

Traducir la sonrisa, reinventar la sombra:
Legados culturales y traducción colaborativa en "La sombra tras la sonrisa"

Presented by

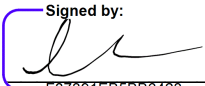
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The Shadow Behind the Smile

Written by Rubén Mosquera

Translated by Audrey Lee

“In loving memory of my mother, Ñata. For always singing about Gardel while doing things
around the house, songs that filled my childhood. Wherever you are...

With love,

Your son

SCENE I: “*EL DOLOR DE YA NO SER*” (THE PAIN OF NO LONGER BEING)

(A spotlight turns on, giving an intimate air to the scene. Seated on a stool, off to the side of the stage and closest to the audience, sits a man. He’s around 40 years old, with a beard and thick, tortoise-shell glasses that give him the look of an intellectual. He speaks directly to the audience.)

Andy: My name is Dr. Andrés Moisés Sheckman, psychiatrist. What I’m about to share with you may cost my career, my credibility, perhaps even my closest friends. Yet despite risking everything, I feel it my duty to present this case. You see, in my line of work, patients come to me with all types of outlandish stories. I hold their hand listening to their embellished realities, assuaging their nonsensical fears, and absorbing every bit of untruth because that’s the job: to help people feel better. My job is *not* that of a detective who solves mysteries. Thus, I present to you the curious case of Antonio Navarro. 45 year-old male. A laid off factory worker, father of three. Brought to my clinic by his wife who has born witness to the worst of his condition. I’ll admit this case falls outside my normal scope of practice, leaving me no other choice but to consult with you who are gathered here.

(The other stage lights illuminate as Andy heads to his desk. He takes his seat across from another man, pulls out his notebook, and begins to write as the man in front of him speaks. This man is dressed like a poet from the beginning of the century, wearing a suit and tie with his hair combed straight down the middle. He speaks with a certain nervous and nostalgic cadence.)

Antonio: Gardel was a fucked up guy, doc. But people wouldn’t shut up about him. I swear, every time I went to the store, a new tabloid appeared: “Spotted: Gardel with new mystery *mujer*. Are they really an item? I mean she’s half his age.” His diehard fans always denied it, refusing to believe he’d trade down for some undeserving *Lolita*. And then there were always others who implied, or even accepted as indisputable fact, that Gardel played for the other team. Out of loyalty to my friend, I will refrain from comment. I mean, you saw what he did to people, women especially. They worshipped him like some angel sent from above. And man, he sure sang like one. That’s why, when I tell you what I know, they’ll want to rip me to shreds. Not figuratively, literally... There’s a secret I’ve been keeping... I’ll just come out and say it... Gardel was an asshole... *(he emphasizes this several times, more and more emphatically)*... such a fucking asshole.

Andy: But Antonio, Gardel is dead... In fact, it’s been years since he passed, so you couldn’t possibly have known him.

Antonio: Ahh, but my name isn’t Antonio. And where do you get off saying I’ve never met Gardel? *(he glances around restlessly)* Of course I knew him, I knew him better than he knew himself ... And I’m not stupid, I know he’s dead... after all, so am I, I mean it’s completely his fault I’m dead in the first place... but because of Gardel and this secret, well... *(gesturing in front of himself as if to say “here I am”)*

Andy: I think we're getting ahead of ourselves. Why don't you tell me a little bit about the incident that happened with your neighbors? Your wife was saying there was some sort of altercation with the brother?

Antonio: This again? I'm sick of it, I really am. All those girls throwing themselves at Gardel, worshipping the ground he walked on. When really, all the guy did was piggyback off somebody else's hard work. He didn't have a single creative bone in that perfectly chiseled body.

Andy: Okay, I hear what you're saying. We'll circle back to Gardel, but right now I'd really like to hear about what happened with your neighbors.

Antonio: It was those goddamn Fontana sisters. They were L-O-C-A, *loca*, that's for sure. Seriously, the most obsessed fangirls I'd ever met. They spent all day camped outside Carlos' building, lying in wait. As if he'd ever give those two the time of day...

Andy: Okay, so is that what prompted you to attack them?

Antonio: I mean, I gave them plenty of fair warning, I really did. Every night I could hear them through the wall, going on and on about what they were going to do to Gardel. And doc, you don't even want to know what they said Gardel would do to them. So one day I just snapped. I threw them out, said they had 24 hours to pack their things and leave, but of course the brother had to get involved. So, I ran them off with my gun.

Andy: (*writing something down on his notepad*) And you said these girls were obsessed with Gardel?

Antonio: The Fontana sisters?

Andy: Yes...

Antonio: You're telling me you've never heard of "the lovestruck *locas*?" I guess, in theory it could've been sweet, cute even. But not so sweet hearing it through the fucking walls when you're trying to sleep. I mean, really, how have you never heard of the love-crazed *locas*?

Andy: (*surprised*) Obviously, I've heard of the phrase, but I had no idea as to their backstory.

Antonio: Well, now you do. I mean, you get why I had to run them off. And you know what doc, I'd do it again.

Andy: (*smiling*) Ah, I suppose that's where the lyric comes from: "*locas las Fontanas*."

Antonio: Back to what I was saying... I was a witness to everything Gardel stole, everything that asshole claimed as his own. First, he screwed over Razzano and before I knew it, I was his next victim ... (*Andy looks at him with disbelief*) But see, you don't believe a word I'm saying...

Andy: Whether I believe you or not is beside the point, Antonio. I'm listening nonetheless. *(He checks his watch)* It seems to me that we'll have to pick this up next time. In the meantime, I'm prescribing a very mild medication, just a little something to take the edge off.

Antonio: Just admit it, you don't believe me. You think I'm some raving lunatic, but I'm not!

Andy: *(passes Antonio the script)* Take one of these every 8 hours.

Antonio: You're not listening.

Andy: *(calling for someone backstage):* Sra. Navarro? Sra. Navarro?

Antonio: I'm not taking any goddamn pills. I don't need them. *(Suddenly an older-looking woman enters, dressed in outdated clothes— a brown skirt and floral blouse. Her outfit reveals she dressed up for today's visit)*

Angela: Yes? ... *(she looks at Antonio who becomes mute)* Antonio, just give me a minute with the doctor, ok?

(Antonio leaves with a submissive air)

Angela: Have you seen anything like this? Can you fix him?

Andy: We'll take things one step at a time. This medication should help *(he hands her the piece of paper)*. And I'd like to see him again in three days, when I'll be able to make a more informed diagnosis. As long as he doesn't resort to violence again, I don't see any reason to admit him.

Angela: *(taking the prescription)* Admit him? You don't think this medicine will be enough?

Andy: It's hard to say after only one session. We'll need to delve deeper... *(pensively)* For right now, let's just see how the week goes. *(Andy stands as if to leave)* If you'll excuse me, I have my next patient to see.

Angela: Yes, of course. *(They start heading to leave)*

Andy: And if you wouldn't mind bringing some of Gardel's records from your husband's collection next time? I want to better understand this whole Gardel phenomenon. He's not someone I'm overly familiar with.

Angela: But my husband doesn't own any of Gardel's records. Before all of this started, Antonio couldn't care less about Gardel.

Andy: Is that so? I was almost certain he'd have some in his possession.

Angela: No, this obsession came out of nowhere.

Andy: Then the plan will be to observe him over the next few days. I can't help but wonder what hidden corner of his brain harbors this obsession. Why so transfixed by a myth? And if Antonio doesn't own Gardel's records, how could he possibly know each song by heart? It's like each song ignites something deep within him... It's all rather puzzling.

(They exit the stage)

(Curtains close)

SCENE II: "SU IMAGEN ME OBSESIONA" (HIS IMAGE HAUNTS ME)

(The lights come on, giving an ethereal feel to the stage. A chorus of female voices sings "New York Blondes," evoking a heavenly realm. A man in an impeccable tuxedo appears. It's him. The Carlos Gardel. He approaches Andy's desk and reads his notes. He walks across the stage and smiles at the audience with undeniable charisma. The lights dim as he exits the stage, at the same time that the volume of the chorus lowers. Silence, and the curtains close.)

SCENE III: "HAY UN DESFILE DE EXTRAÑAS FIGURAS" (A SEA OF STRANGERS)

(The lights illuminate an empty stool. Andy enters and takes a seat. The lighting suggests an intimate confessional is to come.)

Andy: As I said before, I'm Dr. Andrés Moisés Sheckman. But, please, call me Andy, at least that's what they called me back in my theater days. Some might be surprised to hear I was a theater kid, but I've always been a true thespian at heart. How could I not be enamored by the theatrics of it all, taking on all those different personas, a true chameleon...

Alas, my theater dreams never came to fruition. As my old man liked to remind me: "It's a nice hobby, Andy, but it's not a career." You can imagine how relieved my parents were when I told them I had given up the stage to go to medical school.

But, truthfully, medicine made me feel numb, like a shot of novacaine injected into my veins. And the politics of it all, suffocating. I knew it wasn't my calling, not like the theatre. But I also knew I couldn't risk ending up like my father, taking over his shop and fading away like some discarded scrap of fabric.

So thank god for jazz! It's the only thing that got me through medical school. Thank god for Cortázar, and thank god for my wife, Marcela. I met her in a record store, and we immediately hit it off. She wasn't Jewish, though, so when I eventually proposed, my mother was beside herself, sobbing for days, mourning the life she'd envisioned for me. My father, on the other hand, accepted her with open arms.

