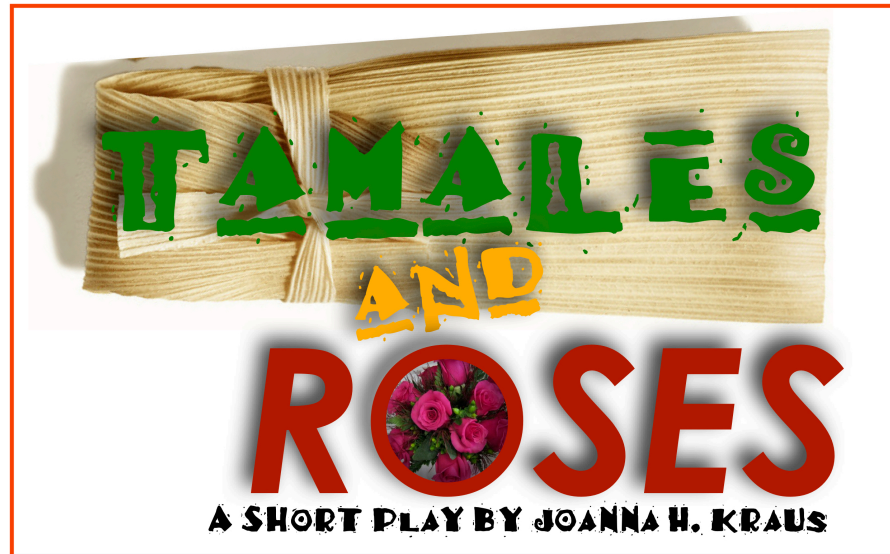


PERUSAL SCRIPT

(includes a Teaching/Activity Guide at the back)



with audience participation

Based on her book "A Night of Tamales and Roses"



Newport, Maine

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Tamales and Roses

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was reluctant when John Newman asked me to dramatize my book that was published several years ago by Shenanigan Books. His innovative and creative classroom exercises exploring the story's content ultimately persuaded me to write a participation play suitable for touring. It is thanks to John, the director, Teresa Dayley Love, and the talented company at Utah Valley University that the play came to fruition.

Also, the California Stage Company in Sacramento did an excellent staged reading under the direction of Ray Tatar, so I could polish the final version—and my Spanish.

Finally, it is thanks to Michael Perry at Leicester Bay Theatricals that the script is now published for you to enjoy.

The play's premiere was March 16, 2018 produced by Noorda Theatre Center for Children and Youth, directed by Teresa Dayley Love. The cast was as follows:

ANA LUISA — Kiana Zimmerman

ABUELITA — Carey Ventura

MAMÁ — Melissa Bonilla

PAPÁ — Jacob Thomason

SYLVIA — Abby Watts

EDUARDO — Logan Johnson

MUSICIAN — Coco Galli

SWING for MAMÁ/ SYLVIA — Rilyn Gardner

PLACE: a small town in northern California

TIME: the present

CHARACTERS

ANA LUISA — the flower girl, frequently day dreams, shy with strangers, age 7.

SYLVIA — the extremely nervous bride-to-be, 21.

ABUELITA (affectionate form) — their doting grandmother, 60.

MAMÁ — their mother, organized, devoted to her family, 40.

PAPÁ — their father, proud, portly, age 44.

EDUARDO — the groom-to-be, considerate, age 24.

WEDDING GUESTS (Volunteer Audience Members)

MUSICIAN(S)/NARRATOR

TAMALES & ROSES by Joanna Kraus 4W, 2M and one musician, either gender. When a flower girl gets stage fright and can't start the wedding procession, she's convinced no one will forgive her. But her Hispanic family demonstrates their understanding and unceasing love. The 30-minute bi-lingual participation play, adds music and dancing and is geared to a K-2 audience. It premiered at the Utah Valley University and toured area schools in 2018. **Order #3190**

