

ANG PALENGKE

Also performed under the title
"Hangga't Kaya Kong Panagarap"

A One-Act Play Written by
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Cast of Characters

(In order of appearance)

Mrs. Lucila de la Cruz: Female. 50s. Mother of Alex and Marya.

Marya de la Cruz: Female. Late teens, early 20s. Youngest daughter of Mrs. de la Cruz and sister of Alex. Had to be the responsible one of the family since her Kuya Alex left the Philippines to study abroad.

Rowena Lacanilao: Female. Late teens, early 20s. Best friend of Marya. She has a very loud Has been madly in love with Erick.

Erick Bacalso: Male. Mid 20s. A t-shirt vendor at the Palengke who is also a talented singer who wishes his luck was just as good as his close friend, Alex.

Old Man: Male. Late 50s, early 60s. Even though, he is a down on his luck street begger, he maintains his optimism and hope for the people around him even though they may think of him as being foolish.

Jun Mendoza: Male. Early 20s. Street cigarette vendor. Older brother to Ligaya. Him and his younger sister, Ligaya, have been living on the streets since their mother passed away. They never met their father.

Ligaya Mendoza: Female. Teens. Younger sister of Jun Mendoza.

Renato and Boy: Males. 30s. Tricycle drivers playing cards and drinking San Miguel in the Palengke.

Marites Gandionco: Female. 20s. Works as a dancer in a club who dreams of one day having her TV Show. She is also trying to balance a secret relationship with politician.

Senator Marcial Sales: Male. 50s. The charming politician who has been seeing Marites.

Alex de la Cruz: Male Mid-20s. The oldest son of Lucila de la Cruz. Returning home from a year of studying medicine from abroad.

Aling Ai Singson: Female: 60s. A proud vendor in the Palengke who has worked there all her life and has seen everything and everybody's dreams either come true or not... but never losing hope. She provides the final monologue of the play.

Setting

The play takes place in the present at a Palengke.

SCENE 1: "MARYA! HOY, MARYA!"

The story takes place in the Philippines in a place in the city where everything happens – the Palengke (the Marketplace). The time is the now.

Curtains are still closed. MARYA and ROWENA come out from stage left carrying paper bags with handles on them. A spotlight is following them.

As they are "talking" to each other, Marya's mom, MRS. DE LA CRUZ calls her from behind the curtains stage left.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

(Shouting) Marya! Marya! Hoy, Marya!

MARYA

(Stopping with Rowena.) Wait here, okay. (Turns back around looking up. Shouts back.) Yes, mom!

ROWENA takes out a pocket mirror from her bag and fixes her hair while facing stage left.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

(Enter from stage left.) Marya, don't forget to buy some talong for your Tio Bong at the Palengke, Okay! Also, I need some kamatis, litsugas at dalawang niyog. Here, (takes out some money from her pocket). Now, be home before Alex arrives from the airport. You have to help me cook for his party.

MARYA

(reassuringly) I won't forget mom.

MARYA takes the money and puts it into her bag. She walks back to Rowena.

Exit MRS. DE LA CRUZ stage left.

ROWENA

(turns to look at Marya, but still has the mirror in her hand.) Why is your mom so hard on you sometimes?

MARYA

I guess it's just because she's anxious about Alex coming home from the States. She's never had a son who was a doctor. Besides, I don't think she's that hard on me. I became her only child when Alex left two years ago. And since then, I'm the one who had to take care my mom and the house especially after our dad passed away.

ROWENA

Hmm. (trying to avoid making Marya uncomfortable, she returns to fixing her hair.) Do you think that Erick will be working at the Palengke today? He had better notice my new haircut.

MARYA

(looking at Rowena as if she were crazy.) Oh, Rowena. Why don't you leave him alone? You have been after him since our first year in High School. I really hate to break it to you, but I don't think that he's really interested. (Rowena turns in disbelief) I just don't want you to get hurt.

ROWENA

I told you that he is just playing hard to get. You know how shy he can be sometimes. Look, you'll see, one day we'll be married, have a big house, and have lots of kids running around. And, when he see's my new look...(poses like an artista)

MARYA

(Hitting Rowena on her arm.) Ay, loco, loco. (They both laugh.) Let's go. We have to get back home before Alex arrives from the airport or my mom kill me.

ROWENA

What about Alex?

MARYA

What about Alex?

ROWENA

I mean, do you think Alex will like my hair? I bet he's probably seen this style on every woman in California.

MARYA

(shakes her head, grabs Rowena's arm) Let's go, Rowena.

END SCENE

SCENE 2: "HELLO, ERICK"

Curtains open up to reveal the Palengke. Many workers and customers walk across the stage starting from all directions. People are moving and talking. Bargaining scenes are shouted over the crowd.

From right to left: ERICK is working at a stand located down-left. An OLD MAN is to the left of another stand up-center-left. RENATO and BOY are on the left side of this stand playing cards and drinking beer. And, ALING AI is selling purses at her stand is on the left side.

Dim the lights over the Palengke and a spotlight follows MARYA and ROWENA to Erick's stand.

ROWENA

(Grabbing Erick's hand.) Hello, Erick. Do you notice anything different about me? (poses again.)

ERICK

(Letting go of Rowena's hand.) Well, I noticed that you're still here.

