

# PERUSAL SCRIPT



Book, Music and Lyrics  
by Carolyn Chatwin Murset



Newport, Maine

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## **TALES OF TILA!**

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**ORDER # 2102**

**TILA** — At opening, 12 years old, then progressively aging to 69 years; Spirited

Other characters played by or interacted with by the solo performer:

Teen Tila

Tila at 40

Tila's Mother

Tila's Grandmother

12 and 32 year-old Lorraine (Tila's daughter)

Carolina, daughter

**SETTING** — Taos, Santa Fe, Los Alamos New Mexico

**TIME** — 1912 through 1971

**TALES OF TILA!** a One-woman Musical by Carolyn Chatwin Murset. 1f. Two chairs, a guitar, and a trunk of props. About 90 minutes. The story of an ordinary woman, yet the show is nothing but extraordinary. This is an unusual musical journey through a life that could be any relation to any one of us. Tila, the author's Hispanic Latter-Day Saint, Pioneer Grandmother, Domitila Trujillo, (1902-1971), was patient, optimistic, beautiful, and wise. As a young girl who struggled to make soft tortillas good enough for her older brothers to chew, not crunch, and swallow down without choking, Tila had the faith that her prayers for help, would assist her. They did. The author is glad her grandmother wrote about it in her brief personal history when she was 57 years old. She also wrote about going to boarding school in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she learned to knit and crochet with the other girls. She and Grandpa Trujillo exchanged notes to each other in a ledger. Tila's journey through the first half of the twentieth century comprises many stories — all true, as she experiences friends her age leaving to serve in the Great War (as World War One was called back then), the Spanish Flu Epidemic, joining the LDS Church when Mormon missionaries arrive in Taos, marrying her friend's brother at age 17, waiting three years for him to also join the LDS Church, the Great Depression, World War Two and her husbands contribution toward the creation of the Atomic Bomb in the secret city of Los Alamos, New Mexico. It was performed at Taos, New Mexico, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, and St. George, Utah, September-October 2019. **ORDER #2102**

**CAROLYN CHATWIN MURSET** is a friendly, half-Hispanic grandma, singer/songwriter tortilla maker, who grew up in the 1960's in Taos, New Mexico. She premiered her original one woman musical Tales of Tila at the Electric Theatre in St. George, Utah, October, 2018 (produced by Wilford Brimley), ran it again at Brigham's Playhouse September 2019 and then took it to New Mexico in November where her Hispanic family stories originated! In 2021 it was filmed onstage by Flower and Bone Productions at q-Staff Theatre in Albuquerque (and streamed online, due to COVID-19 restrictions in New Mexico.) She's self-produced four CD's of her original music, and plays guitar, mandolin, ukulele and banjo. You can find her music on iTunes, etc. and her podcast at [mycarolynmurset.com](http://mycarolynmurset.com).

# MUSICAL NUMBERS

## ACT ONE

- #1 MY NAME
- #2 THE PRAYER
- #3 TORTILLAS BY TILA
- #4 THANK YOU
- #5 SILENCIO!
- #6 HOME, HOME, HOME
- #7 THE FIRST WONDERFUL THING
- #8 OH, JUAN MANUEL!
- #9 THE LIFE OF THE WIFE
- #10 NO, HE DID NOT
- #11 TRUJILLO, TRUJILLO!
- #12 THE LIFE OF THE WIFE REPRISE
- #13 PRUNE PIE (ASK A TAOSÉÑA)

## ACT TWO

- #14 IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SPRINGTIME
- #15 CHOW CHOW
- #16 THE CHILDREN OF A SHEPHERD
- #17 TO THE MOVIES
- #18 POST OFFICE BOX 1663
- #19 THE PICKUP
- #20 POBRECITO
- #21 THE PHOTO
- #22 THE PRICE WE PAID
- #23 BETSY
- #24 THE GENTLE MAN
- #25 MY NAME (REPRISE)

All songs can be played live by a guitar, or to track with other instruments. Or a mix of both.