Joanna H. Kraus is an award-winning playwright of twenty Theatre for Young Audiences produced/published plays, among them *The Ice Wolf* (Dramatic Publishing) and *Remember My Name* (Samuel French) both produced off-off Broadway. Picture books include *Tall Boy's Journey* (Carolrhoda/Lerner), *A Night of Tamales and Roses* (Shenanigan Books) *Blue Toboggan* (Mascot Books), *Bravo, Benny* (Mirror Publishing), and *Oh Little Ham of Buffalo, a Korean Adoption Memoir* done with her son, Tim. (Mirror Publishing.) She's written numerous media articles and for the past two decades reviewed children's books for the Bay Area News Group. Kraus is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI), the California Writers Club, the Dramatists Guild and is Professor Emerita of Theatre and former Coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Arts for Children program at the College at Brockport State University of New York. She's a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, holds an M.A. from UCLA and an Ed.D. from Columbia University. Originally from Portland, Maine she now lives in the San Francisco Bay area. Visit her website: www.joannakraus.com

PRODUCTION NOTES

Tamales And Roses can be performed either in theatre-in-the-round or on a proscenium arch stage. If you choose theatre-in-the-round see the optional opening speech, located at the end of the script, to explain the staging convention to a young audience.

A **Glossary** for the actors, provided in the back of the script, translates the simple Spanish words used throughout. However, the meanings are contextually clear for the audience.

Ana Luisa's daydreams and imagined fears can be accented with sound, lighting or family members' stylized choreography and vocal work.

Options re: wedding guests:

For a theatre-in-the-round performance, actors can interact with the children, who are seated on the floor surrounding the performance space, welcoming them to the wedding and later inviting them to join in the easy serpent line dance (See traditional folk song and dance at end of script.) At the conclusion actors escort children back to their seats.

For a proscenium arch production, projections or scrim could be used to suggest the crowd of guests. Then, when people buy tickets, ask if they would like to participate in the show on a given cue by an actor. At the conclusion performers escort participants back to their seats.

Or for a school performance a class and teacher could be designated to be the official wedding guests. Possibly the class might even learn the song and rehearse the dance beforehand, although the dance is so simple it isn't necessary. At the conclusion performers escort children offstage or back to their seats.

MUSIC FOR THE SONG: *A La Vibora de la Mar* appears at the back of the script.

TAMALES and ROSES

SCENE: the Ramirez modest home and garden. There is a carpet leading to the alter.

AT RISE: the stage is empty.

SOUND: Joyful Latino music

ACTORS playing instruments dance down the aisle through the audience and come onstage.

PAPÁ: A wedding!

MAMÁ: A wedding!

ANA LUISA: There's going to be a wedding.

ABUELITA: ¡Una boda!

EDUARDO: *Un casamiento.*

ANA LUISA: For my sister Sylvia and Eduardo.

(THEY come forward, whirl around once and bow to audience)

ANA LUSIA: *(cartwheels downstage or something equally exuberant.)* He'll be my brother.

EDUARDO: *(twirls her around)* And you'll be my favorite flower girl.

MAMÁ: And afterwards there'll be a party.

ABUELITA: *Sí, una fiesta.*

MAMÁ: With tamales

ANA LUISA: I'm going to help make them too. I love tamales.

SYLVIA: This is the story of a flower girl, who spends too much time daydreaming.

MAMÁ: Sometimes they are happy thoughts.

SOUND: a phrase of lively music.

PAPÁ: But sometimes they are not.

SOUND: crash of cymbals or menacing drum beats.

ANA LUISA: At the rehearsal, before the wedding, everyone said all I needed was a little more practice.

MAMÁ: But let us show you what happened.

SYLVIA: I wanted everything perfect. No disasters.

ANA LUISA: What's a disaster?

SYLVIA: When something terrible happens.

ANA LUISA: Like what?

SYLVIA: A flood. Or Eduardo forgets the ring.

EDUARDO: I won't.

SYLVIA: *(To ANA LUISA)* Or you make a mistake.

