

FADE IN

Thunder is heard in the distance. Rainfall begins to make its presence known. Slowly it builds and then it fades.

MUSIC BEGINS - "**Tango In The Dark Theme**"

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - NIGHT - MIDNIGHT

Several lights go out as Buenos Aires begins to go off to sleep.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

It's dark, deserted streets have been washed down by an earlier storm as it silently waits for an incoming blanket of fog to tuck it in for the night.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A police car carries its occupants from left to right.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

A lone figure, from across the street, steps out of the dark and into the dim light.

SLOW DOLLY IN

He is quietly dressed in a dark charcoal gray fedora hat and overcoat. His face is covered in shadow and dark thoughts.

He strikes a match to light his cigarette. He takes a long drag and exhales slowly.

He holds the match next to his wrist and illuminates his watch.

CLOSE-UP

It is now just after midnight.

CLOSE-UP

He blows out the match. He tosses the cigarette away.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

He runs down an alley. A revealing light, from a nearby street lamp, shows that his shadow on the wall is not far behind.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

LONG SHOT

He carefully maneuvers his way across the soak stained cobblestones. The sounds of his shoes echo throughout the city.

EXT. STREET LAMP - NIGHT

His labored strides begin to slow down as he nears the light. He is breathing heavily and stops to catch his breath.

MEDIUM SHOT

He pulls a handkerchief out of his pocket and wipes his well defined face. Then he pulls out an object from his neatly pressed coat.

CLOSE-UP

A shiny blade is exposed. He wipes the blood off with his handkerchief. His dark, brown eyes are seen in the reflection.

MEDIUM SHOT

He raises his face but the brim of his fedora keeps his identity a secret for now. He looks around for any spectators but sees only lonely streets.

CLOSE-UP

The blade of the knife is carefully closed and placed back into his suit pocket. Then, he carefully folds the soiled handkerchief into squares and places that into his other pocket.

EXT. SIGN - NIGHT

A bright neon sign captures his attention.

IT READS: TANGO IN THE DARK

MEDIUM SHOT

He walks towards the cafe like a moth to a flame.

EXT. CAFE - NIGHT

The cafe's spicy aromas invite its participants to enter. Over in the corner two men from the neighborhood have been spending their time solving their own problems over a chessboard and a cheap cortado.

EXT. CAFE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

He is about to go in, but stops for a moment. He pauses to straighten his tie and his feelings of doubt and fear.

MUSIC ENDS

MUSIC BEGINS - **"Tango Latino"**

INT. CAFE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

He opens the door and steps forward. He removes his hat and coat. Several female eyes follow **CARLOS DE LA VEGA**, thirty, as he makes his way through the cafe. Its dark, moody atmosphere matches his personality.

INT. CAFE DINING AREA - NIGHT

He finds a dark corner and eases his exhausted body into the leather booth.

MUSIC ENDS

The crowd begins to applaud. He looks at the stage and notices the world famous bandoneon performer and his band are leaving the stage to take a break. His mind begins to wander. A **WAITER** approaches him.

WAITER

Hello.

Carlos quickly turns and stares at the waiter. He is embarrassed and tries to respond but the words and thoughts don't come quickly.

CARLOS

Oh! Hello.

WAITER

Would you like a menu?

CARLOS

No, I'll just have something that'll help me forget.

WAITER

I'm sorry?

Carlos shakes his head and sadly smiles.

CARLOS

Just bring me your finest whisky.

WAITER

Yes, sir.

The waiter turns to leave, but stops as Carlos speaks.

CARLOS
Make it a strong one.

WAITER
Very good, sir.

The waiter turns and leaves. Carlos once again returns to a place from the distant past. It has been almost ten years since his heart, mind and soul was touched by an angel. Her face. Her voice. Her style and grace. His first love.

MUSIC BEGINS - "**Marlena**"

FLASHBACK BEGINS

MONTAGE BEGINS

SLOW DISSOLVE TO

EXT. CHURCH - DAY - NOON

SLOW DOLLY BACKWARDS TO REVEAL CARLOS

Carlos stops, for a moment, on the steps leading up to the church.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Carlos enters and walks down the middle aisle of the church.

CLOSE-UP

Carlos, twenty, stops and sees the most beautiful girl he has ever seen.

CLOSE-UP

MARLENA DIAZ, twenty, walks into the church from a side entrance with her family. They are running late. They quickly find their pew and kneel down.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. CHURCH COURTYARD - DAY - AFTERNOON

Carlos enters through a large wooden door. He looks for her amongst the crowd. He hears laughter and turns to look to his left. She is standing there. She is laughing and talking to her friends.

CLOSE-UP OF MARLENA

She senses that someone is looking at her. She turns to her left. She locks eyes with Carlos. She looks away briefly, but looks back at him again. She slowly smiles.

CLOSE-UP OF CARLOS

He returns the smile.

MEDIUM SHOT

He begins to walk towards her. She is hesitant at first, but begins to walk towards him.

CLOSE-UP OF CARLOS AND MARLENA

They meet face to face.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

OVERHEAD SHOT

Carlos and Marlana are doing a tango waltz in the middle of the ballroom floor. They cross in a diagonal pattern from left to right.

LOW ANGLE

DOLLY BACKWARDS

WE FOLLOW THE COUPLE THROUGH A SERIES OF GRACEFUL TRACKING SHOTS

Carlos and Marlana waltz behind the first marble pillar. They are hidden for a moment.

As they reemerge from the pillar, they are seen in another set of clothes. Her hairstyle has changed. They continue towards the second pillar.

They disappear, for a moment. Then, they reappear and are seen in another set of clothes. She has another hairstyle.

They continue to waltz past the third pillar. On the other side of the pillar, her hair and their wardrobe has changed once more. Her long flowing gown sweeps by.

