

SOCIAL NARRATIVE



Esperanza Rising

Adaptation by
**ALVARO
SAAR RIOS**

Original Music by
**DINORAH
MARQUEZ**

From the book by
PAM MUÑOZ RYAN

*Originally
Commissioned
by First Stage,
Jeff Frank,
Artistic Director*

SPONSORED BY



PROUD CORNERSTONE MEMBER



UNITED PERFORMING ARTS FUND

Watching a play is like watching TV or a movie, except people are on stage in front of us.



They are called actors. They can see and hear me too. I can't turn the channel or turn the volume up and down.

In Partnership With



Autism Society
Southeastern Wisconsin

I am going to see a First Stage show at the Todd Wehr Theater.



I am going to see the show with

A play is made up of many interesting things.



Costumes



Scenery

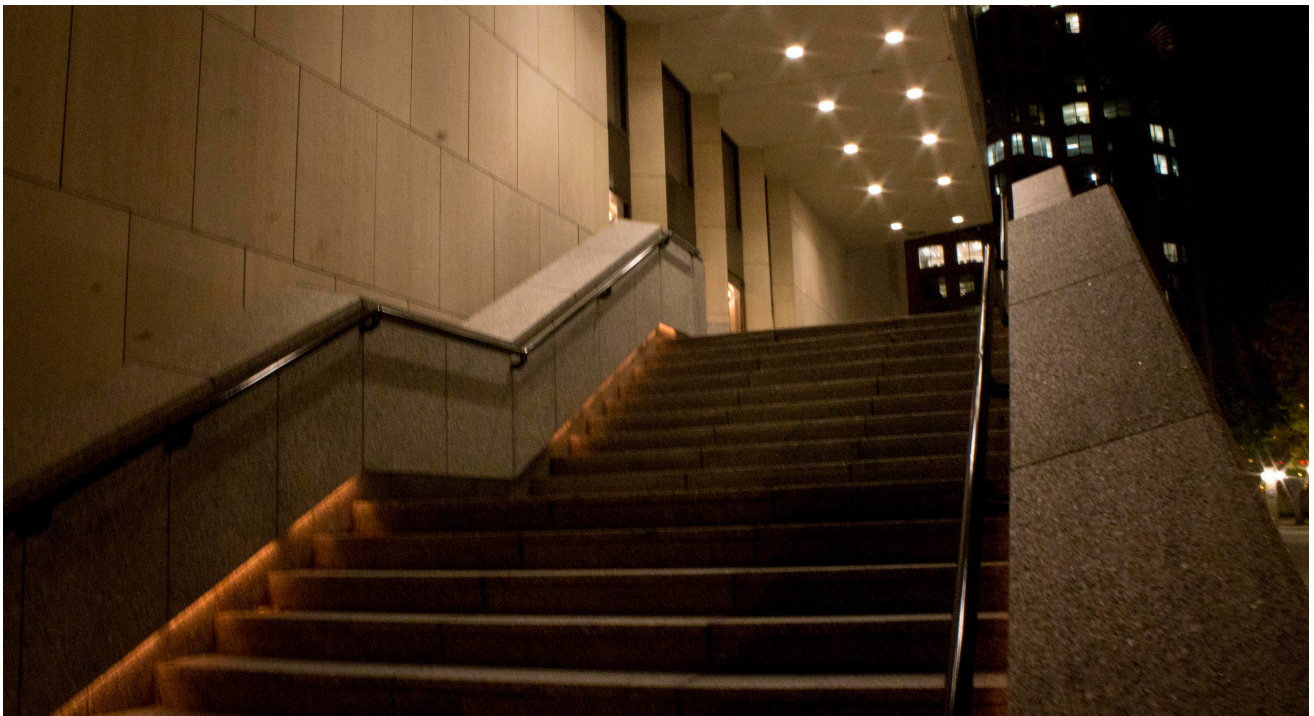


Sound



Lighting

**When we arrive at
the theater, we will
probably have to
climb some stairs.**



There are stairs outside the building,
and inside the building.