But back to what I was saying, for the longest time I only cared about jazz. So when tango entered my life, it happened by pure chance, right here in this hospital. You see, in private practice, most days I'm stuck listening to these poor forgotten housewives bored out of their minds, who will pay anyone to simply listen to them talk about their problems. They go on and on about their poor life choices with little or no intention to change.

What I was really looking for when I went into this career was a true Freudian headcase. I waited for years and years... until one day, fate unexpectedly intervened. Enter Antonio Navarro. At first, he presented like any ordinary case. But his delusion, or rather obsession, with Gardel, this is what I had been waiting for.

My old man always used to say: "When life gives you lemons, don't make lemonade. Make life take the lemons back! I don't want your damn lemons, what the hell am I supposed to do with these? Make life rue the day it thought it could give Andrés Moisés Sheckman lemons! Do you know who Andrés is? He's the man who gets what he wants."

I know, I know, at first glance Antonio's case doesn't seem all that. Just another man let down by the system, seeking treatment from a psychiatrist who gave up on psychotherapy years ago. And to top it all off, the patient doesn't even believe he's the infamous Gardel. I mean, Gardel, he was like the Elvis of Argentina. No, I take that back, think bigger. Bigger than Michael Jackson, Frank Sinatra, Elton John, Freddie Mercury. Gardel was a god compared to those mere mortals.

So, why in god's name would anyone choose to be the shadow behind the star? Who dresses up to be Robin for Halloween when you could be Batman? Seriously, I must be the only psychiatrist in this predicament. After years and years of biding my time, I get the one nutcase who believes he's Le Pera. Yes, Alfredo Le Pera, the invisible songwriter behind Gardel's famous tangos. Not familiar? I'm not surprised, neither was I. If it weren't for Antonio, I never would have known Le Pera existed. It was always Gardel and Le Pera, never Le Pera and Gardel.

I mean, Gardel was center stage, and don't get me wrong, Le Pera was talented, he was a real wordsmith. But as soon as Gardel opened his mouth, no one cared who wrote the words.

"...Was it all a lie? My heart waiting for a call that never came..."

(They project images of all of Gardel's movies)

Just look at Gardel, he could dazzle divas and dentists with that smile. I suppose what I want, what I need, is to understand why anyone would choose to delude themselves into thinking they're a ghost? The ghost lingering behind this iconic, untouchable being.

So, that's why I'm here, digging into Antonio's soul, or rather, Le Pera's soul, straining to see what's behind that dazzling smile ...

Perhaps it's just a humble author who doesn't need the praise (although who doesn't like praise)? Perhaps it's a man whose name didn't quite make the end credits. Perhaps it's just a nameless, wandering soul.

(The image of Gardel smiling remains. Curtains close.)

SCENE IV: “ALMA CRIOLLA, ERRANTE Y VIAJERA” (The Wandering Soul)

(The lights shine on Antonio. He sits impatiently, checking his watch as he waits for Andy. Gardel enters, and the light focuses on him with a special brightness. You can hear a female chorus, mimicking a chorus of angels as they sing “Golondrinas”)

Antonio: I don't know how you do it. Girls are all over you, throwing themselves at you any chance they get. Me, on the other hand, I'd be lucky to get a sideways glance. But I guess that's my life, just one giant disappointment after the next. I'm like Discepolín, another sad sidekick who never got to see the spotlight. I suppose we should be grateful, we have you to thank for making our music what it is. *(bitterly)* The lyrics would be forgotten without you, but at least they would've been ours. You may have transformed tango into what it is today, but all the while you were taking something from us. You know, Carlos, I only fell in love once. Just once. Sure, I had girlfriends and of course, my kids that I love... but it never compared to how I felt for her. I can't even bring myself to say her name.

“You stopped breathing, but the world kept turning.”

I wrote that song for her, did you know that? No one understands what it feels like, to see someone you love leave forever. People say they're sorry and offer their condolences, but what the fuck do they know about grief? All I know is that today, and every day after that, my heart ached. And still aches for her.

But you? You never cared about love. I remember once we went to the races, and I saw you throwing money at those horses. I thought to myself, that's the closest I've seen you in love; obsessed with the chase and even more seduced by money. You could have been king, Carlos, and instead you turned out to be... the biggest disappointment I'd ever met.

But, you're also my friend. It was always me behind you, your most loyal companion. I believed in you from the moment I saw you. It was your smile. That damn smile that made the whole world fall in love. And I knew together we could do great things. Monumental, earth-shattering things. I would be by your side as you conquered the world. And you did just that. Paris, Tokyo, New York. But you fucked it all up.

You know, some people like to call you generous, ha! With who? Me? You're an asshole, and you just couldn't help yourself. You wanna know why I've kept this in for so long, why I haven't gone and told the world the truth about who you really are? Because that means disappointing millions of people.

(Changes his tone to admiration) No one can sing like you, Carlos. You're the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars. They try to imitate you and they can't. I don't know how you do it... but every day you sing better.

(Gardel sings as Le Pera kneels at his feet, waiting excitedly)

How is that even possible?

(Gardel leaves. Le Pera continues repeating in a low voice, sobbing)

Every day you sing better, Carlos ... Every damn day.

SCENE V: “NO DIGAS A NADIE QUE YA NO ME QUIERES” (DON’T TELL THEM YOU DON’T LOVE ME ANYMORE)

(The intimate tone of the light shifts brighter)

(Andy enters as he observes Antonio with curiosity)

Andy: What are you doing Antonio? *(he looks around)* Were you talking to someone?

Antonio: You don’t hear that?

Andy: Hear what?

Antonio: Not a single day passes that I don’t hear him. I can’t escape him. And every time he sings it’s like the skies split open *(his gesture of admiration turns into a middle finger to the sky)*. But, even his perfect, angelic voice can’t save him, that good-for-nothing son of a ... Of course nobody will ever know the truth, they only see what he wants them to see... *(his tone switches from indignation to admiration again)* But when he sang, man could he sing. Only God could have created a voice like that. Nobody sang like him, nobody ever will. *(From off stage, you hear Gardel’s voice singing again, this time the first line of “Mi Buenos Aires Querido”)* Can’t you hear that?

Andy: No.

Antonio: But it’s Carlos *(shaking his head)* What an asshole. I mean, he just took what he wanted and ran with it, never mind if it belonged to someone else ...

Andy: Who? Gardel?

Antonio: Have you been listening to a word I’ve said? Who else would I be talking about? He’s unbelievable, literally unbelievable. He had the world at his feet, and boy did he know it. He could get away with anything, so he did.

Andy: How can you admire him so much but describe him with such loathing?

Antonio: What does one have to do with the other?

Andy: Listen to yourself. If people didn’t know better, they’d think that Gardel is your idol.

Antonio: And?

Andy: It begs the question, is he the hero or the villain of this story?

Antonio: When you think of the word “idol,” what comes to mind is someone rooted into everyone’s consciousness— adored, unforgettable, an icon.

Andy: We’re getting sidetracked.

Antonio: Tell me, who’s your idol? I mean consider Rodolfo Valentino or Elvis for that matter. They couldn’t step foot outside without everyone noticing them. And the women! All those women chasing after them? Whose face do you imagine plastered on posters in every teenage girls’ bedroom?

Andy: You’re the patient, Antonio. Please answer the questions.

Antonio: Just humor me for a second. Who’s your idol? Who’s the person that inspires you, that makes you believe there’s still good in the world?

Andy: That’s hardly relevant.

Antonio: Why? You can tell me. *(he waits expectantly)*

Andy: *(looking around as if someone will hear)* Marx... Freud.

Antonio: Who?

Andy: *(with more confidence, proudly stating his admiration)* Marx and Freud.

Antonio: And what exactly did they do?

Andy: Well, they were men of ideas, thinkers...

Antonio: But did their thoughts fill people with joy? Did they sing as well as Magaldi or Corsini? Like our dearest Gardel?

Andy: No, these men developed great theories. They imagined worlds without pain or loneliness, worlds where humans could actually come together and cohabitate without conflict. They declared capitalism as innately evil, poisoning our societies and leaving destruction in its wake. They predicted how technological advances would eventually turn against mankind and make the future unimaginably worse than the present.

Antonio: Ah. I see... So, they wrote tangos. You could’ve just said that. I’m not familiar with their work, I suppose Gardel never sang their songs ... In any case, it’s all the same. You should tell those guys, what were their names, Max and Fred? They should pass some of their work off to dear Carlitos. If Carlos sings it, it’ll be an overnight sensation. Tell them their faces will be on billboards all over, their names heard on every radio station. Just imagine *(putting on the voice of a radio announcer)*: “*Me cortaste la cara*, an original by Gardel and Fred” or “Up next, the song

we have on repeat: *Te espíantaste con otro* by none other than Gardel and Max.” Really, any song he touches turns to gold. No matter how many songs they churn out about unrequited love and heartbreak, Carlos somehow makes it original. It’s that angelic voice of his. But again that isn’t enough to absolve him of his sins. I’ll never forgive him...

Andy: Ahh, this again.

Antonio: Yes, this again. And I’ll keep saying it for the rest of my life... I’m the only one left who knows the whole story, who can dispel the myth of my great friend Carlos Gardel.

Andy: Ok Antonio, why don’t we take a step back?

Antonio: You mean Alfredo.

Andy: No, Antonio...

Antonio: My name is Alfredo.

Andy: Your name is Antonio Navarro.

Antonio: I am Alfredo Le Pera!

Andy: No, Antonio.

Antonio: I am Alfredo Le Pera!

Andy: Fine, let’s suppose for a moment that you are Alfredo...

Antonio: But I am Alfredo...

Andy: Well, Alfredo, what would you like to tell us about Gardel?