EDUARDO: She won't.

ANA LUISA: But what if I do?

EDUARDO: *(Teases)* Then you won't be my favorite flower girl.

SYLVIA: And you have to practice throwing the flower petals.

ANA LUISA: When do I pick them up?

SYLVIA: You don't. The carpet is supposed to be strewn with flowers for the bride.

ANA LUISA: Why?

SYLVIA: So Eduardo and I will have a sweet life. When the music starts, you start. Remember, the whole wedding procession depends on you.

PAPÁ: Ana Luisa won't disappoint us.

ANA LUISA: No, Papá.

ABUELITA: *(Shaking her head.) PERO...*

(ABUELITA exits to sewing room)

MAMÁ: But....but.....

PAPÁ: Wait.

MAMÁ: Watch.

(ACTORS freeze.)

LIGHTING: *dims.*

SOUND: *dream music. Note: Music or sound effects for ANA LUISA'S good and bad daydreams and the passage of time should be distinctly different. The wedding night music is primarily the traditional folk music indicated in the script.*

(As the good dream music starts, ANA LUISA sits under her favorite persimmon tree. In stylized movement and with regal grace, she rises with her basket and pretends that she is scattering rose petals. From various parts of the stage come the rest of the cast, also using highly stylized movement. They swirl around her.)

EDUARDO: Well done.

PAPÁ: I'm proud of you.

MAMÁ: What a pretty flower girl you'll be.

SYLVIA: I'm so glad that my own little sister will start the wedding.

ABUELITA: ¡Perfecto!

(Their smiles beam as THEY wave and exit.)

SOUND: *dream music stops and an irritated voice summons her.*

LIGHTING: *full*

MAMÁ: Ana Luisa. Hurry.

(Rushes to her daughter.)

Abuelita's waiting.

(Firmly guides her over to Abuelita's sewing room.)

This is no time for day dreaming. And be sure to apologize to your grandmother for being late.

(In the sewing room the wedding dresses in garment bags hang on a rack. ABUELITA kisses Ana Luisa's cheek.)

ABUELITA: *Hola, Chiquita.*

ANA LUISA: I'm sorry I'm late, Abuelita.

(ABUELITA waves apology aside.)

MAMÁ: We need to see if it fits you correctly.

ABUELITA: *(Gestures) Levanta los brazos. Chiquita.*

MAMÁ: Yes, hold up your arms and close your eyes.

(With a knowing twinkle.)

So it will be a surprise.

(ABUELITA removes the dress, slips it over ANA LUISA'S head and inspects her work.)

¡Que hermosa! Beautiful. Ana Luisa, you can open them now.

(ANA LUISA looks in the mirror (mimed) and is astonished at the sight. ANA LUISA beams and hugs her grandmother.)

ANA LUISA: *(Whirls around twirling the skirt and posing as she looks in the mirror.) Gracias, Abuelita. Gracias. This dress is so beautiful. Mamá, I look...pretty.*

MAMÁ: Remember, pretty is as pretty does, *mija*.

ABUELITA: *Cuidado.*

MAMÁ: Be careful. And stop fidgeting Ana Luisa. You don't want it to tear the dress before tomorrow night.

ANA LUISA: Can't I practice in it?

MAMÁ: No. You have to keep it clean.

(MAMÁ helps ANA LUISA remove dress as SYLVIA enters. AUBELITA puts on SYLVIA'S wedding gown and then inspects it. The gown is breathtaking.)

SOUND: *Ooohs and ahhs and applause.*

ANA LUISA: How come she didn't have to close her eyes?

SYLVIA: I saw it last week when I had my first fitting. Now, it's just right, Abuelita.

(Basking in their approval.)

How do I look everyone?

MAMÁ: The most beautiful bride in the valley.

ANA LUISA: *(Admits.)* Like a fairy tale.

ABUELITA: *(Beaming.)* Dos princesas.

SYLVIA: Eduardo won't believe his eyes, when he sees me. My wedding gown is... ¡maravilloso! ¡Un millón de gracias!