## ACT ONE

### Tortilla Tale (Scene One)

*(SCENE: A garden with growing vegetables and many weeds waiting to be pulled. It is a late summer morning in Placitas, a small neighborhood in Taos, New Mexico, 1912.)*

*(AT RISE: Tila, a young teen girl, full of life, enters stage right, holding and playing a classical guitar. She should be pulling the weeds instead. There are two wooden southwest styled chairs at center stage left, ten inches apart from each other. Throughout the play the chairs become and represent various objects as needed in the scenes. In this scene they represent the horse and buggy Tila's parents and older brothers take to work in the fields nine miles away from home. Stage right of the chairs is a wooden guitar stand. Behind the chairs is a small wooden trunk large enough to carry the aprons that Tila wears throughout the play.)*

#### #1 MY NAME

**TILA:** *(She sings and plays guitar.)*

IF I TOLD YOU WHAT MY NAME WAS, I DOUBT YOU WOULD BELIEVE ME.

MY ANCESTORS CAME FROM SPAIN, THUS THE NAME THAT'S ALWAYS PLEASED ME!

AS COMPELLING AS MY STORY READS

YOU'LL NEVER HEAR ME PRAISE THESE WEEDS! MY NAME ROLLS NIMBLY OFF THE TONGUE

FAR BETTER SPOKEN THAN SUNG....

*(She speaks)*

Maria Otila Domitila Miera

Call me Tila!.....Yes, Mamá?! My mother's name?

Maria Ellanuaria. I call her....Mamá .

*(She sings:)*

MARIA OTILA DOMITILA MIERA

MARIA OTILA GETS TO LABOR EN LA TIERRA.

SEÑORITA MIERA HAS NO CHOICE OF WHAT TO DO! AFTER ALL, I WAS BORN IN THE YEAR 1902.

1902--in the village of Taos, New Mexico Territory. It is 64 miles north of Santa Fe, which is 64 miles north

of Albuquerque. They say it is 7,000 feet above the level of the ocean, but do not ask me how they figured that one out!

All I know is that the air is so dry that you get nosebleeds all the time, and if you do not keep your tortillas covered, they...

Speaking of tortillas, I was already making them by the time our territory became a state in 1912. Of course, my little brother, Victor would disagree and tell you that the round thin, white things I was making were crackers. They were crispy.

Good heavens! I was only ten when our parents left me and Victor alone to ourselves during the day while they went to work way over in Arroyo Seco. I was in charge of taking care of him and the bread making.

Late in the afternoon when my parents and older brothers came home from working in the fields, Lino and Moises were hungrier and meaner than ever. They would grab my tortillas that I had been slaving over for hours, break them, eat them, then act like they were choking, and beg for water.

One day they called my tortillas “crackers” one too many times! I ran out into the garden

*(crossing down stage right and sinking to her knees)*

and there, in-between the rows of corn where no one but the angels could see me,

## #2 THE PRAYER

*(Tila sings:)*

I SANK DOWN TO MY KNEES, WISHING TO BE BOLDER.

I BEGGED, “DEAR FATHER, PLEASE, WHY COULD I NOT BE OLDER? THAT LINO AND THAT MOISES, THEY DO TAUNT ME SO!

THEIR TEASING, AND THEIR VOICES ARE HAUNTING ME, OH!

*(She speaks)*

I ASK OF YOU, MY FATHER, DEAR, I ASK OF YOU TO... INTERFERE?

*(She sings)*

AND, WHILE I’M IN THE GARDEN, MAY I ASK THIS QUESTION,

‘WHY DO TORTILLAS HARDEN?’

I TRUST THAT YOU KNOW BEST, THEN.

MAMÁ MUST HAVE TOLD ME

THE CORRECT WAY TO MAKE THEM,

BUT, I FEAR THAT SHE WILL SCOLD ME, AND HELP THE BOYS TO BREAK THEM!

DEAR PADRE, PLEASE BE LISTENING PLEASE, AS I’M DOWN HERE ON MY KNEES.”

I WILL DROWN HERE ON MY KNEES. I’M A CLOWN HERE ON MY KNEES.

## 2

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Tears have never done me much good. Mamá pities no one. So I pulled myself together and went back inside the house.

*(She stands.)*

I felt the same. Nothing was different. Nada.

The next day, by the time I started making tortillas it was already getting late and I expected my brothers and mis padres, my parents to come home in the wagon any minute.

Victor, my tag-along will tell you that the reason we got home so late from school, la escuela, was because we went home the long way through Ranchitos to see and ride my best friend, Lile's new Palomino. She's selling her white Arabian, and I need a white horse!