We may need to wait in line to scan our tickets.



When we are waiting, I can stay with my family or teacher.

Someone will show us where to sit.



The audience area is for all of us.



The stage is for the actors only.

When I am in the theater waiting for the show to start...

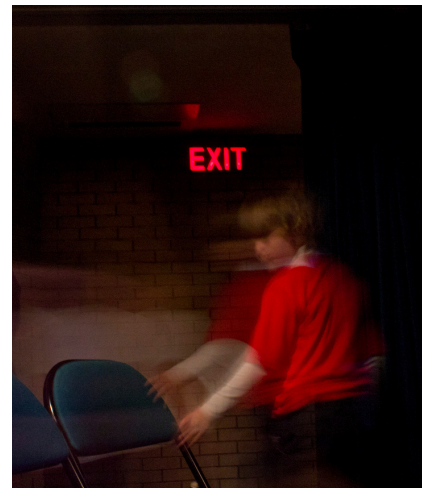


1. I can talk to my family or friends.
2. I can take a short break in the lobby.

There will be a lot of people in theater and it may get noisy.

If it gets too loud:

1. I can bring headphones if I want.
2. I can put my hands over my ears.
3. I can leave the room and take a short break in the lobby.



I can come back when I am ready.

During the show:

1. I can watch and listen to the actors quietly.
2. I can applaud if I like something.
3. I can hold things in my hand that make me feel comfortable.



If I need to talk:

1. I can talk quietly to my family.
2. I can write down what I want to say.
3. I can leave the room.

After the show there will be a "talkback."

The talkback is a chance for me to ask questions.

1. I will raise my hand to show that I want to ask a question.
2. I will wait for the leader to call on me to ask my question.
3. I don't have to ask a question if I don't want.



I can ask different kinds of questions:

1. I can ask questions about the show.
2. I can ask questions about the scenery, costumes, lights, or sound.

After the show is finished, I will leave the theater with my family.





Two young storytellers, with the help of an ensemble of actors, take the stage and begin to weave the tale of Esperanza — a wealthy Mexican girl whose privileged existence is shattered when tragedy strikes, and she and her mother must flee to California. Forced to work in a migrant labor camp, Esperanza must learn to rise above her difficult circumstances and discover what she's truly made of. Set in the turbulent 1930s, and based on the popular book by Pam Muñoz Ryan, *Esperanza Rising* is a poetic tale of a young girl's triumph over adversity.



Meet the "Dream" Cast

These are the actors you will see at
the Sensory Friendly Performance on
Saturday, May 17 at 3:30 PM.

Visit firststage.org to view the full
"Dream" Cast performance schedule.

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Hi, my name is Isabel
Scardino and I play
Esperanza.

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Hi, my name is Speedy Schultz
and I play Miguel.

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Hi, my name is Jade Herrera and I
play Isabel.

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Hi, my name is Lis Rodriguez and
I play Marta.

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Hi, my name is Ellie Gutierrez and
I play Storyteller 1.

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Hi, my name is Fiona Castillo and
I play storyteller 2

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Hi, my name is Ashley Marie
Rodriguez and I play Mama.

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Hi, my name is Laura Crotte
and I play Abuelita/Hortensia.

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Hi, my name is David Flores
and I play Alfonso/Papa.



Meet the "Hope" Cast

Visit firststage.org to view the full
"Hope" Cast performance schedule.

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Hi, my name is Miranda Rose and I play
Esperanza.

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Hi, my name is Thomas Alberto Bastardo and I
play Miguel.

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Hi, my name is Aria Martinez and I play Isabel.

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Hi, my name is Erin E. Frailing and I play
Marta.

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Hi, my name is Lucia Harris and I play
Storyteller 1.

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Hi, my name is Eleanor Dysart and I play
Storyteller 2.

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Hi, my name is Ashly Marie Rodriguz and I play
Mama.

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Hortensia/Abuelita.

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Hi, my name is David Flores and I play
Alfonso/Papa.

