
That’s enough mama. Karamia come. We’re going to Sanchez to call off this agreement.
KARAMIA
I won’t live the life of a gitano Ignacio.

ROSA
You are not welcome in the cuevas. We have pride in our barrio and we do not want trash like you around.

IGNACIO
I promised her papa I would take care of her.

KARAMIA
If you mean to honor your word, then promise you’ll slaughter the bull.

IGNACIO
Why does it matter if I slaughter the bull?

KARAMIA
People are expecting you to be gored. People have bet against you. Even Tati has bet against you.

IGNACIO
Tati?

KARAMIA
She was with Sanchez helping him determine the odds. She said you are likely to be killed this time.

ROSA
It’s the past repeating itself. They’re setting you up.

IGNACIO
I have to do one last fight.

ROSA
You don’t have to honor your word to Sanchez. He doesn’t care about you. He only cares about himself.

IGNACIO
I’m not doing this for him.

KARAMIA
I know you’ll do what’s right for us. Just like everything I have done is for us.

Karamia exits.

ROSA
She is no good. You are a fool if you stay with her.

IGNACIO
Is what she said about your medicine true mama?

(CONTINUED)
ROSA
I saw a vision of her long ago that I never understood. She was shedding tears of grief with a smile on her face. She is as much part of the curse as your desire to be in the ring.

IGNACIO
She is the woman I promised to love and honor. She stayed with me against her father’s wishes and I can not abandon her.

ROSA
I don’t know that I could truly love my grandchild if I know he shares the blood of a bruja.

IGNACIO
How can you say such hateful things? She’s only anxious about not having a home to raise a family. She sees the mothers crying over their babies shivering with cold and hunger.

ROSA
She is selling herself behind your back. That will never change. She has been revealed. Open your eyes.

IGNACIO
My eyes are open but I choose to see only the good in people.

ROSA
Damn you Garcia men. Your honor is a blessed curse. It’s what makes me swell with pride but shrivel in agony.

IGNACIO
It’s who you raised me to be.

ROSA
I must hold vigil that this will be over soon.

Rosa exits.

Ignacio stands and opens the garment bag.

He stares at the vestida.

IGNACIO
Just one more time. I will do this with honor and give Hefe his freedom. Then I’ll free myself from this legacy.

Music begins a haunted melody.
In a final choreographed dressing ritual, Ignacio transforms into a matador.

THE BULLRING 3.5

Ignacio enters wearing his matador costume, the muleta and an ESTOQUE with the RIBBON wrapped around it. He stands outside the barrera.

Karamia enters holding a ROSE.

Karamia
Don’t be mad at me. I did what I thought was right.

Ignacio
You were selling yourself behind my back.

Karamia
I knew you wouldn’t approve.

Ignacio
And you did it anyway.

Karamia
You’re no better. The only reason you’re doing this is to impress that trainer whore.

Ignacio
You’re calling her a whore?

Karamia
When a woman wants another woman’s man, she’s a whore.

Ignacio
She only cares about Hefe. And I care about him too.

Karamia
You don’t care about a cow Ignacio.

Ignacio
He’s not a cow.

Karamia
Right. He’s a toro with horns that will impale your organs and kill you. If that’s what you really want, you deserve to be gored. I’ll give you one last chance to consider the sensible option.

Karamia kisses Ignacio on his cheek against his liking.

She watches from the distance.

(CONTINUED)
Rosa enters exchanging a spiteful glare with Karamia.

IGNACIO
Why did you come?

ROSA
I saw the vision again while I was praying. This time it was clear what’s to come. I can’t let you do this.

IGNACIO
You should go home and wait for me to return.

ROSA
You won’t walk out of there. The toro--

IGNACIO
Stop mama! He won’t hurt me. I know he won’t.

Rudulfo enters with Rosa’s medicine.

RUDULFO
You ready son?

IGNACIO
I’m ready.

RUDULFO
The bull is mellow today. It should be an easy kill.

IGNACIO
Great.

ROSA
You’ll be gored to death!

IGNACIO
Your visions of me have always been wrong.

ROSA
Don’t you care that my heart weakens by the minute?

IGNACIO
Go home and take your medicine. Rudulfo take care of her.

ROSA
I won’t lose you to a toro. I’ll throw myself on his horns in your place.

IGNACIO
You cannot protect me anymore. You have to let me be a man.

(CONTINUED)
RUDULFO
Leave him Rosa. Let him get ready.

Rudulfo guides her to the side of the ring where they will watch the fight.

Tati opens the gate to the bull pen.

Hefe stands unusually still as a minotaur.

TATI
This is it Hefe. We’ll see how much Ignacio loves you.

HEFE
His love is true. He’ll set me free.

TATI
You’re going to be disappointed in him.

HEFE
Humans always disappoint me.

TATI
Even me?

HEFE
Yes.

TATI
Why do you want to upset me?

HEFE
I want nothing to do with you.

Ignacio enters the ring practicing a series of pasos and veronicas.

TATI
It’s time Hefe.

IGNACIO
Come on amigo. Let’s give them a good show.

Music begins.

Rosa clutches the ROSARY to her chest.

Rudulfo hugs her to him.

Tati opens the gate all the way.