Anyway, I had to hurry, but I took great care to measure the ingredients without making a mistake:

*(Tila pantomimes:)*

6 cups flour, some baking powder, salt, manteca (lard), and water. I even washed my hands and kneaded the dough delicately.

*(Calling stage right:)*

“Victor, the stove is not hot enough! More wood!”

*(Continuing with the pantomime:)*

I rolled out each tortilla as if I were going to enter it in the state fair in

Albuquerque. Our state did not have a fair then, but I like to pretend. As the last tortilla was cooking on the stove, I heard them coming! Not wanting to be ridiculed again, I hid the tortillas in a folded towel made from a flour sack and got the heck out of the kitchen!

Next thing I know, Lino yells, “Who on earth made the bread today?”

I ran into the kitchen and was about to clobber him with the rolling pin.

“This is the last time I ever make tortillas for this family! You think it is so easy. You try making them and having people gag on them and laughing in your face!”

“No, Tita is not visiting us from Santa Fe. Why do you ask such a silly question?” Our older, married sister, Tita makes tortillas that you could get cravings for.

What I failed to notice during my ranting and raving was that:

### **#3 TORTILLAS BY TILA**

THE ENTIRE FAMILIA, NOW SEATED AT THE TABLE

EACH HOLDING A TORTILLA, WAS SUDDENLY NOW ABLE TO BEND, AND TO WRAP,  
ENCIRCLE AND ENTWINE

LOS FRIJOLE. MY TORTILLAS, THANKS TO *HIM* WERE NOW DIVINE! TO BEND AND TO

### **3**

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PRODUCTION PURPOSES by the following group only:

WRAP THOSE ‘DELECTABLE’ FRIJOLE,  
‘TORTILLAS BY TILA’, WERE NOW UP FOR PA-RO-LE!

*(Tila speaks:)*

Parole. It rhymes!...You think it is so easy.

*(She stands to challenge audience members:)*

Why don’t you try writing a song about tortillas and beans, and having people gag on it and laughing in your face!

Well..they sent me to boarding school. Mamá was weary of all the traveling in the wagon every day. Now that the boys were older, Papá didn’t rely on her help working in the fields. She could stay home now and take over the household duties that had taken me much too long to master. We didn’t get along. My friend, Lile’s parents talked her into letting me go. I went.

*(Tila removes her apron and places it in a narrow basket behind the trunk.)*

### **Boarding School for Girls (Scene Two)**

*(SCENE: 1916. It’s early morning, before sunrise in the kitchen of the Miera household. Tila’s mother has prepared bags of food for the 41 mile journey Tila, now 14, and her father, and Tila’s friend, Lile will be taking as they ride in the wagon pulled by horses to catch the train taking Tila and Lile to boarding school in Santa Fe.)*

*(AT RISE: Tila’s mother takes a shawl out of the trunk that is behind the chairs, and wraps it around her shoulders as she talks and scolds Tila, who is moving slowly. She is also struggling with staying awake and with the anxiety of leaving home for the first time in her life.)*

#### **(TILA’S MOTHER)**

Tila! Ándale! You and your father still have to go and get Lile in Ranchitos.

Brush your hair! Let me see your teeth. Your nails. You are fourteen years old. Don’t you wash your hands after you pull the weeds?

Your father put your trunk in the wagon! Take these bags. Your lunches are in this one. Your suppers are in the other one. Oh, Tila, you didn’t finish eating your breakfast! No, it’s not too early to eat! Take these apples. Go! Write to me!

**TILA:** *(Tila removes the shawl, walks upstage to the trunk to trade it for the white school girl apron that she places over her head and ties on.)*

We were on our way, and the sun wasn’t even up yet. My father drove me and my friend, Lile Duran in the wagon the 41 mile journey to catch the train. The



Chili Line, as they called it, made a stop in Ojo Caliente. Once we boarded, it had to make six more stops before we reached our last stop at Lamy, which was as close as we could get to the school in Santa Fe. I'm so grateful for the food that Mamá sent with us.

#### #4 THANK YOU

Needless to say, we didn't come home for the weekends.

*(Tila takes guitar, sits in stage right chair and sings:)*

THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD. I WISH I HAD BEEN GOOD.