What Happens in the Play?



(Notice the words underlined and bolded those are the times the actors and sound might get loud; you may want to cover your ears.)

“Esperanza Rising is both a Mexican story and an American story told with nine actors and two puppets. Although the play does not include everything in the book, the heart of the story is present. The audience is invited to listen and use their imagination as they watch the story unfold on stage.”

The story takes place in the year 1930 on a ranch in Aguascalientes, Mexico called “El Rancho de las Rosas” the home of Esperanza Ortega and many servants including Miguel and his parents Alfonso and Hortensia. There was a revolution in Mexico that ended over 10 years ago but there are still bad feelings against those who continue to own lots of land like Esperanza’s Papa.

For the last three weeks, workers have been harvesting and storing grapes. This is Esperanza’s favorite time of year. Esperanza is excited about her birthday which is the next day. Esperanza is alone in the garden picking roses waiting for her father who promised to meet her in the garden before sundown. **While in the garden, Esperanza picks herself with a rose thorn. Her mother shares this is a sign of bad luck.** Mamma tells Esperanza Papa is running late, and she sends Alfonso and Miguel to look for him. Mama exits and Esperanza picks up her flower basket.

What Happens in the Play?

Bad News:

Abuelita and Esperanza appear crocheting while Mama looks outside. In the study room, Abuelita tries to distract Esperanza by teaching her how to crochet a zig zag pattern. Esperanza notices Abuelita stitches the strands of hair that fall from her head into the blanket. When asked why she does this, Abuelita says, this way my love and good wishes will be in the blanket."

Mama hears riders coming. Esperanza gets up to look out. It is Tio Luis (president of town bank) and Tio Marco (town mayor), Papa's stepbrothers who hold powerful positions in Aguascalientes. They have Papa's belt buckle and Miguel is closely behind them with a lantern and news that Papa and some of his vaqueros were mending a fence on the far end of the ranch when they were attacked by bandits. No one survived.

"The rosaries, masses and funeral lasted for three whole days. Many brought food and flowers to pay their respects. This whole time, Esperanza's birthday gifts remained unopened. The gifts reminded Esperanza too much about the fiesta she was supposed to have and why it didn't happen." Mama encouraged Esperanza to open her gifts, because Papa would have wanted her too. Esperanza opens her gift and pulls out a doll. Esperanza hugs the doll and Abuelita and Mama exit the stage.

Rose Hip Tea:

A rose garden appears. The audience sees Esperanza on the ground listening to the earth. But she is too restless to hear anything. So, Esperanza decides to pick rose hips. She recalls Abuelita saying when you drink tea made from rose hips, you take in all the beauty the plant has known.

Miguel remembers when her papa planted those roses. Esperanza revealed Papa left the land to Tio Luis. However, he left the house the Mama, but Tio Luis offered to buy it. Mama said "she will not sell the house. Tio Luis offered marriage as a solution for owning the land and the house together. Mama refused to marry him.

Miguel reveals he is leaving for the United States for a chance to be more than a servant.

What Happens in the Play?



Esperanza's Bedroom:

As Esperanza prepares for bed she wonders where she would go if she had to leave Aguascalientes. Esperanza wakes up. Mama is screaming, "the house is on fire, and we must find Abuelita." Miguel and Alfonso leave to look for Abuelita and return with Abuelita who can barely walk. Abuelita's ankle is injured. The only place untouched by the flames is the servant's cabin. Esperanza and Mama sleep there for the night.

After the Fire:

The next day Esperanza noticed Tio Luis and Tio Marco who came to give their condolences for the loss of their house and to convince Mama to reconsider his marriage proposal. Esperanza shared her dissatisfaction with this request. Tio Luis tells Mama that Esperanza must have better manners. He shares his plan to investigate a boarding school which will teach Esperanza to act like a lady. Tio Luis and Tio Marco leave.

Mama reveals her plan to go to the United States with Miguel, Alfonso and Hortensia. Abuelita will not be able to travel with them. She will stay behind with her sisters because her ankle needs to heal. Esperanza doesn't respond.