ABUELITA: *De nada. De nada. Estoy contenta.*

(Hands them garment bags.)

SYLVIA: I want my wedding to be as beautiful as this dress.

ABUELITA: *Sí, sí. Naturalmente.*

(SYLVIA notices ANA LUISA standing apart, isolated. Carefully, she removes her necklace.)

SYLVIA: Ana Luisa, this would be just right with your dress.

ANA LUISA: But that's your favorite. You always wear it.

SYLVIA: You know the saying:

Something old, something new,

Something borrowed, something blue.

ANA LUISA: Isn't that for the bride?

SYLVIA: This time it's for the flower girl too.

ANA LUISA: *(Twirling skirt)* Something blue. And I've got new shoes too.

SYLVIA: *(Hands her necklace, which ANA LUISA puts on.)* Something borrowed.

MAMÁ: And something old. That belonged to your great grand-mother. She gave it to me when I was seventeen. And I gave it to Sylvia when she turned seventeen.

ANA LUISA: *(Looks in mirror.)* It's beautiful.

SYLVIA: You can borrow it for the wedding. And then when you turn seventeen--

MAMÁ: *(Interrupts.)* For now you must take special care of my grandmother's necklace.

ANA LUISA: I will. I will. I promise.

MAMÁ: Best let me hold it until the wedding.

ANA LUISA: But I want to wear it now.

(MAMÁ holds out her hand. ANA LUISA reluctantly removes it.)

Thank you, Sylvia.

SYLVIA: If you do everything perfectly, that will be thanks enough.

ANA LUISA: I will. I will.

MAMÁ: *(Puts necklace in her pocket and helps remove dress.)* Now, Ana Luisa, let's practice together before the wedding rehearsal starts. Sylvia, please go hang the dresses up.

SYLVIA: Sí, Mamá.

(Exits.)

ANA LUISA: It would be a lot better if I could wear my dress to practice.

MAMÁ: No, *Querida*, I already told you. It could get dirty.

ANA LUISA: Or wear my new shoes?

MAMÁ: Not till the wedding.

ANA LUISA: Or wear the necklace for luck.

MAMÁ: At the wedding. Not before. It was generous of Sylvia to let you borrow it. You mustn't disappoint her.

ANA LUISA: Mamá, could I practice with some real flowers?

MAMÁ: *(Kisses her cheek.)* For now just use the basket of balloons in the garden. Later, we need to blow them up to put by the gate so all our guests can find us.

ANA LOUISA: Can I help?

MAMÁ: *Claro que sí. Of course.* Now, watch.

(Takes ANA LUISA's hand and THEY x into the garden.)

It's a step, pause. step, pause. Just listen to the music.

ANA LUISA: But, Mamá, there isn't any.

MAMÁ: Imagine. You're good at that. Now, let's do it again. Step, pause, scatter flower petals. Step, pause, scatter.

ANA LUISA: *(practicing)* Step, pause, scatter.

SYLVIA: *(Dashes back on as her sister is practicing.)* Mamá, did you order the chocolates? You know Eduardo loves them.

ANA LUISA: So do I.

MAMÁ: Of course I did.

SYLVIA: They're for **after** the wedding, Ana Luisa.

MAMÁ: And for our guests, *Querida*.

ANA LUISA: I know.

MAMÁ: Now, show Sylvia how nicely you can walk down the aisle. And then we'll add the balloons and pretend that they're flowers.

(But ANA LUISA gets flustered with both staring at her and overhears their whispering as she slowly makes her way.)

I hope she doesn't trip when she wears her brand- new shoes.

SYLVIA: If she walks that slow, I'll never get married.

ANA LUISA: *(Speeds up.)* Is this right?

SYLVIA: No, Ana Luisa. Let me clap for you.

(No sooner does SYLVIA start, then she abruptly stops, looking around.)

Mamá, where are all the flowers for the garden?