ROWENA

(Acts as if she has been insulted, then smiles and grabs his hand again.) Oh, Erick. You almost fooled me that time. You joke only. (Erick just rolls his eyes.)

MARYA

(Now takes Rowena's other hand.) Uh, Rowena we have to go. (smiling at Erick.) Now, say good-bye to your boyfriend.

ERICK looks shocked at MARYA and shakes his head.

ROWENA

(Let's go of Erick's hand.) I have to go now, but I will be back soon and we could have marienda, okay? Then, you can sing to me in front of everybody here and they will all be jealous because I have the most talented boyfriend in all of Philippines.

ERICK

Rowena, we're just friends. Remember? Friends?

ROWENA

Of course we're friends! (turning to Marya) See, Marya? Don't you think it's so cute about how he doesn't want to get you jealous by admitting that we're together. (Turns back to Erick, dreamy.) You're so sweet. (Noticing something on the side of Erick's mouth. Takes out a Kleenex from her bag, licks part of it and goes to Erick and tries to wipe it off. Erick starts to fight her off.)

MARYA

(Grabbing Rowena's arm and pulls her away from Erick.) Rowena, we have to go now!

ROWENA

(Composing herself, to Erick) Sorry... there's something on... your... Uh, well I'll see you at Alex's welcome home party?

As MARYA and ROWENA start to walk away...

ERICK

Uh, Marya. (the girls stop and turn around.) Can I talk to you for a minute?

MARYA

(Looking at Rowena and back at Erick.) Uh, sure. (She begins walking back to the stand and SPOTLIGHT follows her.)

ROWENA takes out her mirror again and the men playing cards, RENATO and BOY, see her and she flirts with them.

ERICK

It's about Alex's welcome home party. I don't know if I'll be able to make it.

MARYA

Why not? Alex will be so happy to see you there.

ERICK

(looking down) Uh.. business. (looks up) That's right, uh.. (rolling his eyes) There's a lot of business that I have to take care of here.

MARYA

(suspecting something is wrong, but doesn't force anything.) Well, I hope that you change your mind. (turns back around and starts back toward Rowena.)

ROWENA

What was all that about?

MARYA

Uh... he told me that he was going to miss you while you were gone.

ROWENA

(surprised) He did! (waves back at Erick and blows him a kiss.) I will miss you too, my darling!

MARYA and ROWENA exit stage right with the spotlight on them. But first they pass the OLD MAN who is sitting down. MARYA stops and looks in her purse and takes out some coins and gives it to him. ROWENA waits impatiently. He takes the money and puts it into his pocket. Now, they exit.

END SCENE

SCENE 3: "SOMEDAY AT THIS BIG PARTY"

The OLD MAN looks into his palm at the change that she has given him. He scratches his head and puts it into his pocket.

OLD MAN

(to some of the shoppers who pass him by.) Don't hate me because I'm beautiful. (to the audience, and walking forward) You know, believe it or not. I was not always like the man that you see before you. And, I don't intend to be like this forever, either. No, I won't. Because, one day these people will respect me. Oh, yes they will.

Some of the customers in the background are waving him off, "Sure we will."

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

(as he walks downstage, the curtain closes behind him) Also, one day those people will throw me a big party at the Manila Hotel. Or better still, at Malakañang Palace. Oh, yes. It will be like the Spanish Galas my Lola told me about when I was a child. Back when the Philippines was Spanish ruled, and the people were dressed more elegantly than the kids today. And I won't be wearing these rags that you see. As a matter of fact, I will be wearing one of my brand new barong tagalogs. So new that everyone from ten kilometers away can see right through it. And the women there... oh, (sighs and looks up) the ladies in their Maria Clara Dresses. They will all want to dance with me of course. (pretends like he is dancing. Stops and laughs at himself.) I might seem like a foolish old man, but these are not foolish old dreams. (sighs) Someday... (starts to walk off stage right with the spotlight following him. He stops. Turns) facing the audience.) Someday at this big party.

OLD MAN exits stage right. As he exits the curtains open up to reveal the Maria Clara Ballroom scene.

[SPANISH DANCES]

END SCENE

SCENE 4: "WHEN, JUN?"

Enter from stage right, LIGAYA and JUN. A brother and sister in rags. JUN enters with a box that carries cigarettes and LIGAYA has an old thrown-out backpack. They get to right-center stage, put down their stuff and sit down.

JUN

(gets the backpack and opens it to take out some bread.) Here, Ligaya. (breaks a piece of bread and gives it to her. Then breaks a piece for himself.)

LIGAYA

(slowly takes a bite) Jun, when will we get a real place to stay. You said that we have relatives in Quezon City. Why don't we go over there?

JUN

Why do we have to go over this again? I told you, when we have money, we can buy some decent clothes and then we will leave this place. Do you think that anyone would take us in looking like this? (grabs his shirt)

LIGAYA

But, mom always said that family is family and it don't matter what we dress like because blood is thicker than wine. And, mom also said...

JUN

(cutting her off) But mom is dead. (bites a piece of bread. Ligaya is silent.) Ligaya, I dream of having a real family again, too, but we're all the family that we have right now. (pauses) Am I not enough of a family for you?