Antonio: I already told you. Everyone talks about him as this idol, but that hardly makes me his shadow. Haven’t you ever heard of “La Plata del Bebe Torres?”

Andy: I can’t say that I have.

Antonio: *(he continues asking as Andy shakes his head “no” to each question)* “Piernas de Seda?” “Opera en Jazz?” “Gran Circo Político?” Do you live under a rock? Or perhaps music is completely lost on you. Well, I’ll educate you. *All* of these scores were written by me... Don’t give me that look, I’m not some pathetic composer. I was just as good as Gardel, just as good as Andrew Lloyd Webber. These productions were great! I would know, I wrote them, and all by myself or with the occasional help from Discepolín. Now he was a generous man, full of compassion, not some stuck-up, self-obsessed asshole, but a truly great man.

Andy: Okay, I understand. Let's try to get back on track. As I was saying, let's suppose that you are Alfredo Le Pera...

Antonio: But I am Alfredo Le Pera...

Andy: Ok, you were telling me that you wrote often.

Antonio: So much, all the time, constantly. And somehow you don't recognize a single thing of mine? What about this one, you have to know this one: "*Arrabal amargo metido en mi vida*"

Andy: "*Como una condena y una maldición?*" ... Yes, yes that is familiar. That's Gardel, no?

Antonio: "*Volver con la frente marchita, las nieves del tiempo*"

Andy: I know that one! "*platearon mi sien*"... That's Gardel.

Antonio: No, I've been telling you this whole time...

Andy: "*Las horas que pasan ya no vuelven más.*" That's definitely Gardel.

Antonio: No, you idiot, it's mine! It all belongs to me. Have you ever actually watched Gardel in those movies? Like *really* watched him? Did you ever actually see him play the guitar?

Andy: Truthfully, I don't really remember.

Antonio: He was stiff as a board whenever he held a guitar (*he awkwardly grasps the air in front of him, clunkily handling an imaginary guitar*). The only sound that he could squeak out was the pluck of an individual string. He didn't know a chord to save his life, and you seem to think he could've written a whole score. He thought half rests were cute little hats on the page, and don't get me started on the codas. But of course, you believe it's him when you see a close-up of his hands strumming a guitar, as if those hands ever belonged to Gardel. There was always a double. Some guy with slimmer hands to match his youthful smile. And when they panned to his face, well, that's what flooded the whole screen, that dazzling, glittering, blinding smile. So who bothers to look at his hands? Who cares if he knew how to play the guitar or not? At the end of the day, Gardel was an idol, gifted with a voice from God.

Andy: So you've just told me that it didn't matter if he played the guitar or not. Yet, I'm sensing some lingering resentment. Can you tell me more about that?

Antonio: You know what it's like to do your friend a favor? You do it because they're your friend, and you're supposed to expect nothing in return. But eventually you bend over backwards one too many times, and you break. You write one smash hit after the other, each one outdoing the last. It's exhausting. All the while, you don't receive an ounce of recognition for your songs, yes those songs at the top of the charts. No, because Gardel's on top. The applause is only for him. All the awards, and all the accolades belong to him.

Andy: This negative self-talk is unproductive, and I don't believe Alfredo would belittle himself like this. I'd like you to imagine yourself instead as the great songwriter who put Gardel on the map. And that's something to be proud of. Think of all the authors whose books are later adapted to film, the thousands of composers whose operas are sung by someone else. They're just like you. Creative geniuses. Can you see now that all this self-loathing is, in fact, quite illogical?

Antonio: Alright, doc. Since you like to suppose such hypothetical scenarios, let's suppose that Verdi wrote an opera that Caruso sang, yes?

Andy: Yes...

Antonio: And let's imagine these two were friends ...

Andy: I don't follow.

Antonio: Ok, yes, they lived a century apart, and had they met, they probably wouldn't have been friends. But, I suppose this doesn't apply to me because Carlos was my friend. Well, now this doesn't make sense anymore. What matters is that I never denied being the songwriter behind Gardel. I am quite secure in the fact that all of Gardel's tangos are my beautifully crafted words. But all of the success, the acclaim, the appreciation ... I never saw a glimpse of that. Never.

Andy: Are you talking about the money?

Antonio: I'm talking about the myth of Gardel, the friend who was never really my friend... the generosity that simply didn't exist...the charming fan encounters that never happened ... All of it is a lie.

Andy: I'll ask you again, is this about the money?

Antonio: No. This is about a person who was a myth, whose image wasn't consistent with what really was. After everything I've told you, can you still like Gardel?

Andy: I've never really paid him that much attention. But because of you, I've started to listen, and truthfully I can't say that I like the guy or not, but here we are talking about me and not you. *(pauses)* Do you like Gardel?

Antonio: As a singer, he was...

Andy: No, Alfredo, I'm asking about Gardel's character. Did you love him, or did you hate him? Have you ever asked yourself that?

Antonio: Ever since that day and the plane...

Andy: Plane? What plane?

Antonio: *(starts humming)* Hey, what about this one? Do you recognize it? “*Por ti, por tu palpitar, doy la vida al besar...*”

Andy: What plane? What are you talking about?

Antonio: *(turning to the audience)* Can you believe he doesn't know that one?

Andy: Let's pause for a moment. ... You were telling me about a plane.

Antonio: What about *Madame Ivonne*...

Andy: *(singing along)* “*La cruz del sur fue como un grito,*” yes I know it.

Antonio: Ahh, so you know that one! It was Cadícamo's plane that Gardel stole, typical *(he rolls his eyes)*, and, well... *(he uses his hand to mimic a plane crashing)*

Andy: Is that the plane you were talking about?

Antonio: I was talking about how Gardel could touch any song and turn it to gold. *(sighs)* But now I'm tired. Can we be done for today?

Andy: Yes, that's fine. I'd really like you to keep thinking about this, so we can pick up where we left off next time.

Antonio: *(as he exits)* Ahh and doc, don't forget to tell that duo... Fred and Max... have them reach out to Carlos. He'll make them famous. But be careful. Carlos isn't your friend. And favors are never just favors, they always come at a cost. And if people mistake that generosity, expecting you to work tirelessly, day in and day out... *(he cuts himself off)*

Andy: Continue, Antonio.

Antonio: My name is Alfredo.

Andy: Fine. Please continue Alfredo...

Antonio: Next time ... *(he leaves)*

(Andy remains thinking about their conversation as Gardel enters, passing from one side to the other of the stage without Andy seeing him. A chorus of angels sings "Blondes de Nueva York". Andy leaves.)

SCENE VI: “AHORA CUESTA ABAJO EN MI RODADA” (IT ALL WENT DOWNHILL FROM THERE)

(Angela enters, anxiously awaiting the doctor. She startles Andy, who was deep in thought.)

Angela: How was he?

Andy: Truthfully, Antonio isn't well. Your husband's case presents as quite the pathological anomaly. I believe these sessions are helping, but I can't guarantee a cure exists for his condition. I've never seen anything like this; it's all rather exciting.

Angela: *(in disbelief)* Exciting?! It might strike YOU as exciting, a case you get to analyze twice a week, but this is MY reality. I need Antonio to get better. We have three kids at home, and I'm the only one holding it together. I mean, the kids, they try to help, but my youngest is just a baby. I can't do this anymore... I just can't *(she begins to sob)*. I don't recognize my husband... he's become a complete stranger. We used to be a couple that supported each other in everything, but I can't do this alone. So when you tell me what an exciting case this is, you'll forgive me if I don't share that same sentiment. Just the other day my sister asked me if I'd be better off leaving him at the hospital. And I had to think about it. I actually had to think about leaving my lunatic husband here!

Andy: Angela, Antonio isn't dangerous. Yes, he clings to this delusion that he is Alfredo. But I am quite confident through regular therapy sessions I can bring him back to reality. I understand it's all terribly inconvenient, but do you truly believe his delusions are hurting others? What's the harm in believing himself to be Le Pera?

Angela: It's hurting me, it's hurting our family! Do you know what it's like to be rejected every day by the man who promised to love you? How much stress this has caused me? How many gray hairs I've sprouted in the last 6 months? I look like a grandmother ... I don't know what to do. I'm the only one taking care of our family, and what if something were to happen to me? What happens then?

Andy: Angela, I'll repeat my question. Do you believe Antonio to be a danger to himself or to others?

Angela: No, of course not. I mean, unless you count the time he doused my head in gasoline and tried to set my hair on fire...

Andy: *(shocked)* He what? *(emphasizing each word slowly)* He tried to light your head on fire?

Angela: Yes, no... I mean, it was an act of passion. Honestly, I was flattered... He snuck up from behind, humming in my ear “*a mysterious light nestles in your hair.*” And it had been such a long time since he had touched me, forever since I had received any semblance of affection... So when I felt my hair was wet, and I inhaled the pungent smell of gasoline... Well, it never went past that. I just took the box of matches out of his hands, washed my hair, and that was that. *(laughing)* I think it even made my hair brighter, actually.

Andy: But Angela, you shouldn't laugh.

Angela: No, I have to laugh. If I don't laugh, I'll cry... And I...I..... (*begins to sob*) My marriage is a wreck, my life is a wreck. Here I am, 42-years old, and I look like I'm 65. When I married Antonio, I was a completely different person...

Andy: Why don't you tell me about how you two met?