MAMÁ: They'll come.

SYLVIA: But why aren't they here. They should be here by now. You better call the florist.

MAMÁ: *(Exasperated.)* Sylvia, go inside and rest.

SYLVIA: Mamá, call the florist **now**.

MAMÁ: Everything will be fine, Sylvia. Please, go take a rest and when you do, put sliced cucumbers over your eyes.

ANA LUISA: Cucumbers? What for?

MAMÁ: My grandmother's beauty trick. Her eyes sparkled whenever I saw her, and she looked younger than her years.

ANA LOUISA: But what if you want to look older?

MAMÁ: You will, *mija*. All in good time.

SYLVIA: *(Impatient.)* Mamá, are you going to call or not?

MAMÁ: Now. Right now. I'm on my way. Sylvia, *Calmarse*. You need to calm down.

(Guiding SYLVIA out.)

Ana Luisa, keep practicing. Try it with some balloons.

SYLVIA: Remember, the flower girl starts the whole wedding.

ANA LUISA: I know. I know.

(MAMÁ and SYLVIA exit.)

(Mutters.)

You've told me a billion times.

(Anxiety mounting. Says to herself.)

Be careful. You can do it. Just be careful.

(She practices trying out different gestures to scatter balloons as the pretend flowers.)

What if I trip and tear my dress? What'll I do if I fall? In front of everyone.

SOUND: *clapping comes from the gate.*

EDUARDO: *Bravo, hermanita.*

(Startled she drops the basket.)

ANA LUISA: *(Blurts out.)* I won't be your little sister for real until tomorrow. And I've got new shoes for the wedding, but Mamá won't let me practice in them. And balloons aren't the same as real flowers. Eduardo, I don't even know if I'm doing it right.

EDUARDO: *(From behind his back comes a bouquet of roses.)* Will one of these roses help?

ANA LUISA: They're beautiful, Eduardo.

EDUARDO: Pick one.

ANA LUISA: Really?

EDUARDO: Go ahead. We can spare one.

(She does. He breaks them into petals and puts in her basket.)

Then toss them as you walk.

ANA LUISA: How far?

EDUARDO: To the persimmon tree?

(She does.)

That looks perfect to me.

ANA LUISA: But what if I throw too many flowers in the beginning and there's none left for the end?

EDUARDO: That's why you're practicing.

(Lifts her chin so that she looks at him.)

So you'll be the best flower girl, Ana Luisa. My favorite flower girl.

(Whirls her around.)

Hasta mañana, Chiquita

ANA LUISA: What about the rest of the flowers?

EDUARDO: Bring them to your Mamá and tell her to call me if she needs any extra help.

(Exits. Happily, ANA LUISA sits beneath the persimmon tree.)

SOUND: *dream music and sounds,*

(She rises and day dreams walking down the carpet towards the alter, and hears everyone not only cheering her, but they are clapping and shouting "Bravo." (This could be heard from off-stage or pre-recorded.)

(Option: ALL enter and in stylized movement circle around her in a choreographed celebratory moment and exit.)

(Under the persimmon tree, ANA LOUISA, eyes closed, sits with a smile.)

PAPÁ: *(Shaking her shoulder.)* Ana Luisa.

ANA LUISA: *(Jumps up.)* What's wrong?

PAPÁ: *(Looks around nervously.)* I need your help.

ANA LUISA: What is it, Papá?

PAPÁ: *(Looks around again.)* I have to practice...
(Almost a whisper.)

Dancing.

ANA LUISA: Why?

PAPÁ: Because at a wedding the father is supposed to dance with the bride. And later your mother will want me to dance with her. But Ana Luisa, I haven't danced in so long. And my feet aren't the same as they used to be. *Aye*, I'm getting older.

ANA LUISA: What do you want me to do, Papá?

PAPÁ: *(Looks around again.)* Practice with me. So I don't look like I have two left feet.

ANA LUISA: *Sí*, Papá.