LIGAYA

(annoyed) Of course, you are! What kind of a question is that?! But, I am just tired of living... (looks around) like this! (stands up) I'm tired wondering if I'll have a safe place to sleep at night. I'm tired of having the only thing to eat is tinapay. Everyday, bread! (sarcastically) Now, if I had some butter to drink I'd be happy. (stares at a silent Jun who's chewing on his piece of bread. She turns away.) Jun, I'm just tired of all of this.

JUN

(stands up) Ligaya, I am sorry. (carresses her shoulders from behind) I am your older brother, and I am supposed to provide you with more than I have. I'm trying... (pauses) At least we have some bread to eat and we're not going through Smokey Mountain like hundreds of other kids like us. (trying to be funny) We should be lucky not to have a house because of the brown-outs that go on at twelve hours at a time.

(MORE)

JUN (CONT'D)

(let's go of her, looks up and moves a little downstage. Dreamy) Remember when we snuck into the movie theatre and we stayed there all day. Do you remember that house that Sharon Cuneta lived in? It was so big. Someday, we will be living there, too. We'll have air con, food, a soft warm bed and all the bread we can eat. Joke lang. Watch, we'll have everything like in the movies.

LIGAYA

(turning around to face her brother) I'm sorry. (tries to smile) You've always been a dreamer.

Jun shrugs his shoulders.

LIGAYA (CONT'D)

But... when? (looks down)

JUN

(picks up her chin with his hand) Look, I'll ask around about our tia in Quezon City today at the Palengke, Okay?

LIGAYA

(smiles) Okay. (they hug.)

JUN

Now, I believe that it's time for work so that I could buy you some butter to drink.
(laughs)

They gather their stuff and the curtains open and the lights go up revealing the Palengke once again. It's busy with business.

JUN (CONT'D)

(taking his cigarette box. Yelling.) Yosi... sigarilyos!!!

END SCENE

SCENE 5: "MY BEST FRIEND, SAN MIGUEL"

Spotlight follows the brother and sister off stage left, and lights up after their exit.

RENATO and BOY are at a table start to whistle at LIGAYA, when JUN turns around, the men turn back pretending that they didn't do anything. JUN, still looking at the men, puts his arm around her and they exit.

RENATO

(turning back around to look where Jun exits, then turning back to his friend, Boy.) Hoy, pare, he's lucky not to start anything with me, huh? (takes a swig of his San Miguel, looks at his cards again) I would wipe his face all over the street!

They continue to laugh and joke around and flirts with another woman that passes their table. They 'Psst!' at a lady as she passes them and she insults them in some way.

RENATO (CONT'D)

(to the woman as she exits) You want me, but you just don't know it yet! (Turning back to BOY) Hoy! I had this dream last night! I was with Ruffa Gutierrez and we had a wild night together!

BOY

Only in your dreams, Renato! Ruffa would never even look at someone like you!

RENATO

Oh, yes she would! And not only her, Manilyn... (and some other star names) would be all with me.

BOY

Yeah, right! Is that all you ever dream about?

RENATO

Of course! What else is there to think about? The smog, the poverty, the corruption? No thank you, Pare. I think I'm just going to dream about all of my future girlfriends, and my best friend (holds up his bottle), San Miguel! (starts to laugh and takes another swig.) This is the life! A day off from riding around in our tricycles and just watching life go by without having to dream about the things that won't come true.

END SCENE

SCENE 6: "MR. SENATOR"

Enter from stage right, MARITES, a woman in her twenties, followed by a man, SENATOR SALES, wearing a barong tagalog and sunglasses. They approach the middle vegetable/fruit stand.

MARITES picks up a fruit and holds it in her hand.

SEN. SALES

Marites, I cannot see you tonight. I have some legal matters that I have to attend to for a meeting tomorrow.

MARITES

(checking some fruit, not looking at him) Do you mean for a meeting with your wife and kids? You told me that you were leaving them. Remember, Mr. Senator?

SEN. SALES

I thought that it was made clear to you that the timing is not right, right now.

MARITES

(Turning around with a fruit in her hand.) Walang hiya ka! Why not right now? Is it because of your damn elections?! Is it because, if the media found out that you had a mistress that you picked up at a dance bar that you would lose your cars, your house, your family... or something even more important, your corrupted money?

SEN. SALES

(clearly annoyed, but maintaining his cool.) Marites, I will talk to you about this at another time, but I have to go. Here, (pulls out a roll of money and hands it to her) Now buy something as pretty as yourself.

MARITES

(taking the money and putting it in her purse.) I think that you had better leave now, before someone suspects something. And, if someone asks about the money, I'll just tell them that you were giving to the needy.

SEN. SALES quickly turns around, makes sure that nobody notices him and exits stage right.

END SCENE

SCENE 7: "TO THE RESCUE"

The men at the nearby table, RENATO and BOY sees everything that takes place between the SENATOR and his mistress. MARITES stands, with a fruit in her hand thinking about what had happened. One of the men gets up and approaches her. ERICK is looking on from his stand.

RENATO

(touching her shoulder) Uh... excuse me, Miss, but don't I know you from somewhere?

MARITES

(snapping out of her trance. Slides her shoulder away from his hand.) I'm sorry, sir, but I'm not from here.