THANK YOU FOR THE DRESSES. I WILL CLEAN UP MY MESSSES.

I'M GRATEFUL FOR THESE STURDY SHOES. I'LL WEAR THEM, AND OBEY THE RULES.

TILA WILL ACT BETTER, AND I'LL WRITE TO YOU A LETTER.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU. GRÁCIAS .

OJO CALIENTE,

BARRANCA, THEN EMBUDO, ALCALDE, ESPAÑOLA,

BUCKMAN, THEN JACONA.

LAST OF ALL WAS LAMY.

I HOPE THAT YOU DON'T BLAME ME. BLAME ME FOR MY ATTITUDE.

I SHOULD HAVE SHOWN MORE GRATITUDE.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU.....

*(spoken)*

I CAN NOT BLAME MY APTITUDE!

*(Tila sings:)*

MAMÁ MAY NOT BELIEVE ME,

BUT I KNOW HOW TO SPELL REAL WELL. SHE WILL NOT HAVE TO SEE ME.

I WILL NOT GIVE HER....

*(Tila stands, places guitar back into the stand. Crosses down two steps.)*

“Hell-o. My name? I'll give him the short version. Domitila Miera.

How do you spell that? Lile, he can't spell that? Gringos. Place of residence? I thought it was here, Alison James School for Girls, Santa Fe.

Oh, he means where I'm coming from. Placitas, a neighborhood in Taos, where there is no high school yet."

"How do you spell that? Who is the teacher here? Taos. T-A-O-S, Taos. I told you I could spell."

"Tila", I often said to myself, "Watch the attitude. Hold your tongue.

And when you are in the cafeteria, no more stealing balls of peanut butter. I know, you never had it at home in Taos, but if you keep hiding it in your bloomers, they will mistake it for something else if one of those balls should fall on the floor on the way to your room. Don't be a mashishi. You are not with your little brother, Victor. Oh the antics. Be good."

*(Tila sighs.)*

"Show Lile and the other girls while you are learning to crochet and to knit and to multiply your numbers while you do your algebra (blegh!), what a good Miera girl from Taos you are."

### #5 SILENCIO!

Sometimes my conscience won't leave me alone!

*(Tila sings.)*

CÁLLATE, I TELL THAT VOICE, THAT VOICE INSIDE MY HEAD. CÁLLATE, I HAVE NO CHOICE,

BUT TO HEAR THOSE WORDS INSTEAD.

*(Tila's conscience voices over.)*

BEHAVE NOW, BE BRAVE NOW.

*(Tila sings.)*

AM I ALLOWED NO FUN?

*(Tila's conscience voices over.)*

BE ON YOUR GUARD, WORK HARD, THE SCHOOL YEAR'S JUST BEGUN!

*(Tila sings.)*

CÁLLATE, SILENCIO, LET'S NOT BEGIN THE RUMORS. CÁLLATE, SILENCIO!

*(Tila's conscience voices over.)*

DON'T HIDE FOOD IN THE BLOOMERS! DON'T HIDE FOOD IN THE BLOOMERS!

So, I shaped up, kept my mouth closed more often, and that voice inside my head became *quieter*. It was muy hard! I only ate peanut butter in the cafetería at meal time.

And there was no more....oh I probably shouldn't tell you all of the bad things I accomplished, without Victor's help! My grandchildren and their children are listening.

It was very difficult for ésta mashishi Miera to reform. Mischief maker, peanut butter thief. Thief?? No, no, no! Your Grandmother Tila was.. a Saint.

And to prove it. You see this dollar bill? Mrs. Blanche Shelley became my favorite teacher there, and I was one of her best students. We wrote to each other for many years after I left the school, and every Christmas she and her husband, Wilson sent me a one dollar bill. You could buy many things with a dollar back then. I may have bought... peanut butter.

*(Tila moves to the trunk, slides it upstage about 12 inches so she can stand behind the stage right chair as the next scene opens.)*

### **The Great War (Scene Three)**

*(SCENE: 1917, at the Alison James Boarding School for Girls in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This was the onset of the United States joining allies in the Great War. The Spanish Flu Epidemic begins a year later. We learn why Tila only stays in Santa Fe one year.)*

*(AT RISE: Tila, now 15, stands behind the stage right chair as she begins narration, the crosses around and down right to narrate.)*

#### **TILA**

1917- Many countries in the world were at war with each other. Our country, the United States joined the allies, Britain, France and Russia in the Great War in April, a month before I came home for the summer from school in Santa Fe.