Angela: It was at the *discoteca*. I was 19, Antonio was 23. He had a girlfriend at the time, he was actually on a date with her when we met. But as soon as I saw him, I just knew. He made me feel like I was the only girl in the world, and I knew I couldn't escape. Three years later we were married, and of course, my father adored him. Antonio worked in the factory just like him. And he made a good living, so we built our home, little by little on a small piece of land. We were smart and bought it in installments, and soon the kids came along... You don't understand how attentive Antonio used to be, how hard he worked for our family. Not once did he raise his voice at me in our 20 years of marriage. If we ever did get into it, well that's just because I have a strong personality... It wasn't until everything with the factory... it all went downhill from there.

Andy: What happened at the factory?

Angela: Well... they started letting people go. But Antonio was such a hard worker, and he knew how to do absolutely everything. They tried to hold on to him, but they kept giving him fewer hours. He was working less and less until he was only earning half his normal wage... But we had our three boys, plus the payments we still owed on the house. And the bills started to pile up, so I told him I was going to find work. I'd clean houses, do anything to help. But he didn't like that one bit. No. Hadn't he promised that I would want for nothing? But it wasn't his fault what happened with the factory. That's just the way it was.

Andy: And then what happened?

Antonio: (*He enters through the door that the public enters*) Angela...

Angela: Yes, *mi amor*... back already?

Antonio: You won't believe this. They called me in and made me an offer to leave, only a fraction of my paycheck.

Angela: And if you don't accept, then what?

Antonio: I talked to the union lawyers and they said if the factory sends me the termination papers, I'd have to sue to get the whole thing, and they're not sure if I'll win...

Angela: Don't worry, we'll figure this out. If you accept their offer we could use the money to open a bodega. We can do that until you get back on your feet.

Antonio: But I'm no good for that. I'm a factory man.

Angela: That factory's no good for you either. For two years they've been cutting your hours, nudging you closer and closer out the door. You owe them nothing.

Antonio: I've spent my whole life there. Everyone knows me, they respect me. At least they used to. You know, it was that new manager who tried to fire me. He's practically a child, and when he gave me that pity offer, I told him: "*I'm almost twenty years your senior, yet you're trying to fire me. Don't you see the irony?*" And all he did was shrug as if to say: "*What's it to me?*" And I swear, if it weren't for you and the boys, I would've grabbed his head and put it under one of those machines and...

Angela: You should accept the offer. We can make do with the bodega while we figure out what to do next.

Antonio: I've given years of my life to that place. He had no right to shrug at me, it's like he laughed right in my face. I'm one of their best workers. I've never even taken a sick day!

Angela: Antonio, don't worry, we'll make do. We will figure it out.

(She goes to stand by Andy while Antonio sits in the chair where Andy was at the beginning. The chair is half-lit.)

Angela: Everyone in the neighborhood was in the same boat, fighting to survive. And Antonio couldn't say no to those trying to feed their hungry families. And the truth was, neither could I. So little by little we started sinking. What we earned wasn't enough to break even... So, a year after we opened, we had to shut down.

Andy: How did Antonio take it?

Angela: How do you think? He became bitter, and each day he got worse. I'd never seen him like that before. After we closed the bodega, I scrambled to find anything to keep us afloat. I told him he could try driving a taxi, but we didn't have a car, and he'd never learned to drive anyway. *(muttering under her breath)* He was always so hardheaded, and he hated the idea of me working. One morning he went out on the streets, offering his services to anyone passing by. They probably thought he was crazy.

(turning to Antonio) Antonio, we have to do something. We don't have any way of supporting ourselves. What about school tuition?

Antonio: I already told you. Antonio Navarro's wife will not work. She'll want for nothing, I'll make sure of it. Unless you've gotten the crazy idea of "working" because you're bored at home.

Angela: *(raising her voice)* Do you hear yourself right now? You think I want to work because I'm bored? Yes, when we met I hadn't worked a day in my life. I was just a girl when we got married. But we need the money.

Antonio: No! When I married you, I promised you could stay at home with the kids. I'd be the man that provides for our family. You'd always have me to depend on, to keep food on the table. And I did that, I worked tirelessly at that factory every day!

Angela: Yes, you did. You took care of me, and you took care of our family. But our situation has changed. And I can't for the life of me understand this stupid ego of yours. The factory is no longer an option.

Antonio: But my wife shouldn't have to scrub other peoples' dirty floors...

Angela: If I clean houses, I'd make twice, maybe three times as much as what we're currently bringing in. You think going into that factory twice a week helps. But you never stay at home and help with the kids, you don't clean the house, you don't do the shopping ...

(Antonio and Angela keep staring at each other)

Andy: And how did he take that?

Angela: *(After a few seconds, she answers without breaking eye contact with Antonio)* Obviously not well. He was completely and utterly defeated. I found out later from my neighbors that he was crying. *(she turns to face Andy, putting her back to Antonio)* They were also let go from the factory, and sometimes they would all get together at the bar across the street.

Antonio: *(slurring his words as if he's been drinking)* Angela... I'm sorry I'm late. We were playing cards, and the loser had to buy the next round, and of course I got dealt the worst hand...

Angela: What are you doing Antonio? You never drink. You know we have no money. I picked up four extra shifts this week, so we would have just enough to scrape by this month.

Antonio: It was just a small glass, the tiniest of glasses. Teeny tiny...

Angela: I can't even look at you. Go. Leave. I can't stand to see you like this... I told you to go *(Angela starts to push him, and Antonio leaves).*

(To Andy) He was humiliated that night. But it was the harsh truth.

Andy: And how did he react? Did he start to behave differently after what had happened?

Angela: At first I thought things were getting better. He stopped drinking. He would try to read or help around the house, I mean as much as a man can. He'd clean for an hour or two, and then he'd have the whole day ahead of him with nothing... And then he started laying in bed all day while I was gone. And when I came home at night, exhausted from being on my feet, I couldn't stand to see him so bitter, so defeated... This was not the Antonio I married.

Andy: And did you notice anything else different about him around this time?

Angela: I-, I don't know if I can say.

Andy: Every detail matters, Angela. In order to help him, I have to understand the whole story.

Angela: For years, he would wake up, and the first thing he would do was shower. Some mornings he'd even do push-ups before work. He'd drink his coffee, and always before he left, he'd wake me up with a kiss on my forehead, and breakfast already made. But little by little, he stopped doing that. And I started to notice that he didn't shower as often. He stopped shaving, walking around with his beard grown out for days at a time. Sometimes I even had to remind him to shower before getting into bed ... He started to act as if he were a child and... I couldn't watch as he let himself go, so one day I tried to snap him out of it ...

Andy: And while all this was happening, how long had it been since you stopped being intimate with one another?

Angela: I'm sorry, what?

Andy: Yes, Angela, you heard me correctly. Just now you had to stop yourself from saying (*looking down to read his notes*) that he was acting like a child and that made you feel like you were his mother. And mothers don't have sex with their sons... (*Angela becomes quiet, embarrassed and ashamed*)

(*After many awkward seconds*) So, I'll ask again. How long has it been since you and Antonio were intimate? Or are you not sure?

Angela: No, no we hugged last week. We hug all the time. I'll hug him, or he'll curl up beside me...

Andy: I'm not talking about that kind of intimacy, Angela... How long has it been since you stopped engaging in sexual intercourse?

Angela: (*trying to justify herself*) You have to understand, with all the problems we've been dealing with... (*Angela starts to cry*) One day, he just stopped looking at me like that. I tried several times, but he was never in the mood. I had never felt less of a woman, humiliated and unwanted. He's the only man I've ever loved, my first boyfriend, my husband, the father to my children. We used to be so happy. But suddenly my husband didn't see me anymore. He didn't react when I tried to touch him. And when I needed him most, he turned his back on me. At first I was desperate, but now...

Andy: But Angela, you can't give up...

Angela: (*exasperated*) What more do you want from me? Do you know what it's like to see the person you love waste away in front of you... (*crying*) and then one day, he starts hallucinating that he's Alfredo Le Pera, that it's his fault everything happened the way that it did with Gardel. You won't give me an answer about what's wrong with my husband, but here you are telling me not to give up?

Andy: Now, Angela. I understand it's frustrating, but getting upset doesn't change the situation. If you want to be angry, be angry. Curse as much as you like. But if you want to help Antonio get better, you have to remain calm and stay the course ... You mentioned to me that Antonio's delusions started suddenly. When exactly did he start to hallucinate? When did he start to believe that he was Alfredo Le Pera? And why Le Pera and not Gardel?

Angela: It started after his Aunt Beba passed. He went to visit her for the last time in el Abasto. And when he came back, he brought a mountain of records and newspapers with him, gifted to him by his aunt. And one day, he started listening to Gardel. He listened religiously. Every day he would hum along while he did things around the house. Honestly, it was a relief. He wasn't a shell of a person anymore, too depressed to get out of bed. The day his aunt Beba passed, he told me he had a secret about Gardel. But Antonio and I belonged to the ABBA generation, to us Gardel was a thing of the past, so why would I care about any Gardel secret? And then, I noticed Antonio stopped humming. One day I came home, and he had destroyed all of his aunt's records. When I asked him what happened, he replied: *"That's just what you do when you're dealing with assholes. And that Gardel sure was an asshole."* My husband never swore, so I remember his words quite vividly. After a couple of days, he brought out a suit I hadn't seen him wear in years. And I thought, just for a second, maybe he was trying to seduce me. Until he started insisting his name was Alfredo, not Antonio. And that everything that had happened to us, to our family, was Gardel's fault.

(Her tone sours) And it was all because of something that happened years ago, and Alfredo would have to spend his whole life atoning for his sins, and I don't even know, he started mumbling nonsense about a plane....

Andy: A plane? Has Antonio flown recently?

Angela: You mean, the man who gets nauseous from going on the merry-go-round with our son? No, he's never flown before.

Andy: There was something else that caught my attention that I wanted to ask you about...