RENATO

Yes, you do look familiar. (turns around to face one of his buddies at the table.) Hey, Boy! Come over here. (waves him to come over. He gets up and goes to them.) Doesn't she look familiar to you?

BOY

(looking at her, as she tries to turn away.) Pare, she does look familiar.

RENATO

(hits Boy on the shoulder.) I remember, she is a dancer at the Paradise Club.

BOY

(starts laughing) It is her, pare.

RENATO

(laughing) Do you think that you could dance for us now?

MARITES

(annoyed and embarrassed.) I don't know what you are talking about.

RENATO

C'mon honey, just a little. (grabs her shoulders.)

ERICK sees all this and runs to her rescue.

ERICK

(takes Marites' hand and pulls her toward him. To Renato and Boy.) I think that you should get back to your card game now.

RENATO

And, who's going to make us, boy?

BOY grabs MARITES from behind. RENATO punches ERICK who then falls to the ground. ERICK is knocked out. MARITES stomps on BOY'S foot, and he screams. Then she breaks off two bamboo sticks of the Fruit stand.

[ESCRIMA/KALI/ARNIS FIGHT]

They try to fight MARITES but her Escrima is too good for them. As MARITES is ready to make her final strike, ERICK gets up, shakes his head clear. Being clearly beaten, RENATO and BOY run off stage right with ERICK running after them.

END SCENE

SCENE 8: "...TRAPPED"

ERICK returns back to MARITES from stage left.

ERICK

Are you okay, miss?

MARITES

Yes... yes, thank you. Are *you* okay?

ERICK

(rubbing his chin) Yeah, I think so. Hey, where did you learn how to fight like that?

MARITES

(smiles) A woman has to know how to defend herself in this city. (returns the sticks to the vendor.

ERICK

(Still rubbing his head.) I guess guys have to, too.

MARITES

(turns back around.) What did you say?

ERICK

Uh... nothing, nothing. Um, look I'm on break now, so can I buy you a drink or something?

MARITES

(pauses, long) That's okay, let me buy *you* something.

The two walk forward and the curtain behind them closes. A drink vendor approaches them as the curtain close. MARITES stops him to buy the "sarsi-in-the-bag" for Erick and herself. Then, they walk over to a bench to sit on.

ERICK

(lifting the sarsi-bag) Thank you. (looks down and takes a sip.)

MARITES

You're welcome.

ERICK

(looks up) I'm sorry. Uh... my name is Erick Garcia. And, your name is...

MARITES

Marites Aguilar. (reaches over to shake his hand.) Nice to meet you Erick Garcia.

ERICK

So, you've seen what I do here. What about you? What do you do?

MARITES

I'm a dancer.

ERICK

Really! A dancer! Wow! So, do you dance at the University?

MARITES

Well, not exactly. I'm sort of teaching myself. Right now, I'm working as a... uh... waitress (trying to get away from the subject.) But, I'm still holding on to my dream of someday getting out of here and maybe have my own show on TV or something. But, enough about me. What about you? I mean do you plan on staying here and sell t-shirts?

ERICK

(laughs) Me. I don't know. Actually, I dream of becoming a singer, someday. One day I'll have real gold albums, probably do a couple of movies, and sing on all of the shows, maybe, someday on your show. (pauses) But for now, well, I was going to sing at my best friend's welcome home party and...

MARITES

Where is he being welcomed from?

ERICK

From America. His name is Alex. He's a doctor and he won a scholarship to study there. You know, I bet I could make it big in the States. At least, over there you have a chance to make it big, not like here... especially when you live like...(pauses and looks around) But, how can I bare to leave this paradise? (there's sound of a car crash in the back.)

MARITES

And you don't want him to see you still here when...

ERICK

(takes another sip.) I don't know. It's just that life's so hard here... (stands and faces stage right.)

MARITES

(Still sitting but faces stage left) You have to have connections...

ERICK

Sometimes I feel that the only thing I have to hold on to are my dreams...

MARITES

And hopes...

ERICK

And it's like sometimes...

MARITES

Sometimes...

ERICK

I feel so, so...

ERICK AND ROWENA (AT THE SAME TIME)

Trapped.

They both turn around to face each other, smile,
and pause.

MARITES

So, are you going to see Alex?

ERICK

I don't know. Um... are you doing anything later?

MARITES

(biting her bottom lip) I don't know, maybe... ?

ERICK

Would you like to come with me?

MARITES

But, what about your stand?

ERICK

I'll ask my cousin to cover for me. She owes me a favor, anyways, So...

MARITES

Well... okay.

ERICK

Great! Uh... let's go get my cousin and in the mean time, you can tell me about your dream of being a dancer.

ERICK and MARITES begin to exit.

MARITES

One day, I will be on a big stage where an audience full of people who have watched my dance videos on TikTok will be cheering. And when the curtain opens...

A curtain opens to reveal several dancers.

MARITES (CONT'D)

I will be in the center of a spotlight yelling, Five, Six, Seven, Eight...

[MODERN DANCES]

END SCENE

SCENE 9: "WELCOME HOME!"

ALEX returns home from studying medicine in the States. He's dressed very nicely with sunglasses on and his carryon bag over his shoulder. Walking in from stage left.