My good friend Amada Trujillo's brother, Juan Manuel, and many other men between the ages of 18 and 45 registered for the draft in May.

Their father Rafael had died in January. Because Juan Manuel was the oldest son, he needed to care for his mother. He was drafted into the infantry anyway, and by the time he was called to serve and was on the way to be stationed at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, the war ended. His service was no longer needed.

Why am I telling you this? If you were fifteen years old and living a two day's journey away by train and by wagon when people a little older than you are going away to war, you would want to stay home, too. No, it wasn't because Pancho Villa and his banditos raided the border town. That was too far away from Santa Fe. I wasn't worried about that. This letter from home addressed to me was what worried me:

“Mi querida, your brother's one year old daughter Evangelina died soon after you left to boarding school. A few weeks later, Pilar gave birth to a healthy son. The new baby is doing well. I know that you would want to be there to comfort your brother Moisés and his wife. Not to worry.

Continue with your studies. Be good. Write to me, Mamá.”

*(Tila stands, moves behind stage right chair,)*

This brother died from typhoid fever the next year. The same brother I was angry with for calling my tortillas crackers when I was the ten year old family bread maker. The same brother.

*(She then takes guitar as the song accompaniment begins then sits in the chair, plays the guitar and sings.)*

## **#6 HOME, HOME, HOME**

The new baby's name? *Moisés*.

I'M SORRY THAT I WAS SO MADDENED AT YOU FOR FEELING SO ANGRY WITH ME.  
I ACTED MY AGE, BUT THEN, YOU HAD NO CLUE, NEITHER OF US COULD APPEASE.

IF I HAD BEEN ABLE TO SEE THROUGH THE YEARS  
I MIGHT HAVE AVOIDED THIS FLOWING OF TEARS.  
CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT OF CRITICAL COMMENTS,  
OF TEN YEAR OLD ANGER AND TYPICAL TORRENTS.

HOME, HOME, HOME. I WANT TO BE HOME, HOME.  
TILA WILL STAY HOME, HOME. SHE WANTS TO BE HOME.

IF I HAD BEEN ABLE TO SEE THROUGH MY FEARS  
I MIGHT HAVE THEN NOTICED THAT YOU WEREN'T SINCERE. CAUGHT UP IN YOUR  
MOMENT OF LANGUISHING HUNGER, MY ANGER RESPONDED.  
IS IT ANY WONDER, THAT  
HOME, HOME, HOME. I WANT TO BE HOME, HOME.  
TILA WILL STAY HOME, HOME. SHE WANTS TO BE HOME. SHE LONGS TO BE HOME.

Back to the Great War, which we didn't know would be the first of two world wars. As it was drawing to a close, another devastating event occurred, and two wonderful things also happened, thank goodness.

Which one do you want to hear about first? The bad thing?

Then, listen to this: The Spanish Flu Epidemic, La Influenza Española of 1918-1919 started. Twenty million people died across the globe. Half a million died in our country, several thousands in our state, and hundreds died in Taos County.

It reached New Mexico in the fall of 1918, and by October all the schools, the churches and the theaters had to be closed. You couldn't even go to the wake of your family members, friends or neighbors, and sometimes familias lost more than one in their household. The dead had to be buried soon after they died.

Then in 1919, the horrible virus disappeared as suddenly as it appeared. We could now gather in groups of more than five people at a time. And we did, because:

### #7 THE FIRST WONDERFUL THING

*(She sits in stage left chair and sings:)*

THE FIRST WONDERFUL THING THAT HAPPENED, THREE YEARS BEFORE  
WHILE IN SANTA FE AT THE BOARDING SCHOOL I WAS TRYING TO LEARN SOME MORE,  
Missionaries from La Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días, the Latter-Day Saints, arrived in Taos and began to hold meetings, teaching 125 investigators. The Book of Mormon, El Libro de Mormón was now printed in our language. I wasn't there, but heard about the comforting teachings and literature that was being distributed.