Angela: Recently he's been waking up restless, as if he's been arguing with someone for hours...

Andy: And before, did he used to talk in his sleep?

Angela: No. Everything about him is different now. He's only getting worse.

Andy: You have to be patient, Angela. I'm quite confident this treatment plan will work... it might take a little time to start seeing some changes...

(He writes something on a piece of paper) I want Antonio to start taking this, it should help *(he extends the paper to Angela but she doesn't accept it)*. What's wrong, Angela?

Angela: This is too much. Either the kids eat, or I buy him the medicine he needs...

Andy: Not to worry. We'll go to the pharmacy downstairs, the girls are sure to have some samples ... Come, come. Cheer up. There's no need to be embarrassed ... This happens to lots of people (*Angela and Andy leave, the office goes dark.*)

SCENE VII: "Y AHORA, VENCIDO, ARRASTRO MI ALMA" (NOW, I AM DEFEATED)

(The lights illuminate as Antonio enters, immediately followed by an angelic choir singing "Arrabal amargo." The choir announces Gardel's entrance, and Antonio rejoices at his arrival, prepared to receive him with open arms. Gardel enters with a tremendous spotlight shining upon him. You begin to hear the voice of Gardel singing "Guitarra, guitarra mía." Antonio listens with admiration. When the stanza ends, a submissive Antonio approaches the smug, shining Gardel.)

Antonio: (*hugging him*) Ahh, mi amigo, how can I stay mad at you? As soon as I hear your voice, my anger turns to awe. (*Gardel smiles*) They study your work... really, it's *ours*, but they only remember it as yours. And one day someone will search for the greatest tango ever written. And I think to myself: if only you had sung *Cambalache*...

(Gardel yawns, looking bored and uninterested) Yes, *Cambalache*, written by my good friend Discepolín. The most political tango ever. The year was 1934, written in reaction to the Church handing out thousands of Bibles all over the city as part of Pope Pius XII's campaign. (*Gardel nods*)

"Herido por un sable sin remache ves llorar la Biblia junto al calefón." (*Gardel raises his eyebrows*) Everyone knows the words, but no one cares what they mean. I'll tell you why they had to ban it. He was talking about how people were so poor, they were using pages of the Bible to wipe their asses. Ha, what a genius! No one was as ballsy as Discepolín. And people sing it all the time and have no idea what they're singing about. (*Gardel laughs*) *Disci* came just a little after your time. If only you could have sang his lyrics... it would've been an anthem. (*He pauses, staring at him*). But, be honest, Carlos, would you have dared to sing them?

Gardel: (*with indignation and much to the shock of Antonio, Gardel begins to speak with a thick Argentine accent*) You dare me? Aren't you forgetting I sang "*Yira yira*?"

Antonio: (*deciding to play a game with Gardel*) Ah, but it's not the same. Just because you sang a cover of *Disci*'s "*Yira yira*," that doesn't make you brave. *Disci* didn't shy away from bashing those priests. And the only thing you dared to sing about was broken hearts and hopeless romantics... It's entirely different.

Gardel: *Hombre*, weren't *you* the one who wrote those lyrics? If you wanted to write the next anthem, why didn't you?

Antonio: Because I'm a romantic. I wanted to be like Amado Nervo.

Gardel: So I guess that's why you copied half of his lyrics and called them your own.

Antonio: *You're* one to talk. And you know what, you've won plenty of awards with my verses. God knows how many.

Gardel: Again with the whining. I've heard you grumbling for days behind my back. But when I came to confront you, *hombre a hombre*, who was nowhere to be found?

Antonio: I've been busy writing theatre with Disci...

Gardel: Again with this Disci guy, who gives a fuck? How many people have gone to see his movies? Hm? I doubt he could compete with me. People line around the block to see my films.

Antonio: *(interrupting him and speaking sarcastically)* Oh, I'm sorry, were you talking about "Cuesta Abajo," or "El Tango en Broadway?" Or maybe "Tango Bar?" You think anyone would recognize those lousy songs? It wasn't until *I* started writing for you that you finally made it to the top of the charts. Go ahead, disagree. Why didn't you sell out shows for "Flor de durazno?"

Gardel: That's not fair, that was a silent film. Who pays to watch a silent film these days?

Antonio: Chaplin made a silent film, and look how he did...

Gardel: Chaplin was a tightrope walker. He had people on the edge of their seats, with his pantomimes and pirouettes...I can't compete with that.

Antonio: Definitely not with that dreadful beard...

Gardel: But put me in a tuxedo, and I'm James Bond.

Antonio: You wish. But somehow you managed to make yourself into an idol: Saint Gardel. Any city you visit, the people swarm you. "You're really him, *the* Carlos Gardel." *(Gardel beams exaggeratedly)* But, you know what Carlos? Saints live alone, stuck in their heavenly realm. That must be why you have no friends, no family, no lovers. Because next to you, nothing else is allowed to shine. *You* take up the whole spotlight. I mean, look what happened to Razzano, what happened to me...

Gardel: Razzano and I did a duet once, at the very beginning of my career *(reading off a poster of the marquee)* "The Criollo duo, Gardel and Razzano." We sang together one time. And then he lost his voice. How was that my fault? But I still tried to help him, I really did.

Antonio: He was your glorified assistant... but of course, Razzano had dignity. He always dreamt of singing. And you couldn't stand to have others compete with you. No one shines brighter than Carlos, so one day you kicked Razzano to the curb. You didn't even have the decency to say it to his face... Were you really so threatened by him? *Adios* to your pal Razzano... and *adios* to me.

Gardel: If we weren't friends, then why were you by my side for every big gig: Paris... New York... the Paramount... I mean, look how far I've come... Morocco and Argentina. I'm the king of Paris... king of New York...

Antonio: King of bullshit... You turn your nose down at everyone, including me. And maybe that's why you never married. Because no one could stand that massive ego of yours. It's suffocating, I would know (*Gardel looks incredulous to what he's hearing*). Don't look so surprised, I mean, you left your dying mother with nothing, for god's sake, that poor woman left all alone. But I guess when you're a god, who has time for anyone else? You're here and there, yet not from anywhere. I mean... who even are you? Are you French, Argentine, Uruguayan? You're everywhere... I hear your voice on the radio all the time... But that emptiness that follows you, it'll always be there. The only way to escape it is to stop playing god. Come back to earth!

(They look at each other as if they've arrived at an impasse)

(Enter Andy)

Andy: Who are you talking to Antonio?

Antonio: My name is Alfredo.

Andy: Were you just talking to someone?

Antonio: No, I don't know what you're talking about.

(Gardel retreats to one side, without leaving the scene, but stops looking at Antonio)

Andy: You're quite early for your session today...

Antonio: Angela's waiting for me in the other room, but I stayed here... don't worry, she'll be back to get me when the 90 minutes are up.

Andy: *(takes a seat at his desk)* Well, I still have some charts to finish...

Antonio: Fine, I'll come back then...

(Andy nods and Antonio leaves)

SCENE VIII: “BORRA UNA LAGRIMA DE PENA AQUEL CANTAR” (WASH AWAY THOSE TEARS WITH A MEMORY)

(Andy appears to be writing in his charts. Gardel passed by him, dancing funnily to get his attention. For a moment, Andy looks in Gardel’s direction but clearly doesn’t see him.)

Andy: *(talking to himself, in an inquisitive tone)* Who is Carlos Gardel? Is he a part of our collective identity? What’s hidden behind the image of this icon? *(Andy begins to hum “Viejo smoking.” Gardel joins in)* Did he dedicate this song to his *abuela*, or perhaps to some *tía* who was in love with him?... And there, in her house, on top of the sewing machine, a huge frame of Gardel smiling, a fedora shading the rest of his face in a shroud of irresistible mystery... But men were never jealous of Gardel, no, they simply wanted to be like him. What is it like to be Gardel, to be so impossibly perfect? After all, the gods aren’t envied. They’re incorruptible beings, far removed from the throes of man’s misery.

(slowly) Is Gardel a collective myth?

(standing up and putting on his theater voice, preparing to give a dramatic soliloquy)

What we were, for a moment, and what we are no more.
Is it finally time to settle the score?
A smile that flirts with death, a god amongst men.
And so he escapes oblivion again and again.
But this time there’s a different side to the story.
A version where Gardel doesn’t get all the glory.
Instead filled with Le Pera’s bitter discontent.
Finally what I’ve searched for appears in a patient.
Antonio is just the middleman under a spell...
Because, in the end, it’s always about Gardel.

(He laughs sarcastically and returns to talking normally) Ha! How pathetic. Only a loser like me gets the appeal of an even bigger loser. Who chooses to delude himself into thinking he’s the shadow? What if we’re all just like Le Pera, yearning for the spotlight? Or perhaps we have the story completely wrong. Is it better to be Le Pera? To be a romantic, a dreamer....

(Gardel retreats. The music turns off slowly. Andy is silent and thoughtful.)

(They project images of Gardel, and a background arrangement of the theme “Soledad” comes on. The images are combined with records from December 2001. After a few moments, the projection stops.)

SCENE IX: “EN CARAVANA LOS RECUERDOS PASAN” (THE PROCESSION OF PAST MEMORIES)

(The stage lights illuminate. Angela and Andy are seated across from each other at his desk.)

Angela: And you think this will work?