ALEX

(taking off his sunglasses to look around.) This place hasn't changed a bit. Hello!? Hello? Is anybody home?

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

(walks in from stage right and stops) Alex?

ALEX

Inay!

ALEX and MRS. DE LA CRUZ walk fast to center stage where they hug.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

Oh, my anak. How come you're here so early? I'm still preparing all the food.

ALEX

There was an opening in an earlier flight so I took it.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

I'm just glad that you're home. This is just like my dream come true. My anak is a doctor! (hug) Oh, my you've gotten so skinny. Didn't you have any rice and fish to eat in America?

MARYA and ROWENA walk in from stage left and stop.

MARYA

Alex!

ALEX turns around, MARYA runs over and gives him a hug. ROWENA follows her.

ALEX

(separating) So, how's my favorite sister in the whole world?

MARYA

I'm your only sister.

ALEX

And, that's why you're my favorite. (sees Rowena, smiles, and hugs her.) Ah, Rowena. How are you? You look... good.

ROWENA

I know, right?!

ALEX

So, where's Erick? I thought that you'd have him wrapped around you're finger by now, Rowena.

ROWENA

Of, course he is. But, he has to work at the palengke today.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

Ay, I still have to cook for all of the guests.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ exits.

ALEX

What guests?

MARYA

For your welcome home party!

Curtain opens to start the barrio fiesta dances. ALEX, MARYA, and ROWENA walk into the barrio crowd and ALEX is greeted with handshakes, hugs and kisses.

[BARRIO DANCES]

After one of the dances, ERICK and MARITES enter from stage left. ERICK greets ALEX. The two watch the dances together and they are smiling. ERICK would whisper something into Marites's ear and she would laugh and/or slap him on the shoulder.

From across the stage, ROWENA sees that the love of her life is really happy with someone else, except her.

MARYA sees this and tries to cheer her up. ERICK and MARITES do something that makes ROWENA run off the stage left and passes the both of them. MARYA starts to run after her. ERICK notices ROWENA running by and as MARYA passes him, she turns around and motions ERICK not to follow her.

Enter MRS. DE LA CRUZ.

After the last dance...

ALEX

I want to thank all of you for making my return home so welcome! (Dancers applaud.)

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

Yes, thank you everyone for making celebration special for my anak! But do you know what would make this welcome more special? A song from his best friend, Erick!

ERICK

No, that's all right. I can't.

MRS. DE LA CRUZ

What do you mean you can't?! No party is complete without you singing. Do it for your new friend.

MARITES waves.

MARITES

Hello, Everyone!

Everyone says, "Ooooo", and says "Hello" back.

MARITES (CONT'D)

I'd love to hear you sing.

ERICK

Uh... okay... but only one song.

Everyone cheers!

Lights fade out on that side of the stage when...

END SCENE

SCENE 10: "I WILL BE HERE"

MARYA (O.S.)

Rowena!

ROWENA runs to center stage from stage right and stops. She's looking real sad, her arms are folded across her chest and she just looks up facing stage right.

MARYA (CONT'D)

(running in from stage left) Rowena... are you alright?

ROWENA

(drying off her tears with the back of her hand) Me, of course I'm alright. It's just that, ... um, that the dancers kicked up so much dust that it blinded me for a second and I ran here to clear my eyes. Uh, you should get back to Alex's party. I'll be alright.

MARYA

(knowing that she's crying about Erick.) Look, if you need anything, I'll be here for you, okay?

ROWENA

(turns around to face Marya.) Thanks, Marya.

MARYA exits and the piano music for NANDITO AKO begins. As the song plays, the audience will see ROWENA by herself on one side of the stage singing to Erick, while ERICK is singing directly to Marites at the party on the other side of the stage.

Duet arrangement from the film, Bakit Labis

Kitang Mahal:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=px46TeFRitg>

g. Instrumental:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgyPulzlmg>

ROWENA (CONT'D)

(singing to Erick)

Mayro'n akong nais malaman

Maaari bang magtanong?

(MORE)

ROWENA (CONT'D)

Alam mo bang matagal na kitang iniibig?
Matagal na 'kong naghihintay

ERICK

(singing to Marites)

Nguni't mayro'n kang ibang minamahal
Kung kaya't ako'y 'di mo pinapansin
Nguni't gano'n pa man, nais kong malaman mo
Ang puso kong ito'y para lang sa 'yo

ROWENA AND ERICK

Nandito ako, umiibig sa 'yo
Kahit na nagdurugo ang puso

ERICK

Kung sakaling iwanan ka niya

ROWENA AND ERICK

Huwag kang mag-alala
May nagmamahal sa 'yo
Nandito ako

ERICK

Kung ako ay iyong iibigin
'Di kailangan ang mangamba
'Pagka't ako ay para mong alipin
Sa 'yo lang, wala nang iba

ROWENA

Nguni't mayro'n ka nang ibang minamahal
Kung kaya't ako'y 'di mo pinapansin
Nguni't gano'n pa man, nais kong malaman mo
Ang puso kong ito'y para lang sa 'yo

ROWENA AND ERICK

Nandito ako, umiibig sa 'yo
Kahit na nagdurugo ang puso

ROWENA

Kung sakaling iwanan ka niya

ERICK AND ROWENA

Huwag kang mag-alala
May nagmamahal sa 'yo

ROWENA AND ERICK

Nandito ako
Nandito ako, umiibig sa 'yo
Kahit na nagdurugo ang puso
Kung sakaling iwanan ka niya
Huwag kang mag-alala
May nagmamahal sa 'yo
Nandito ako
Nandito ako

Applause ends, lights fade out on Erick and
Marites and ALEX enters.