(Ready to begin PAPÁ puts his hands around her waist.)

No, Papá. Put your arms like this.

(Corrects his arms, now in a waltz position.)

SOUND: *soft waltz music underscores the scene.*

PAPÁ: Ah, *sí*. Now I remember. And it's *uno dos tres*. Oh, how your Mamá used to love to dance, when we were younger.

ANA LOUISA: Let's try.

(PAPÁ moves awkwardly and steps on her toes. She stops abruptly.)

Ouch!

PAPÁ: *Perdón, hija*. Sorry, did I hurt you?

ANA LUISA: *(shakes her head.)* Let's try again. I saw them waltz in an old movie on T.V. Just count with me. *Uno, dos, tres*.

PAPÁ: *Sí, sí*

(PAPÁ is awkward and clumsy at first.)

Uno, dos, tres.

(They count together as they practice.)

ANA LUISA: Papá, Mamá's dress has a pretty skirt, so swing her around like this.

(Demonstrates. Pretty soon they are dancing nicely, laughing and twirling around the garden.)

If you can do this, Sylvia and Mamá will be happy.

PAPÁ: If you can do this you'll walk down the red carpet like...like a queen.

ANA LOUISA: Oh, Papa, I like dancing with you better.

PAPÁ: *Mija*, you're going to make us all proud.

MAMÁ: *(off stage.)* Ana Luisa, where are you?

(THEY stop abruptly as MAMÁ enters.)

What are you doing?

(PAPÁ is momentarily tongue-tied.)

ANA LUISA: Papá is ...helping me, aren't you, Papá?

(He nods.)

MAMÁ: To do what?

PAPÁ: To be the best flower girl, that's what.

SOUND: *phone ringing*

MAMÁ: *(Dashing off.)* That phone has been ringing all morning. There's so much to do.

(THEY do one more waltz circle around.)

PAPÁ: Thank you, Ana Luisa. It'll be a nice surprise for Mamá.

ANA LUISA: *Sí, Papá.*

SOUND: *music denotes the passage of time.*

MAMÁ: *(as a narrator)* The next morning

PAPÁ: *(as a narrator)* The sun was shining

MAMÁ: *(as a narrator)* Not too hot.

PAPÁ: *(as a narrator)* Not too cold.

ABUELITA: *(as a narrator)* *Un día perfecto.*

EDUARDO: *(as a narrator)* For our wedding .

ABUELITA: *(as a narrator)* *Sí, un día perfecto para una boda.*

SYLVIA: Nothing will go wrong.

(SYLVIA, PAPÁ, EDUARDO exit in different directions.)

SOUND: *Music to demote passage of time.*

(ABUELITA, MAMÁ, and ANA LUISA X to kitchen area and gather round the table to make tamales.)

ABUELITA: *Necesito hacer tamales para la fiesta.*

MAMÁ: Tamales tonight.

ANA LUISA: I love tamales. How many do we have to make?

MAMÁ: Enough for all the guests. Pay attention, so you can learn.

ABUELITA: *Mezclar la carne con la salsa.*

ANA LUISA: Mix the meat with the sauce. Then what?

ABUELITA: *Cortar las rajadas para el queso.*

ANA LUISA: Can I cut the chilies for the cheese?

MAMÁ: You can help.

ABUELITA: *Luego añadir los aceitunas a la carne.*

ANA LUISA: Can I add the olives to the meat?

MAMÁ: That'll be your special job.

ABUELITA: *(Demonstrates rolling up corn husks.) Luego cerramos las hojas de maíz y los atamos.*

ANA LUISA: I want to do that too.

MAMÁ: You can help. It's your great-grandmother's recipe.

ABUELITA: *¿Entiendes?*

ANA LUISA: *Sí, Abuelita.*

(THEY work together and mime the cooking.)

SOUND: *music cover that will lead to the traditional folk dance.*

SEVEN more pages to end of script

TWO pages of Glossary

ONE Music Page

THREE pages of Teacher's Guide