Andy: I’ve reviewed all the existing literature, and I’ve come to the conclusion that Antonio is suffering from a stress-induced psychosis. It’s a type of acute stress reaction where the patient rebuilds his identity around an alternate persona; in this case, Le Pera. And because he truly believes himself to be Alfredo, Antonio is able to dive into parts of his psyche he couldn’t access before. I believe the best course of action is shock therapy. Don’t fret, Angela, not the electrical kind. This would involve intentionally provoking his dissociative state as a form of treatment. I would like you to sit in on today’s session, but it’s vital you don’t intervene unless I directly ask you to do so...

Angela: If that’s what you think is best ... and if it will end this madness. I just need it to stop.

Andy: I need you to be strong, Angela. Now that we have a better idea of what we’re dealing with, our priority is to shock Antonio out of his delusion. I’ll need you to help him remember why he’s needed in this reality. But, remember only when I tell you.

Angela: Ok... *(stands up and calls out)* Antonio... Antonio, come here...

(Antonio enters)

Antonio: *(in reproach to Angela who has fallen silent)* I’ve told you a million times, my name is not Antonio. My name is Alfredo.

Andy: *(cordially)* Sit, please... *(Antonio takes his seat, Angela looks around for another chair and scooches it to the desk)* Let’s suppose for a moment that you are Alfredo...

Antonio: But, I am Alfredo... My name is Alfredo Le Pera...

Andy: Ok, Alfredo. I’ve heard quite a bit about you, that you’re quite the talented dreamer. I’d like you to imagine just for a moment that you are not Alfredo. I’m going to tell you a story, and I want you to picture yourself as the main character. Ready to begin? *(Antonio hesitates but eventually nods)* You met Angela dancing. She was at the *discoteca* with her friends. You had a different girlfriend at the time, but you knew Angela was the one. You fell in love.

Antonio: Those deep blue eyes, like an endless ocean...

Andy: *(he takes some pictures out of his folder)* This was the day of your wedding... and see this is from when you started to build your house together, little by little. And here’s another one with your factory mates....

Antonio: Factory? What factory? (*Andy looks quizzically at Angela*)

Angela: Yes, your friends from the factory. Look, that's Rodriguez, and Gonzalez, remember, they came to help you...

(The lights cut out, the blackout lasting a second, then the lights turn back on)

Antonio: But, Carlos started to change. The more his fame grew, the less he seemed to care about his friends. He was self-absorbed, only interested in his brand and the money that came with it. It didn't feel like we were making music to change the world anymore. I was just another cog in the machine, mindlessly churning out hits ...

(The lights cut out for a few seconds, then turn back on)

Andy: This was taken after your second son was born ... and this one's from a potluck with your neighbors ... This was your 40th birthday... Look, here's when you renovated part of the house, added a couple more rooms... And here, (*pointing*) that's your eldest kicking the ball and your youngest in Angela's arms...

(The lights cut out for a few seconds, then turn back on)

Antonio: And then he decides to tour Latin America, so he can capitalize on the markets there. He knew the crowds would gather in his wake... You couldn't miss Saint Gardel coming to your city.

(The lights cut out for a few seconds, then turn back on)

Angela: I never told you about the guilt I've carried since we opened the bodega. Neither of us knew how to run a market, and what happened wasn't your fault. How could it be that you, who knew how to do everything, could no longer work? You loved that factory even though it ate away at your soul. I remember when you came home one night, crying because they had fired your friends, and you were scared you'd be next. I reassured you, I told you that you were being ridiculous, that they would never fire such a hard worker, that nothing would happen to you. Then I watched as you slowly turned bitter. You became a stranger, so far from the man I fell in love with. I insisted on that damn bodega, but it wasn't right for us. I shouldn't have pushed it on you.

(The lights cut out for a few seconds, then turn back on)

Antonio: I wanted nothing to do with it. I was just a songwriter who wanted to be like Amado Nervo. I wanted to write lyrics that made Carlos shine. Touring was never in the cards for me. But of course, I went wherever Carlos went. He needed me to keep writing songs, to saturate the markets so other singers couldn't swoop in and steal what belonged to him. I never cared for fame or money. I only cared about Gardel... I mean that voice of his... and when he sang my lyrics. He was a legend ... until the day our plane crashed...

(The lights cut out for a few seconds, then turn back on)

Andy: Your name is Antonio Navarro. You are 45 years old. You worked for more than 20 years in a factory, but now you are unemployed. You have three children. Three boys to be exact.

Angela: I need you to be that Antonio again. I need you to come back.

(The lights cut out for a few seconds, then turn back on)

Antonio: The day of the crash, I met with Carlos... *(Gardel enters the plane as a choir of angels starts singing "Rubias de New York," which only Antonio can hear. At that moment, Antonio stands up from his seat to Andy and Angela's surprise. He heads towards Gardel. The choir of angels ceases)*

Gardel: Alfredo, you need to calm down. We can talk this out ... just calm down...

Antonio: I told you I needed to talk to you, that it couldn't wait. I work nonstop, and for what? I don't reap any of the rewards! I'm not your partner, I'm your glorified punching bag.

(The lights begin to turn on and off, each blackout lasting five seconds. The movements of Gardel and Antonio across the stage are clearly violent. The effect seems to be flashing freeze-frames, as if you were looking at a slide of photographs)

(You start to hear a recording of Gardel's voice)

Gardel: "My dearest friends, *mi gente y mi familia*, I am overjoyed to announce my exclusive contract with Casa Victor. Not only does this mean I am blessed to make more music for you all, but it is my absolute pleasure to announce I have just finished two new films for Paramount Pictures, "El Día que Me Quieras" and "Tango Bar." But wait! It gets even better. At the start of the new year, I'll be kicking off my tour in Puerto Rico, then Venezuela, Colombia, Panamá, Cuba and México. Don't worry, *mi familia*, Carlos Gardel will be coming to a city near you! And I hope to have the honor of meeting each and every one of you."

(Throughout the course of that recording, Gardel and Antonio argue with prominent and exaggerated gestures. Their movements look robotic and surreal. Suddenly, Antonio pulls out a gun. The voice of Gardel's message ends.)

(A gunshot sounds, Gardel looks behind him as if Antonio had missed. Someone else in the background shouts. You hear the plane accelerating on its way to crash. Antonio fires a second shot. Gardel falls before Antonio who seems too in shock to realize what's happened.)

(CUT TO BLACK)

(Sounds of a plane crash and explosion. When the stage lights come back on, Gardel is no longer there, and Antonio is once again seated in front of Andy and Angela)

Angela: Don't you realize it's all a fantasy?

Antonio: I killed Gardel... I had to. I had to bring him back to earth. They made him immortal, so I had to kill him.

Angela: But, Antonio, if you were really there, where are your scars from this accident? *(Antonio examines himself)* And how do you explain these, on your hands, hmm? These calluses you have from working so much? *(She takes his hands in hers, taking one, then the other, to verify the existence of said calluses)* These are the hands of a factory man, a man who has worked all his life. Where are you, Antonio? I need you to come back. Come back to us. *(Antonio looks at her submissively, as if he can't appease her).* Dr. Sheckman, please *(she looks at Andy who is perplexed)* Remind him who he is. Your name is Antonio. You are 45 years old.

(Andy gets up and leaves)

(Lights turn off)

SCENE X: "NACE LA AURORA RESPLANDESCIENTE" (THE SHINING AURORA IS BORN)

(When the lights illuminate, Antonio and Angela sit back to back, their profiles facing the audience. Gardel enters and stands off to one side, his brightness creating a blinding white effect. Andy enters on the other side, situating himself with the rest of the audience. Each person speaks without addressing the other.)

Angela: He's recovering slowly but getting better each day. And soon everything will go back to the way it was... it has to.... *(“Volver” starts to play in the background)* Maybe they'll reopen the factory, and he can return to work. He'll feel proud of himself again, and he can do what he loves. And I'll wait for him every day with dinner ready on the table. And on Sundays, he'll grill steaks while I play with the kids. And at night he'll finally make love to me again. And we'll go back to watching our boys growing up so fast... and I swear, I'll never think of that damn bodega ever again... *(she remains dejected)*

Antonio: I look at myself in the mirror, and I know I can't be that same man. My old life is gone, what I once had, who I once was... But Angela is the most important thing in my life. She's the best thing that ever happened to me. So, next week I'll find work. I'm good with my hands, and I'm strong, and I never miss a shift, even when I'm sick... I'm capable, just like Angela says I am. When the factory reopens, I'll be the first one they'll call to come back. *“Navarro... You have to call Navarro,”* the owner will say. *“We can't move forward without Navarro.”* And Antonio Navarro will be a factory man once again... I'll never have to worry about a paycheck at the end of the month... *(laughing to himself)* But every now and then I'll get this hollow feeling, right here in my chest... and I'll think about the name Le Pera which I can't quite seem to place... the shadow behind the smile... *(remains silent, reflective)*

Gardel: *(he speaks looking off into the distance, you can hear the chorus of angels singing behind him)* Hombre, I'll admit, sometimes it gets lonely ... eternal youth. It's fun for a while, mocking death, until it feels like you're more dead than alive because death is a lie... Am I Uruguayan, Argentine, or French? How did I die? Did I have a girlfriend? Did I not?... What does any of it matter in the end?... I'm just a smile, part of the collective myth. I'm your teenage hearththrob, the one your *abuela* declared she was in love with... I am who everyone wants to be, what they could have been and weren't... The one whose voice is all over the radio... Morocco and Argentina, king of Paris... Eternally smiling... Eternally lonely, like all the other angels, saints, and idols... At least every day I sing better... Who do I think I am?... I'm Carlos Gardel... *(he remains with a haughty smile, presumptuous, with a gesture full of vanity, like a statue).*

Andy: *(addressing the public)* My name is Dr. Andrés Moisés Sheckman, psychiatrist. I've just posed a dilemma that may cost my career, my credibility, perhaps even my closest friends. And why? Did we just hear the guilty admission of the murderer who killed the beloved Gardel? Did Le Pera really do it? What do we really know about Gardel anyway? Do we all want to be like Gardel? Or do we want to be like Le Pera?... Who do we want to be?...