The Trunk:

The day before the secret escape, Abuelita's sisters arrive with a trunk. Abuelita reveals she will not be able to communicate with Mama and Esperanza because Tio Luis and Tio Marc will be watching her correspondence. But she plans to join them in the United States when she is better. Abuelita hands Esperanza a bundle of crocheting and tells Esperanza to finish crocheting for her. Esperanza promises to finish crocheting and hugs Abuelita.

In the trunk are travel papers and clothes for Esperanza and Mama. Esperanza opens the trunk, pulls out a second-hand yellow dress and puts it on.

What Happens in the Play?



Mama and Esperanza hide in a wagon driven by Alfonso and Miguel to get to the train station. It takes two full days to get to the train station. When the locomotive arrives, they ride in a dusty train car with wooden benches, crowded with poor people in tattered clothes. Some have no shoes.

Esperanza pulls a doll out of her suitcase. The shoeless girl tries to touch the doll, but Esperanza puts it back into the suitcase. The shoeless girl cries. Mama reminds Esperanza that their lives are different now. They are just like everyone else in the train car. Peasants. Mama wraps yarn around Esperanza's hand. Mama finishes the yarn doll and hands it to the shoeless girl. The shoeless girl leaves the stage.

The sound of the train is heard. The train reaches the border. Everyone disembarks and stands in a long line. Mama and Esperanza stand with their suitcases. The immigration officer calls for the next person to come forward. As Mama hands over the documents, the immigration official snatches them and tells her there is no work for her. Mama confirms that her paperwork is in order. The immigration officer hands the documents back and welcomes them to the United States.

Mama and Esperanza must find their next train to Los Angeles. The audience hears the train. Esperanza and Mama arrive in Los Angeles. Esperanza meets Miguel's cousin Isabel who shares what Miguel has said about Esperanza in the letters he wrote while living and working on the ranch in Aguascalientes.

"They hop in an old jalopy and take a long ride to camp. They weave through golden hills, softly sculpted with rounded tops. After many hours, they stop for lunch in the shade of a single tree. Later Esperanza wanders away to an overlook where canyons plunge to an arroyo."

"Esperanza wonders if she can hear the ground from here. As Esperanza stretches out on the ground and tries to listen. She turns her back and closes her eyes. Her breathing increases. As Esperanza sits up and opens eyes, Miguel appears. Miguel apologizes to Esperanza for the things he shared with Isabel in the letters he wrote."

What Happens in the Play?

This is not Mexico:

When they arrive at the camp, there are rows and rows of wooden white cabins. Just like the ranch in Aguascalientes, the camp is surrounded by huge fields of grapes. Esperanza noticed that the cabin is not as nice as the servants' cabin in Aguascalientes and is smaller than the horses' stalls on their ranch. Mama noticed Esperanza's dissatisfaction and informed her of the benefit of staying in the cabin with Hortensia and Alfonso.

Esperanza wandered around the camp and was joined by Miguel & Isabel. Isabel revealed the workers all live and worked separately to keep them from banding together and going the strike. Isabel described a strike as workers not working until they get what they want. She also informed them the fiestas, and the Jamaica would be happening this weekend. There will be music, food, and dancing at these celebrated events.

Esperanza Meets Marta:

Marta wanted to know where Esperanza is from. Marta learned El Rancho de las Rosas was a ranch Esperanza's father owned, and Esperanza had servants and beautiful dresses. Marta began to tease Esperanza about her former life in Aguascalientes. As a result of the teasing, Esperanza does not like Marta.

Mama's Hair:

Exhausted from travelling all day, Esperanza returned to the cabin and closed her eyes. When she opened her eyes, she noticed Mama and Hortensia getting ready for work. Hortensia told Esperanza she made her a plate of tortillas, eggs and chorizo. Esperanza found out her and Isabel would be watching her baby brother and sister while everyone worked. Esperanza wanted to work too but was told she was not old enough yet to work. Esperanza noticed her mother's hair looked different. Mama explained she couldn't wear a hat with her hair in a bun to work.