Hefe enters as a bull.
He charges at Ignacio.

Ignacio dodges him gracefully.

This continues several times.

IGNACIO
They’re loving it boy. Can you hear the crowd?

HEFE
They hurt my ears.

IGNACIO
I think you enjoy this. You’re getting excited.

HEFE
Let’s finish.

IGNACIO
A few more pasos.

Hefe charges.

Ignacio dodges.

IGNACIO
Okay. It’s time. One more paso then I’m going in for the kill.

EL HIFE
Let’s do it.

Hefe charges hits Ignacio knocking him to the ground unconscious.

Hefe begins bucking and turning in circles and transforms into a minotaur.

Ignacio regains consciousness and gets up slowly.

IGNACIO
Should we try again?

El Hefe charges and suddenly double backs.

Ignacio is shocked by his hallucination and freezes in the way.

They collide and Ignacio is impaled by El Hefe’s horns thrusting his intestines out of his stomach. He drops the ESTOQUE.

El Hefe bucks violently carrying Ignacio forward just before dropping him in a lifeless heap.

(CONTINUED)
Hefe charges around the ring a few more times before calming down.

EL HEFE
What happened?

ROSA
Ignacio!

EL HEFE
Amigo?

Rosa rips the ROSARY from her neck scattering beads across the ground.

She rushes into the ring dropping her widow’s shawl as she falls to Ignacio’s side.

Music fades to underscore dialogue.

RUDULFO
Rosa! Stay out of there!

Hefe moves towards Ignacio to see if he’s okay.

ROSA
Get up mijo! There’s blood everywhere. Rudolfo help me. Help me get him out of here.

HEFE
Get up amigo. You didn’t finish.

Hefe gets closer to Ignacio and Rosa.

ROSA
It’s exactly like I saw.

RUDULFO
Rosa! You have to get out of there. It’s not safe.

ROSA
I can’t leave him like this.

(To Hefe)
HOW COULD YOU DO THIS?!

Hefe stops in his tracks and stares at Rosa.

She rises to her feet boiling with anger.

Hefe transforms back into a bull and begins snorting and stamping his hoofs.

(CONTINUED)
RUDULFO
Rosa you’re getting him excited. Get out of there.

Tati jumps in the ring and runs in front of Hefe.

TATI
Get out!

RUDULFO
Distract him while I get Rosa. We’ll bring another matador to finish the job.

TATI
He’s my bull. He’s my slaughter.

Hefe charges toward Tati.

Rudulfo jumps into the ring and pulls Rosa off Ignacio and out of the ring.

ROSA
Please. It’s as though every tear that has fallen from my eyes is the pool of blood that surrounds my precious Ignacio.

RUDULFO
Come Rosa. I’ll take you home. You shouldn’t see this.

ROSA
Take me to the graveyard and leave me so the ghost of my son and husband will find me. I can’t live with a heart that is shattered beyond repair and a mind filled with memories of the dead.

RUDULFO
I’ll take you where ever you want to go, but I’m not leaving you alone... never again.

Karamia rushes to Rosa and Rudulfo weeping.

KARAMIA
I didn’t think this would happen.

ROSA
Where’s your smile bruja?

KARAMIA
He was my betrothed.

ROSA
You foolish girl. You’re empty tears will become a curse that follows you through the rest of your life.
KARAMIA
A curse only exists if the person cursed chooses to believe it.

ROSA
Time will test that theory.

Rudulfo and Rosa exit.

Karamia approaches Ignacio and watches him for a beat before throwing the ROSE on his body.

She covers her head with the black widow’s shawl as she exits.

Hefe erects as a minotaur again.

HEFE
I didn’t mean to kill him.

TATI
I know you didn’t. You were excited.

HEFE
I was.

TATI
He would have killed you if you didn’t kill him.

HEFE
No. He’s not capable.

TATI
What should we do Hefe? They want to see you die.

HEFE
I’m ready to die. It’s time.

TATI
Why Hefe? Why do you say that? You could jump the gate and run away free. Run to the pastures. I won’t chase you this time.

HEFE
I killed a man. I’m a beast.

TATI
I’ll keep your secret.

HEFE
No. I want to die. If I live, I’ll always be your bull. And now I’ll be indebted to you. You humans only care what is yours.

( CONTINUED )
I’m your bull. She’s his wife. He’s her son. It’s her house. It’s his house.

And I’m your bull. So let me be your kill. I’d rather die than be a human’s possession. If you love me, give me my freedom. Take my life.

_Tati takes the ESCOJETE lying next to Ignacio._

_She transforms into a matador._

_TATI_  
Are you sure Hefe?

_HEFE_  
Let me be free.

_TATI_  
I’m doing this because I love you. Because you never loved me. And because I am a matador.

_HEFE_  
Whatever.

_Music escalates._

_Hefe charges at Tati._

_She executes a perfect paso and thrusts the ESTOQUE between Hefe’s shoulder blades._

_Hefe bucks wildly as he transforms back into a bull. The momentum takes him toward Ignacio where he eventually collapses beside him._

_Tati watches for a beat in complete stillness._

_She slowly turns to the audience._

_TATI_  
All right folks. Show’s over. Time to go home.

_End Play._