ALEX

(as he walks toward her.) Rowena, you're missing a great party.

ROWENA

Oh, Alex. I'm sorry.

ALEX

It's alright. Really. I told them to save some dinuguan for us.

ROWENA

Thank you.

ALEX

I really missed my mom's cooking. But that's not the only thing I missed.

ROWENA

What could you possibly miss about this place?

ALEX

Well, I missed my mom, Marya, Erick and... you.

ROWENA

Me? Why me?

ALEX

Because you have this way of making me laugh when I needed it.
Not in a bad way, but in a good way. It was something I missed at school over there... I
was so focused on my studies because the opportunity to study over there wasn't just for
me, but for my family, and I'm so grateful.

ROWENA

It's because you are the smartest person in this whole town.

ALEX

Being the smartest doesn't mean that I was the happiest, especially when I miss being able to smile or being able to laugh... everything that you have always given me now... with you.

ROWENA

Why did you say anything before, Alex?

ALEX

Because, one, you're my sister's best friend and two, because I knew how you felt about Erick, and three, because I was about to leave for the States... but I could never get you out of my dreams.

ROWENA

I don't really know what to say. I just felt like my dreams are just ripped to shreds and now... now, I don't know if I'm ready for another one to start.

ALEX

I'm not asking for anything right now, it's just that I... I just wanted to let you know that... Nandito ako.

ROWENA

I know you are.

ALEX

So, should we go back to the party now?

ALEX holds out his hand, which ROWENA takes and they begin to exit to the party.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(as they're walking off) I really like your hair.

ROWENA puts on a big smile, "somebody noticed."

ALEX and ROWENA exit.

END SCENE

SCENE 11: "JUST LIKE IN THE MOVIES"

LIGAYA enters from stage right with her back pack over her shoulder, looking in the direction that ALEX and ROWENA left to. Walks to left-center stage.

LIGAYA

(to the audience.) Wow, I thought that I had it bad.

JUN enters from stage right with a bag.

JUN

Ligaya, are you spying on someone again?

LIGAYA

No. Can I help it if some people get in front of something that I'm trying to look at? (noticing Jun's bag.) Hey, Jun. Where's your cigarette box, and what's with the bag? (concerned) Did you get mugged again?

JUN

(a little grin) No, I didn't get mugged again. I sold off my cigarette box, I don't think that I'll be needing it again.

LIGAYA

(surprised and worried) What do you mean, Jun? Is everything okay?

JUN

(putting his hands around her shoulders.) Uh... there's something that I have to tell you. You'd better sit down for this.

They both kneel down.

JUN (CONT'D)

Ligaya, remember earlier today when I promised you that I'd ask about our tia in Quezon City at the palengke?

LIGAYA nods her head.

JUN (CONT'D)

Well, I found out where Tia Laurie lived from one of mom's old letters, and I called her. It turns out that she has been looking for us all this time. To live with her. (Ligaya just smiles silently looking down.) She's coming with a driver to pick us up tomorrow.

LIGAYA

(looks up at Jun, louder.) Jun, I swear you had better not be lying about this!

JUN

(reaches for the bag, and takes out some new clothes, and gives Ligaya some of them.) These are for you. (Ligaya's feeling the new textures with her hands in amazement.) I saved just enough money for these, so don't mess them up before tomorrow, okay.

LIGAYA

(smiles and hugs her brother) We're finally gonna have a place to live? Like a real home with a soft, warm bed? Just like in the movies?

JUN

(nods his head.) Just like in the movies. I told you that even though we don't have much, we had to hold on to our hopes and dreams to keep from going crazy here working at the palengke. And by tomorrow, we won't have to hope anymore.

LIGAYA

(all excited, sort of sarcastically) Thanks for telling me all of this now, Kuya! Now I don't think I will any sleep, because I'm so excited!

JUN

(gets the old back pack, lays it on the ground beside him. Motions for Ligaya to lay her head on the "pillow".) Come here. (she puts her head down.) Maybe, it's time for one dream. Remember the story that mom used to tell us before bedtime... (Ligaya closes her eyes.) There was once a prince and a princess in Mindanao who were getting ready for their wedding....

Lights begin to fade and the curtain opens for...

[SINGKIL DANCES]

END SCENE

SCENE 11B: "THE CHOICE IS YOURS"

Enter BOY and RENATO.

RENATO

I told you we should have taken boxing lessons from your Kuya!

BOY

That's the last time we get beat up like that.

RENATO

Then you agree, we'll be the next champions of the world!

BOY

No. It's the last time we get beat up like that because I'm not going to be here to get beat up.

RENATO

Exactly! With your Kuya's boxing lessons, you won't be in one place to get hit.

(RENATO stands in front of BOY like
he's in a boxing stance)

Like if you stand in one place, you're going to get hit. But if you move like this.