(Stays silent, looks insistently at the audience) Was this psychosis or was it possession? Why do I keep putting my reputation on the line by entertaining this...whatever this is? After all, who am I to bear false witness against one of God's heavenly saints? *(Silence)*

(Andy steps back, Antonio and Angela turn to face the public, Gardel leaves his statue position and looks at the audience without smiling)

(Andy looks the audience in the eye) Now that you've heard the whole story, well, what do you think?

(there is a repeated echo of that phrase as the lights slowly go down until it's all dark)

(CURTAIN DROP)

Traducir la sonrisa, reinventar la sombra:

Legados culturales y traducción colaborativa en *La sombra tras la sonrisa*

Presented by

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¿POR QUÉ EL TEATRO?

“Was this psychosis, or was it possession? Why do I keep putting my reputation on the line by entertaining this...whatever this is? Who am I to bear false witness against one of God’s heavenly saints? And now that you’ve heard the whole story, well, what do you think?” Esas preguntas me desconcertaban mientras que traducía *La sombra tras la sonrisa*. Esa capacidad de dialogar con el público es uno de los aspectos más poderosos del teatro, lo que me atrajo a elegir una obra de teatro para mi tesis. A diferencia de otras formas literarias, me fascinaba el aspecto de crear algo que evoca preguntas y obliga a los espectadores a desentrañar el significado después de ver la obra. Además, el énfasis del metateatro en esta obra permitió que yo como traductora, junto con los actores, directores, y espectadores, pudiéramos preguntar cómo definimos la realidad dentro de un ambiente específico sociocultural.

¿QUIÉN ES RUBÉN MOSQUERA? ¿Y POR QUÉ ESTE TEXTO?

Rubén Mosquera es un dramaturgo argentino que ha tenido un impacto significativo en el teatro independiente. Más conocido por sus obras que exploran la memoria histórica, *La sombra tras la sonrisa* es la primera obra que Rubén puso en escena y sirve como un ejemplo clave en cómo Mosquera manipula el teatro como un espacio para reflexión y entendimiento colectivo de la realidad. La obra fue inspirada por una anécdota que escuchó por la bisabuela de su amigo e incluye algunas referencias personales que refleja la crisis económica argentina y las experiencias de su padre que trabajaba en una fábrica. Al entrevistar a Rubén, yo también aprendí que durante gran parte de su niñez, Mosquera escuchaba los tangos de Gardel y lo entendía como un ícono. Pero cuando tenía siete años, esa bisabuela dijo a Rubén que ella había conocido a Gardel personalmente porque vivió en el mismo barrio, el Abasto, y ella introdujo la historia de que Gardel era un hombre corrupto y egoísta. Ese fue el momento que desató el

interés de Rubén en esa historia y su investigación sobre la sombra detrás de Gardel, Alfredo Le Pera, lo que al final resultó en *La sombra tras la sonrisa*.

Centrado en el icono que era Carlos Gardel, el cantante argentino más famoso del siglo XX, esta obra interroga los legados culturales y el costo de preservarlos. Para aquellos que no están familiarizados con Carlos Gardel y su prestigio (como yo antes de traducir este texto), es posible que su legado parezca como algo merecido por su talento y carisma. Pero al investigar más en esta historia, se revela cómo el legado es selectivo. Este texto requiere que el espectador cuestiona a la persona detrás de los ídolos, para mirar más allá de la fascinación y la fama. Aquí, Rubén Mosquera subraya la historia de Alfredo Le Pera, un talentoso letrista cuyas contribuciones a menudo fueron eclipsadas. Al contar la historia de Le Pera por la posesión de Antonio y sus conversaciones con su psicoterapeuta, Mosquera plantea cuestiones sobre la autoría y el reconocimiento. A primera vista, se parece un poco contradictorio al encontrar una obra con fantasmas mezclados con el mundo objetivo de medicina y las ciencias naturales. *La sombra tras la sonrisa* me llamó la atención porque me veo mucho a mí misma en este texto. Como una estudiante interesada en la medicina y al mismo tiempo apasionada por las humanidades y el español, esta intersección de realidades que parecen inconsistentes funciona como un espejo de mis propios intereses. Al traducir esta obra, también quería priorizar las voces literarias que a menudo eran no detectadas, algo que también puede reflejar mi propia relación como una traductora y la metatraducción. Esta traducción no sólo destaca las voces silenciadas sino que también invita a los espectadores a reconsiderar cómo construimos los iconos culturales. De este modo, esta obra de teatro motiva a los espectadores a confrontar la ambigüedad y llegar a sus propias conclusiones sobre el legado cultural, un tema que supera barreras lingüísticas y culturales a través de mi traducción.

LOS DESAFÍOS UNIVERSALES DE LA TRADUCCIÓN Y LOS DEL TEATRO

Es crucial entender los desafíos fundamentales de la traducción, así como aquellos que son específicos a la traducción del teatro. Venuti describe uno de estos obstáculos universales en su libro, *The Translator's Invisibility*, al explorar la dicotomía entre “domestication” y “foreignization.” Él define “domestication” como el proceso de reducir un texto al eliminar las referencias culturales extranjeras para que el texto se alinee mejor con los valores de la cultura del idioma objetivo. Por otro lado, “foreignization” es el proceso de intentar que el lector entienda las referencias culturales y lingüísticas del idioma extranjero. Aunque “domestication” ofrece más acceso al texto, hay riesgos de reducir los estilos e intentos originales del autor. Por otro lado, “foreignization” que protege las alusiones culturales puede ser incomprensible con un público no familiarizado con el sujeto específico. Esta dicotomía subraya cómo el traductor inevitablemente tiene que tomar decisiones sobre ciertos aspectos lingüísticos, sociales, culturales, o ideológicos del texto y lidiar la discordancia entre una traducción y el texto fuente (Venuti). Sandra Berman también describe que la traducción no es una réplica estática del original, explicando “Translation is not merely the interpretation that a translator performs on a literary or social script. Rather, translation itself – and particularly its encounter with otherness – becomes a model for ethical and political action. In this sense, ‘performing translation’ allegorizes an ethical, and politically effective, comportment” (Berman, 293). Así, el traductor no sólo tiene que navegar esta contradicción entre la fidelidad y la originalidad sino también asegurar que su traducción lleva un impacto consciente y ético en sus recipientes.

Además de los desafíos generales de la traducción, también hay obstáculos específicos que pertenecen al género del teatro. Susan Bassnett describe uno de estos desafíos al decir que “since the play text is written for voices, the literary text contains also a set of paralinguistic

systems, where pitch, intonation, speed of delivery, accent, etc. are all signifiers. In addition...it is not only the context but also the coded gestural patterning within the language itself that contributes to the actor's work" (Bassnett, 139). De una manera diferente que la prosa u otro texto literario, hay muchos niveles en una obra de teatro que el traductor tiene que resolver como las acotaciones, las partes que incluye explícitamente en el guión y otras partes que deja a la interpretación del director y los actores. Fernando Poyatos construye sobre esta idea al decir "in the theater and the cinema there is something even more complex than in the novel which provokes that plurality... the possible multiplicity of versions according to different performers. One thing is for each reader to recreate a character according to his own sensitiveness [when reading a literary translation], and another is when another person, the actor, imposes on the spectators his particular personal recreation" (Poyatos, 142). Esta multiplicidad refleja el desafío de un objetivo en movimiento y cómo el traductor puede obtener una traducción exitosa si cada vez que la pone en escena resultará un espectáculo diferente.

MI PROCESO DE ENFRENTAR EL TEXTO

En mi primer paso, leí el texto completo en español para entenderlo en su totalidad. Después, elaboré mi primer borrador, lo que resultó en una traducción muy literal y de poca fluidez. Mientras que yo traducía el texto por primera vez al español a inglés, también anotaba palabras y referencias culturales desconocidas. Al marcar estas palabras, podía investigar cada de los nombres desconocidos como Magaldi y Corsini para que pudiera hacer comparaciones modernas a esas figuras culturales en mis borradores subsiguientes. Mi investigación también ha incluido mirar las películas de Gardel y escuchar su música. No fue hasta que vi algunas de las películas de Gardel como *Tango Bar* cuando me di cuenta de que todos los títulos de las escenas eran las letras de Alfredo Le Pera. Esta comprensión resultó en mi decisión de quedar todos los

títulos en el español original, acompañados con la traducción del título en inglés para rendir tributo a Le Pera. También, al escuchar la canción “Por una cabeza,” me di cuenta de que la había oído antes pero nunca había conectado que era Gardel. Así, las investigaciones de mirar algunas películas y escuchar sus tangos eran muy beneficioso para clarificar algunas partes de la obra y entender mejor la atracción y carisma del Gardel desde mis propios ojos. De una manera completamente por accidente, también leí algunos libros que trataban de temas similares. Un libro que se llama *The Silent Patient* por Alex Michaelides está escrito desde la perspectiva de un psicoterapeuta, algo que fue muy provechoso para que yo captara el tono elevado y formal de un psicólogo profesional. También, terminé *Yellow Face*, un libro por R.F. Kuang que se enfoca en el éxito de una autora que robó las palabras de otra persona, una historia muy similar a Gardel y Le Pera. Al consumir este contenido y hacer estas investigaciones, podía entender mejor el tono y las perspectivas de los personajes en mi traducción.