THIS MOVEMENT REFLECTS SEVERAL PASSAGES OF TIME IN THEIR COURTSHIP

SOFT DISSOLVE TO

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Carlos and Marlana are dining in an elegant restaurant. They have barely touched their meal. They are engrossed in conversation and cannot take their eyes off each other.

CLOSE-UP OF MARLENA'S RIGHT BLACK SILK STOCKING FOOT SLIPPING OUT OF HER SHOE.

SHE BEGINS TO RUB CARLOS' LEFT CALF WITH HER FOOT. CARLOS BEGINS TO SMILE. MARLENA RETURNS THE SMILE.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

They begin to make love for the first time.

MEDIUM SHOT

They stop, for a moment, and look deeply into each other's eyes.

CLOSE-UP OF CARLOS AND MARLENA

They kiss long and passionately.

MONTAGE ENDS

MUSIC ENDS

SLOW FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

DOLLY FORWARD

EXT. CHURCH COURTYARD CORRIDOR - DAY - AFTERNOON

Children run away and down the stairs. Pigeons begin to take flight.

EXT. CHURCH COURTYARD - DAY

The Diaz and de la Vega family have gathered to announce the engagement of Carlos and Marlena. The de la Vega family is originally from Madrid, Spain. They've recently relocated to Buenos Aires, Argentina. Carlos works as an officer of an international bank. His father, **LUIS DE LA VEGA**, is in his early fifties and soft spoken. He is the vice-president of the bank. His mother, **CLAUDIA**, is in her early forties and manipulative. She runs the house with an iron fist. Carlos is their only child. Marlena's family works in a clothing factory on the outskirts of town not far from their home. Her mother, **ELENA DIAZ**, is in her mid-thirties and caring. She tries to do as much as she can for her children. Life has been hard since their father, **MIGUEL**, suffered a fatal heart attack several years ago. Her brother, **JOSE**, is seven years old. He may be young but is protective and supportive of their dreams of a better life. The families and friends of the couple are engaged in small talk. Elena has joined her daughter. She gives her a hug and a kiss on the left cheek. Marlena does the same.

ELENA

Are you happy?

MARLENA

Very happy.

ELENA

Do you love him?

MARLENA

Very much, Mama.

ELENA

He seems to be a good man. Stable, secure. I feel that he will be a good husband ... and father.

They both smile. Their happiness is short lived and popped by a poison pin. Claudia has joined them.

CLAUDIA

So, tell me Marlena. What does your family do?

MARLENA

We work at a clothing factory.

CLAUDIA

I see. As you know, our family is in banking.

MARLENA

We are very proud of what we do.

CLAUDIA

I'm sure you are, my dear.

She looks at herself in the mirror and primps.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

You are very lucky to be marrying into a family like ours.

MARLENA

I love your son very much.

CLAUDIA

Yes. We'll let's be frank. Would you be interested in Carlos if he was poor?

Elena becomes flush in the face.

MARLENA

I love him for the person he is. He is kind and thoughtful ... considerate.

Marlena pauses, for a moment.

MARLENA (CONT'D)

There is more to life than material things.

CLAUDIA

Well, once you have tasted the good life ... you never want to go back.

Claudia looks around the courtyard. She sadly sighs.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I had always hoped ... that when the time came for Carlos to find a bride ... that he would marry someone from a noble family.

Elena reaches back and slaps Claudia in the face. There is silence in the courtyard.

MEDIUM SHOT

Carlos looks on in sadness. He walks over to Marlena. Marlena buries her face into his chest. She begins to cry. He places his arm around her shoulder and holds her tight. He tries to comfort her.

EXT. CHURCH COURTYARD - DAY

The celebration is over. The two sides begin to clear the buffet tables.

Carlos' family grabs their coats and hats.

Claudia and Luis leave the church courtyard quickly.

Carlos stays behind as Elena takes Marlena and Jose by the hand.

They exit through the large courtyard door. The door begins to close.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The front door is slammed closed by Carlos.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Luis and Claudia are in the living room. They both look up. Carlos storms in.

CARLOS

What was that all about?

CLAUDIA

Lower your voice. What will the maid think?

CARLOS

I could care less about what our
maid thinks right now!

LUIS

You're being disrespectful to your
mother.

Carlos ignores his father.

CARLOS

I'm trying to make you understand.

CLAUDIA

Oh, I do understand.

CARLOS

Do you?

There is no reply. He takes another breath and tries to
calm down.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

All you worry about is what everyone
will think.

CLAUDIA

Don't forget who you are and where
we came from.

CARLOS

Well, right now ... I'm a little
ashamed at who we are. What were
thinking? Why did you have to act
so rude towards her family?

Luis attempts to speak out.

LUIS

Now, son ...

CARLOS

Stay out of it, father!

Luis looks down. Carlos directs his anger towards his mother.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

You can't run my life anymore!

Carlos looks at her with disgust.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

I'm tired of how you manipulate
everyone. Control them.

CLAUDIA

That is not true! I'm only doing what is best for this family.

CARLOS

No! You're only doing what's best for you!

CLAUDIA

We have sacrificed everything for your education and your future. And all you want to do is throw it away for that low class girl.

Her remarks wound him. Carlos fights back tears.

CARLOS

I love her!

Claudia becomes sarcastic.

CLAUDIA

Of course, you do.

She pauses, for a moment.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

But you can do better. There are plenty of beautiful, well educated girls from good families back in Madrid.

CARLOS

Well, we are here in Buenos Aires.

There is a silence in the room.

CLAUDIA

Not anymore.

CARLOS

What are you talking about?

Luis speaks up.

LUIS

Your mother and I have discussed this. We are moving back to Madrid.

Carlos shakes his head in disbelief.

CARLOS

No. No! I won't go!