LOS MISIONEROS WERE THERE

WHEN OUR COUNTRY GOT INVOLVED IN THE GREAT WORLD WAR,

NOW WE HAD PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED:

FATHERS, SONS AND BROTHERS LEFT THEIR FAMILIES TO FIGHT WOULD THEY COME HOME SAFELY,

WITH THEIR LOVED ONES REUNITE?

THE MISSIONARIES WERE THERE THROUGHOUT THE EPIDEMIC TAOSEÑOS LOST FAMILY  
HOW COULD WE NOT PANIC?

CHILDREN AND BABIES, SISTERS AND BROTHERS WIVES AND HUSBANDS, MOTHERS  
AND FATHERS.

Is it any wonder that the teachings of the LDS church about temples and being bound with your family and loved ones after we die was a comfort, after the devastating losses of the war and of the epidemic?

The Mormon Elders organized branches of the church and held meetings in some of the school houses in the little communities surrounding Taos.

“Amada, this morning I heard-- one of those meetings is tonight at the school by your house. Can you go? Come with me! I'll leave my house at six, walk back here to your house, and we can walk over together. See if your old brother, Juan Manuel can go, too.”

Juan Manuel, was twenty six years old, nine years older than me, and not married yet? The Trujillo family lived in an hacienda and owned a dance hall in Ranchitos. He played the violin, the piano and the guitar. He had his own horse and buggy. Before he was drafted, he helped build the dam at the Cimarrón River to

create Eagle Nest Lake for the farmers and the ranchers to use the water. He had a novia, a girlfriend. That didn't *stop* me from inviting him to come with us. I could still flirt with him, couldn't I?

So, he came with us to the meetings, *sometimes*. His sister, Amada and I felt and later knew that the teachings we heard about the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ as taught by Elders Cannell and Haymore were the truth. Even though missionaries had been in the Taos area for over two years, I was the first to be baptized, and Amada was the second. That October 28th, 1919, the river was COLD!...

**#8 OH, JUAN MANUEL!**

My heart, warm.

I WISH IT HAD BEEN SUMMERTIME,  
FOR THE RIVER NOW IS MUCH COLDER! HER BROTHER WANTS TO MARRY ME,  
EVEN THOUGH HE IS NINE YEARS OLDER!

IT WON'T HURT HIM TO JOIN THIS CHURCH. IF NOT, THEN I'LL REFUSE  
TO BE HIS WIFE, TO SHARE HIS LIFE UNTIL WE DIE, WHAT'S THE USE?

OH, JUAN MANUEL, CAN YOU NOT TELL ETERNAL MARRIAGE IS TRUE!  
BUT UNTIL YOU BEND, I'LL NOT CONSENT TO RIDE IN THE CARRIAGE WITH YOU.

UNTIL YOU BEND, I'LL NOT CONSENT TO RIDE IN THE CARRIAGE WITH YOU!

*(Tila speaks:)*

Put your feet in the water! Elders, catch him!

THAT I'M YOUR GIRLFRIEND NOW IS WHAT THE VILLAGE HAS BEEN TOLD  
YOUR WHITE GLOVES, HORSE AND BUGGY WON'T SHORTCUT YOU INTO THE FOLD!

GIVE ME YOUR WORD YOU'LL SERVE THE LORD AND FOLLOW ME INTO THE WATER.  
TO NOT BE SEALED, WE CAN'T AFFORD  
'TIL DEATH DO US PART, I WON'T BOTHER!

OH, JUAN MANUEL, CAN YOU NOT TELL ETERNAL MARRIAGE IS TRUE?  
BUT UNTIL YOU BEND, I'LL NOT CONSENT TO RIDE IN THE CARRIAGE WITH YOU.

UNTIL YOU BEND, I'LL NOT CONSENT TO RIDE IN THE CARRIAGE WITH YOU!

The stubborn man promised me he would get baptized. I believed him, and became Mrs. J.M. Trujillo in August of 1919, and *that* was the second wonderful thing that happened!

*(Tila sits on stage right chair.)*

### **El Presidente Trujillo (Scene four)**

(SCENE: 1919, The Trujillo household in Taos, New Mexico.)

(AT RISE: Tila, 17, is sitting on the stage right chair, slumped over and discouraged.)