(he moves to the side)

Then you're not going to get hit. And then you move here.

(moves to the other side)

Then you're not going to get hit there either! Simple. It's mathematics: One minus One equals None and you'll stay pretty like me! No more getting hits!

BOY

You're not making any sense!

RENATO

First rule of combat, Pare! Confuse the enemy and escape getting beat down.

BOY

And that's exactly what I'm planning on doing.

RENATO

Yes!!!! So we'll start our fighting lessons tomorrow!

BOY

I'm not talking about the boxing lessons. I'm talking about us escaping this life.

RENATO

Now, you're confusing me! What's wrong with this life? We could do what ever we want, when ever we want.

BOY

By drinking all day-

RENATO

And all night-

BOY

And driving people to where they want to go?

RENATO

Of course! That is our job. We provide a service to everyone who doesn't like to walk. That's what we're here for. That is our function in life. And I do it proudly. Because if we didn't do our job, then who will?

BOY

Don't you want to do more? Didn't you ever dream of bigger things?

RENATO

I told you my dream! That I was with Ruffa Gutierrez and we had a wild night together!

BOY

Not that kind of dream. What happened to that dream you had about being a police officer?

RENATO

I never wanted to be a police officer.

BOY

When we were kids, your dad bought you a toy gun and we played like we were in an action movie and you were always the police officer.

RENATO

But that was before... I don't want to play this game anymore. And we were kids then. We're not kids anymore. This is real life and we have to make adult decisions.

BOY

And that's why I'm choosing to become a lawyer.

Enter OLD MAN.

BOY (CONT'D)

Excuse me, Sir! If you could be anything than what you are now, what would you be?

OLD MAN

I'd be a Senator and change all your lives!

Enter MARITES and ERICK.

BOY

Excuse me?

MARITES puts up her fists like she's going to fight them.

MARITES

You want so more of this?!

BOY

No no no! You win!

MARITES

I thought so.

BOY

I just want to ask you a quick question. Is that okay?

ERICK

It's okay, Honey. You can relax now.
Make it quick.

BOY

if you could choose to be something than you are now, what would you be?

MARITES

A dancer.

ERICK

A singer.

MARITES

On television.

ERICK (CONT'D)

On television.

MARITES (CONT'D)

But it will be on my own show.

ERICK

Or on my show.

Do you want to fight for it?
MARITES

MARITES puts up her fists.

Oh no!
ERICK

ERICK makes a heart-shape with his hands.

ERICK AND MARITES hug and exit.

Enter ROWENA and ALEX.

Excuse me, what is your dream life?
BOY

To have my patients live a long life.
ALEX

ROWENA
To be a social influencer, to have my own make-up company, to host my own TV Show, to own a publishing company, and to have many many kids!

How many kids?!
ALEX

It's your choice, 2 or 12?
ROWENA

TWELVE!
ALEX

I'm Kidding!
ROWENA

As ROWENA and ALEX exit, ROWENA turns back to Boy and Renato and shakes her head and silently mouths, "I'm not kidding, we're having 12 babies!"

Enter MARYA

Excuse me, Miss.

BOY

I'm sorry, I don't have time.

MARYA

It will be quick.

BOY

I have to go-

MARYA

MARYA begins to exit.

BOY

If you could choose a different life, what would you choose?

MARYA stops.

RENATO

Sorry, she doesn't want to answer.

MARYA turns around.

MARYA

What did you ask?

BOY

If you could choose a different life, what would you choose?

Pause.

RENATO

I'm sorry for my friend, Miss. He has his heads in the clouds again when he should have his head in some San Miguel.

MARYA

No, I heard him. It's just that no one has ever asked me before.

BOY

Then I'm asking you.

MARYA

Maybe a Nurse... or a Translator... or a Scientist.

RENATO

What could you do as a scientist?!

BOY

She could find a cure for the common cold. Or she could cure cancer. Or she could make a medicine that could permanently end COVID or end any future pandemic.

MARYA

I could?

BOY

If it's your dream.

MARYA goes to hug BOY. RENATO is shocked and happy.

MARYA

Thank you.

MARYA leaves.

RENATO

That's all you have to do to get girls, Pare!
 "If it's your dream."
 And then have them all over you!

BOY

That's not what this is about, Pare!
 It's about being daring enough to believe that we can have a choice in life.

RENATO

Like being a Lawyer?

BOY

To fighting for the rights of others.

RENATO

Instead of using fists?

BOY

Well, we're not good at doing that either!

RENATO

That's true, Pare. Very true.
 Do you think a college will accept us?

BOY

If we get enough business today...

RENATO

And for the next 5 years.

BOY

Well, then we better get started!

RENATO

Hold on.. Let 's get a beer first! And in the mean time... Tell me what you think the future will hold for all of us.

Exit BOY and RENATO.

END OF SCENE.

SCENE 12: "BAMBOO" / EPILOGUE

ALING AI (the "old" woman) walks in from stage right. She has been in the Palengke working, and is visible throughout the play, but doesn't say a word until she provides the "epilogue" of the story: you know, she'll explain whatever happened to the cast in the future.