MI MÉTODO DE LAS 3 C’S

La creatividad

Yo abordaba este texto al priorizar la legibilidad para mi audiencia mientras consideraba también la fidelidad al texto original. Una de las técnicas que yo empleaba mucho era cortar algunas partes de poco interés y sustituir con algo más creativo y cautivador para el público. Un ejemplo de eso ocurre en la tercera escena cuando Andy habla sobre su descontento con la medicina. El original dice:

“Pero de medicina, nada: enseguida me atrapó la política... o mejor dicho, las piernas de una pelirroja trotskista. Rápido tuvimos diferencias con la línea oficial y fundamos una célula guevarista-maoísta en Villa Crespo. Después de empatar siete votaciones, me eligieron secretario general, y a ella de organización. Supuse que era lógico: jugaba de armadora en el equipo de vóley del Scholem...”

En mi traducción, he cambiado este párrafo a:

“But, truthfully, medicine made me feel numb, like a shot of novacaine. And the politics of it all, suffocating. I knew it wasn't my calling, not like the theatre.”

Aquí, yo elegí eliminar detalles como “la célula guevarista-maoísta” que no parecen relevantes al público. En lugar de eso, me enfoco más en el sentimiento de estar insatisfecho con la medicina, añadiendo mi propia referencia a una inyección de novocaína para destacar su falta de pasión.

Otra cosa que me importaba cuando traducía era incorporar el humor. Un ejemplo que subraya mi uso de libertad creativa está en la quinta escena cuando Antonio dice:

“Ah. Vio... escribían tangos... No los conozco, será que los tangos de ellos no se los cantó Gardel... Fíjese lo que hace Carlos con las cosas Discépolo dice lo mismo que sus ídolos y yo a Discépolo lo conozco. Dígales que le pasen un par de tangos a Carlitos que él se los canta y los hace famosos, imagínese que hablar de que los tipos que no pueden levantarse de la catrera tiene que ver con un amor no correspondido, aunque ya hay un montón de tangos igual vende cualquier cantidad.”

En mi traducción, lo cambié a:

“So, they wrote tangos. You could've just said that. I'm not familiar with their work, I suppose Gardel never sang their songs ... In any case, it's all the same. You should tell those guys, what were their names, Max and Fred? They should pass some of their work off to dear Carlitos. If Carlos sings it, it'll be an overnight sensation. Tell them their faces will be on billboards all over, their names heard on every radio station. Just imagine (putting on the voice of a radio announcer): "Me cortaste la cara, an original by Gardel and Fred" or "Up next, the song we have on repeat: Te espantaste con otro by none other than Gardel and Max.”

Este cambio de equivocarse los nombres de Marx y Freud era una elección explícita, lo que no existía en el original. Quería añadir este aspecto para generar una oportunidad para que el público se pudiera reír. Mientras que la mayoría del mundo conoce a Karl Marx y a Sigmund Freud, este error añade una pequeña broma y destaca cómo Antonio está desconectado de la realidad.

Además, era importante usar la creatividad con algunas referencias de la música. En el texto original dice que: “No sabía lo que era una corchea, y para él una negra era la esposa de un negro.” Aquí, había un juego de palabras que sólo tenía sentido en español con la negra (an eighth note) y la esposa de un negro. Yo afrontaba este desafío de no enfocarme en las palabras exactas. En lugar de eso, yo escribí algo similar al decir, “He thought half rests were cute little hats on the page, and don’t get me started on the codas.” Aquí, esta frase lleva el mismo impacto que Gardel no sabía nada sobre el proceso de escribir música aunque la referencia era completamente cambiada.

El ejemplo final que quería incluir es la creatividad a través de la poesía. Con mis experiencias de traducir una variedad de obras en “SPAN 4040: Lost and Found in Translation,” me interesaban mucho la poesía y el teatro. Yo incorporé un poco de poesía en mi obra porque al leer esta escena por primera vez, pensaba que el original suena un poco aburrido. El original dice:

“Omnipresente. Todo sonrisa. Siempre joven.
 Lo que fuimos, por un instante, y ya no somos.
 ¿Será nuestro testimonio del dolor de ya no ser?
 Una sonrisa que embelesa a la muerte. Que la engaña.
 Y así esquiva el olvido... para seguir rondando.
 Incluso para alguien como yo, que lo ignoré, que lo deteste.
 Y ahora se me aparece, como un espejismo, en un paciente.
 Antonio es apenas el medio. Porque siempre, en realidad, se trata de él... de Gardel.”

Al capturar este sentido de reflexión, pero de una manera más dramática, yo escribí mi propio soliloquio:

“What we were, for a moment, and what we are no more.
 Is it finally time to settle the score?
 A smile that flirts with death, a god amongst men.
 And so he escapes oblivion again and again.
 But this time there’s a different side to the story.
 A version where Gardel doesn’t get all the glory.”

Instead filled with Le Pera's bitter discontent.
 Finally what I've searched for appears in a patient.
 Antonio is just the middleman under a spell...
 Because, in the end, it's always about Gardel."

Aquí, el soliloquio con su rima destaca la reflexión de Andy con más pasión y énfasis. Aunque no traducía las palabras exactas del original, las ideas fundamentales fueron capturadas en la forma de poesía.

El continuo de transformación

Además de la creatividad, una técnica clave de mi estilo de traducción era el continuo de transformación con las referencias culturales. Por ejemplo, Rubén escribe en el original: "En vez de imaginarse el goleador, alucina ser el que le alcanza la pelota." Inicialmente lo cambié a: "It's like if you were a soccer player in the finals of the World Cup and instead of imagining yourself as the one to score the game-winning goal, you can only dream of touching the ball." Mis primeros intentos resultaron en una traducción muy literal, y eventualmente yo giré completamente fuera de la metáfora del fútbol porque no pensé que describiera bien este sentido de mantener las expectativas tan bajas. El producto final lee: "It's like dressing up as Robin for Halloween when you can be Batman." Mientras que no había ninguna referencia a Batman en el original, tuve que separarme del texto. Aquí, el continuo de transformación subraya cómo era crucial establecer puentes entre culturas para que tuviera sentido con el público de hablantes de inglés. Otro ejemplo de este continuo de transformación ocurre con las referencias a personas famosas. Las figuras como Corsini, Magaldi, Amado Nervo y aún con el personaje principal de Gardel no eran familiares para mí, y tenía que establecer referencias musicales más anchas. Por ejemplo, para capturar el magnetismo de Gardel, yo hice una referencia a James Bond y otros músicos famosos en que yo escribí: "I mean, Gardel, he was like the Elvis of Argentina. No, I take that back, think bigger. Bigger than Michael Jackson, Frank Sinatra, Elton John, Freddie

Mercury.” En otros borradores, yo hice referencias a otros cantantes más recientes como Harry Styles, pero eran demasiado modernos para la época de Gardel. Así, la evolución de diferentes referencias culturales era importante para establecer el prestigio de Gardel con figuras relevantes de la época apropiada.

La colaboración

La realidad es que mi traducción no habría tenido éxito sin la colaboración con otros. Además de las reuniones semanales con la Profesora Cobb, mi consejera del DMP, también era muy útil colaborar con el dramaturgo original. Al entrevistar a Rubén y entender sus motivaciones, también yo podía clarificar y discutir algunas partes confusas del texto. Por ejemplo, había una referencia a las hermanas de Fontana. Y cuando busqué en internet no pude entender si había un barrio en Argentina, otra figura famosa, u otra referencia desconocida en total. Después de discutir con mi consejera, yo también consulté a Rubén para entender mejor esta parte de las hermanas de Fontana, en que él me dijo que era una conexión de incorporar algunas letras de Le Pera en las líneas de Antonio.

Además de consultar a mi consejera y el autor, yo compartí mi traducción a un público pequeño por el grupo de Portavoz y después al departamento de teatro en UVA. La colaboración con grupos que no tenían familiaridad con la obra era muy provechoso porque podía escuchar reacciones desde perspectivas más lejos del material. En el grupo de Portavoz, yo escuchaba a otros miembros del colectivo que leían el texto de una manera diferente que yo. Podía prestar atención a partes incómodas o forzadas, cambiando la traducción para que suene más fluida y natural. Además, la colaboración con el departamento de teatro en UVA y la oportunidad de escuchar a actores profesionales que leían mi traducción era una experiencia extremadamente gratificante y también beneficioso al escuchar sus comentarios. Por ejemplo, me gustaba

entender cómo este grupo de actores confirmaba algunas de mis elecciones como el tono más formal del psicólogo y la conversación más casual entre Antonio y Angela. También, algunos de los comentarios me llamaron la atención sobre unas referencias forzadas como la referencia de *Coco*. Esta película comparte muchas similitudes con *La sombra tras la sonrisa*, pero no resonaba bien porque era tan moderna en comparación con mis otras referencias culturales, algo que yo no me di cuenta antes de la lectura. Porque estaba demasiado cerca del texto, era provechoso que otros que no estaban familiarizados con el trabajo pudieran señalar esas irregularidades.

CONCLUSIÓN

A través de mi trabajo en *La sombra tras la sonrisa*, he mostrado cómo la traducción puede desafiar las narrativas dominantes del legado cultural al hacer espacio para voces marginadas. Además, mis métodos usando la creatividad, las referencias culturales en evolución, y la colaboración resultaba en una traducción exitosa a pesar de los obstáculos de traducir el teatro. Mi traducción, entonces, se convierte en un espacio para el diálogo, uno que no sólo conecta los idiomas sino que también fomenta una reflexión más profunda a través de las fronteras culturales.

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