### **TILA**

“Juan Manuel! You are so stubborn.” I married you in August. I joined the LDS church three months later with *your* sister. My mother, my father, my brothers, Eliseo, Lino, Santiago, Victor, the next July. Jacinta and *her* husband Francisco, in August. *You gave me your word you would join the Church too.* Do you know how long it took him to do that?

### **#9 THE LIFE OF THE WIFE**

Three years. Tres años! Why?

THE LIFE OF THE WIFE, SEÑOR JM TRUJILLO IS NOT WHAT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.  
IS IT BETTER, OR WORSE,  
YOU WON'T LEARN IN THIS VERSE  
TO START HERDING SHEEP NOW? LET'S SEE!

YOU'RE A MAN OF FEW WORDS, BUT I CAN INFER THAT YOUR JOINING THE CHURCH  
WILL NOW WAIT. AND I WILL HOLD ON TO YOUR PROMISE FOR LONG I'M EXPECTING  
YOUR CHILD, SEE MY WAIST?

IN THE FALL OFF TO MARKET,  
WILL YOU PLAY A PART IN THE SHEARING OF WOOL IN THE SPRING?  
TO ASSUME YOU CAN COOK, TAKES ME OFF THE HOOK.

WILL I SEE YOU AT ALL? SAY SOMETHING!

DO YOU FEAR COMMITMENT? DO YOU FEAR COLD WATER?

I GIVE YOU MY BEST NOW, I PLEAD!

I'LL HELP WITH YOUR MOTHER, I MIGHT BEAR A DAUGHTER

I'LL GIVE YOU THE TIME THAT YOU NEED.

IN THE FALL OFF TO MARKET, WILL YOU PLAY A PART

IN THE SHEARING OF WOOL IN THE SPRING?

TO ASSUME YOU CAN COOK TAKES ME OFF THE HOOK.

WILL I SEE YOU AT ALL? SAY SOMETHING!

I'LL HELP WITH YOUR MOTHER, I MIGHT BEAR A DAUGHTER.

I'LL GIVE YOU THE TIME THAT YOU NEED.

María Magdalena was born in August 1920, a year after he and I married. She was a beautiful baby with black hair, and very dark eyes.

The winter was harsh and temperatures, unforgiving.

*(While speaking, Tila arranges the chairs, having the seats facing and touching to form a crib.)*

There were few doctors, and no hospital. Antibiotics weren't invented until the early 1930's, so if you got an infection, and your body couldn't fight it off...

Magdalena died from whooping cough the next April, living only eight and a half months. *My first baby.*

### **#10 NO, HE DID NOT**

We buried her next to her Grandfather Rafael Trujillo.

*(TILA kneels at crib.)*

SOMETIMES THINGS LIKE THIS MOVE YOU CLOSER TO GOD

THAT HE WOULD JOIN HIS CHURCH WAS SURELY WHAT I THOUGHT

BUT NO, HE DID NOT. NO, HE DID NOT. MY WAIT CONTINUES ON.

YES, NO HE DID NOT,

AND THOUGH HE DID NOT

I WILL CHOOSE TO CARRY ON!



*(TILA stands and returns chairs to original position.)*

My desire to go to the temple to be sealed to him and to Magdalena became dream, and a longing, for Salt Lake City was six hundred miles away, and our only means of transportation was the horses and the buggy.

It would be three more decades until we owned a motor vehicle. By that time, a temple in Mesa, Arizona was built, and some of the sessions were held in our Spanish language. Mesa is still over 500 miles away. I will tell you more about going there later.

The church meetings at the neighborhood school houses continued, and The Taos Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints was organized by the President of the Mexican Mission, Ray L. Pratt in October of 1920. This was done so the members could continue their Sunday school meetings during the cold winter months when most of the Elders moved to warmer climates. The mission office was in El Paso, Texas where it is much warmer in the winter.

In May of 1922, our new baby boy, Rafael, named after my husband's father was three months old, and healthy. It was either because my husband was relieved to have a healthy son, or the shearing season was over, or the river in Ranchitos was warmer, or he believed the new Mormon missionaries returning from El Paso, who knows?

### **#11 TRUJILLO, TRUJILLO!**

Trujillo, as I now called him, announced, that he was willing to enter the waters of baptism!

TRUJILLO, TRUJILLO, IT'S SUDDENLY CLEAR

YOU'RE SAYING THE WORDS I'VE WANTED TO HEAR!