ALING AI

(Sweeping) Ay buhay. (Sigh) It's been such a long day here. I see people come from everywhere to shop here at the Palengke. (noticing a newspaper on the ground.) Sometimes, I wonder if they come here to shop or just make a mess. (picks up the crumpled paper; and reads the headline.) "Senator Marcial Sales gets caught with another woman. He loses everything." I wonder if that means his corrupted money, too. (pauses to think) You know I remember that Senator. He used to come by here to "see how everything was going." But he only came when there was an election. Hmm... I remember him shopping with Marites Agilar, you know the local girl who went to Metro Manila to be discovered. She doesn't come by anymore. She must be busy trying to balance her television show and her marriage with Erick Garcia. That man can sing! And he is so cute naman! Did you see his last movie? The one with him and Sharon living in that big house... ay, only in the movies. (sees another crumpled page of the newspaper and picks it up and starts to read...) "Nephew of Rich Land Developer Gets Killed in NPA Crossfire..." (keeps reading) "Jun Mendoza, nephew of land developer, Laurie Mendoza was shot yesterday on his way to U.P. ..." (puts down her head in disbelief.) Ay nako. I can't believe this news. He was such a good boy. I remember when he and his sister would come by here and... I heard that he was studying to become a lawyer, and his sister is studying to be a doctor. Both of them were such dreamers. (enter ALEX and ROWENA. They greet Aling Ai and continue to cross-stage) Ay, there goes the newlyweds. Dr. and Mrs. Alex de la Cruz. They really do make a cute couple. Rowena has changed a lot, especially since Alex opened a Medical clinic near Smokey Mountain. (the couple is greeted by the OLD MAN, who is wearing a barong, as he enters from stage left. After he greets them he proceeds to Aling Ai.)

OLD MAN

How are you doing today, Aling Ai?

ALING AI

I am doing very fine Mr. Senator. How are you?

OLD MAN

I am doing well. I've just been busy trying to let the government listen to our needs. Please forgive me... I must leave for a meeting now. (exits)

ALING AI

(Watches him leave and returns to sweeping. Turns to the audience.) Yes, life can be hard here at the Palengke, but we always survive. We're like the bamboo in a bagyo, we may bend in the most impossible of positions... but We. Never. Break. That's the Pilipino way to survive by doing what's right for ourselves and for each other. And as long as WE can continue to dream and not lose hope, no matter how cloudy it gets, we will always reach for the sun. It's on our flag... and in our hearts.

“Rosas” by Nica del Rosario starts and ALING AI begins to sing the song which gradually grows as each member of the cast comes to join in.

Song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tDJmoMeUuI>

WAG KANG MABAHALA
IKAW AY MAHALAGA
HINDI KITA PABABAYAAN

HINDI KA NAIIBA
AT SANA'Y PANIWALAAN
NA PIPILIIN KA ARAW-ARAW

AT ALAM KO ANG AKING KAYA, ALAM KO ANG HINDI
ALAM KO ANG KAILANGAN UPANG MAKAPAGSILBI
HANGGA'T MAY KABUTIHAN, HANGGA'T MAY PAG-IBIG
LIWANAG ANG MANANAIG

AT HINDI KO MAIPAPANGAKO ANG KULAY ROSAS
NAMUNDO PARA SA 'YO
AT HINDI KO MAIILAWAN ANG LAHAT NG ANINO
PERO SISIKAPIN KO AT HINDI AKO MAGPAPAHINGA
HANGGA'T HINDI MO PA MAGAWANG MULING IPAGMALAKI
NA IKA'Y ISANG PILIPINO

'WAG KANG MATATAKOT
MAY KASANGGA KA SA LABAN NA ITO
SABAY NATING GISINGIN ANG NASYON

AT ALAM KO ANG AKING KAYA, ALAM KO ANG HINDI
ALAM KO ANG KAILANGAN UPANG MAKAPAGSILBI
HANGGA'T MAY KABUTIHAN, HANGGA'T MAY PAG-IBIG
LIWANAG ANG MANANAIG

(MORE)

ALING AI (CONT'D)

AT HINDI KO MAIPAPANGAKO ANG KULAY ROSAS
NAMUNDO PARA SA 'YO
AT HINDI KO MAILLAWAN ANG LAHAT NG ANINO
PERO SISIKAPIN KO AT HINDI AKO MAGPAPAHINGA
HANGGA'T HINDI MO PA MAGAWANG MULING
IPAGMALAKI NA IKA'Y ISANG

PILIPINONG MAY PUSONG SAGUTIN ANG TUGON
PILIPINONG MAY TAPANG NA MULING BUMANGON
PILIPINONG BUO ANG PANININDIGAN
ALAM ANG TAMA AT TOTOO
SAMAHAN MO AKO

AT HINDI KO (AT HINDI KO) MAIPAPANGAKO ANG KULAY ROSAS
(KULAY ROSAS) NA MUNDO PARA SA 'YO
AT HINDI KO MAILLAWAN ANG LAHAT NG ANINO (OH, OH, OH, OH)
PERO SISIKAPIN KO AT HINDI AKO MAGPAPAHINGA

HANGGA'T HINDI MO PA MAGAWANG MULING
IPAGMALAKI NA IKA'Y ISANG MATATAG AT MATAPANG
AT MABUTI AT MAPAGMAHAL NA PILIPINO
PILIPINO, PILIPINO

END OF PLAY