EL ESPÍRITU SANTO'S BEEN WORKING ON YOU

YOU'RE SAYING EL LIBRO DE MORMÓN IS TRUE!

WE'LL GATHER OUR FAMILY, WE'LL GATHER OUR FRIENDS,

GO DOWN TO THE RIVER, THEN SHOUT OUR AMENS!!

YOU'VE SAID NOW THE WORDS WE'VE WANTED TO HEAR,

SO PRAISE THE LORD, WAIT NO MORE! WE'RE OF GOOD CHEER!

TRUJILLO, TRUJILLO, IT'S SUDDENLY CLEAR

YOU'VE SAID NOW THE WORDS WE'VE WANTED TO HEAR!

Trujillo! They've called you to be Sunday School Superintendent? It's 1925, you've been a member three years now, you'll do a good job. I support you.

### **#12 THE LIFE OF THE WIFE REPRISE**

A few years later, he accepted the call to be the Branch President. *Seventeen* years later, (serves him right,) he was released from that calling.

THE LIFE OF THIS WIFE, PRESIDENTE TRUJILLO IS NOT WHAT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.  
IT'S FAR BETTER THAN WORSE, YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS VERSE:  
WE'RE DONATING LAND NOW? LET'S SEE....

THERE'S PLENTY OF SPACE OVER THERE FOR THREE ROOMS  
OF ADOBE AND PLASTER TO BUILD  
WITH ELDERS AND MEMBERS ALL HELPING WE'LL SOON  
HAVE A BEAUTIFUL CHAPEL TO FILL!

In 1935, the three room adobe chapel was completed, right next to our home in the Placitas neighborhood. The building had one congregation room with wooden pews, and a platform stage. There were two small classrooms in the back, which were also the bedroom and the kitchen for the missionaries, who were like my sons. My home was like their home away from home. I fed them our traditional foods, including my mouth watering and very *soft* tortillas, and chile so spicy hot, they begged for mercy and a cup of water after taking the first bite. I also taught them a few spicy words in Spanish, not telling them what they really meant, and giggled when they innocently spoke those words to others. Oh, the antics, without my brother, Victor's help!

I had the privilege to hostess General Authorities of our church who visited our branch in Taos, including Apostles Heber J. Grant and George Albert Smith. I was the Relief Society President when a separate branch was created for the Anglo members living in Taos, and in the fall of 1951, the Presidents of what were now the Spanish American Mission and the Western States Mission met with the members of both branches and told us that a new and bigger chapel would be built and that both branches would join together into one.

Both Relief Society women's organizations worked together and raised money with our many worthwhile projects, including bazaars where we sold handmade crafts that we knitted, crocheted, sewed.

### #13 ASK A TAOSEÑA (Prune Pie)

We baked breads, tortillas, cookies, pies and candy, and sold them, too.

HAVE YOU EVER TASTED PRUNE PIE?

It's delicious. I know, it can be dangerous the day after, but if you're willing to risk it, then,

ASK A TAOSEÑA TO MAKE YOU ONE.

DO YOU NEED...

*(Speaks:)*

...to raise money?

HAVE A TAOSEÑA...

TEACH YOU HOW TO MAKE OUR

ENCHILADAS, EMPANADAS, TORTILLAS, BEANS AND CHILE. EMPANADAS, ENCHILADAS,  
TACOS AND POSOLE.

And serve *that* at your fundraising dinner, like the ones we used to have. But, don't put the pinto beans in the chile. Just the pork. Keep them separate. That is our way. And it's the *right* way.

TAMALES TAKE TOO LONG TO MAKE!

Save them for Christmas time, along with empanadas, which I only put in that song because they rhyme with enchiladas. I digress.

*(Sigh.)*

Many times we fed the crew of members and missionaries who donated money and labor to help in the construction.

This new building included an apartment in the basement where the missionaries lived AND a baptismal font on the main floor, right next to the big kitchen. You could now be baptized any time of year, indoors, in heated water. I'm grateful Trujillo didn't know this would eventually happen, or he may have waited thirty years to join the church

INSTEAD OF JUST THREE!

*(Tila laughs and exits stage left.)*

**END OF ACT ONE**

***19 more pages in ACT TWO***