As Mama and Hortensia leave, Isabel appears holding two babies (Pepe & Lupe) who need their diapers changed. Isabel changes both babies' diapers and hands them to Esperanza. Esperanza does not know what to do with the diapers. Isabel tells her to take the diapers to the toilets and dump them. As Esperanza runs offstage, Isabel brings on a washboard and tub. Esperanza returns and Isabel asks her where the diapers are. Esperanza shares "the diapers were dirty, so she put them in the trashcan." Isabel explains "they are supposed to wash the diapers in the tub." "Esperanza runs off and returns with the diapers. She holds the diapers at one corner and barely dips them in the tub. Isabel hands the baby to Esperanza. Isabel learns that Esperanza does not know how to wash clothes, so she washes and rings out the diapers herself.

What Happens in the Play?

The audience also learns that Esperanza does not know how to sweep. “In her entire life Esperanza has not held a broom in her hand. Esperanza takes the broom and swings it wildly. She is trying to remember how Hortensia would do it... Miguel appears and teaches Esperanza how to hold the broom and sweep the floor.

Miguel is frustrated because he did not get the job fixing engines. Miguel leaves. Isabel teaches Esperanza how to pin diapers, wash clothes, and put the babies to sleep. In return, Esperanza tells Isabel about her life in Aguascalientes and shows her the beautiful doll her papa gave her. After a long day with babies, Esperanza and Isabel sit under a tree and shell almonds for the Flan de almendra Isabel’s mom will be making to sell at the Jamaica tonight. Almond flan is one of Esperanza’s favorite sweets.

La Jamaica

Alfonso and Hortensia dance while Isabel and Esperanza play with the babies and Miguel drinks punch. At the Jamaica there is dancing and bingo, women are selling tamales, desserts, and delicious punch. Fiestas are so popular that people come from other camps to be there. Moments later, Marta appears holding a kitten. She shares why she feels it is important for workers to go on strike, then Marta leaves chanting “Huelga! Huelga! Huelga! Strike! Hortensia shares they can’t afford to lose their jobs. If they strike, the big farms will simply hire others. Then, what will they do.”

Ripe Plums:

Esperanza is sitting on a blanket feeding Pepe & Lupe. In the cabin, a big pot of beans sits on the stove. All the adults are working, and Isabel is away at school. So, it’s just Esperanza and the babies. Esperanza feeds the babies plums without cooking them first. As Esperanza runs off stage, Pepe & Lupe play with wood blocks. The beans are cooking nicely, and the children are falling asleep. As Esperanza pats them to sleep, she smells something, and it stinks. As Esperanza changes Lupe’s diaper, Pepe whimpers. Esperanza needs to change Lupe too. This happens again and again. She realizes they are getting sick because they ate the uncooked plums. Isabel appears and tells Esperanza Pepe and Lupe are too young for raw plums. Plums must be cooked for babies. Esperanza remembers that when she got sick like this Hortensia made her rice water. As Esperanza set out to make rice water for Pepe & Lupe, Isabel smells the beans burning. Esperanza runs off stage.

What Happens in the Play?

La Tormenta.

A dust storm comes when Alfonso and Miguel are picking grapes and Mama and Hortensia are working in the shed. "A cloud of brown looms over the mountains and the sky turned into a dark whirling fog. It started like a gentle rain and then it got harder and harder. Dirt flew everywhere. It hit the house and the roof. The wind stopped but the dust continued. There was so much dust. Mama became sick because of the dust storm... Mama lies down on a bed. Hortensia makes her some soup. Esperanza tells her mother the soup is ready. She calls for Hortensia because she notices Mama's arm is burning, and her cheeks are red. Mama is not waking up. Hortensia gets the doctor.

Valley Fever:

Esperanza sponges Mama's forehead while Isabel sits on the floor and draws pictures. The dust got into Mama's lungs and caused an infection called Valley Fever. Thankfully, there are some medications Mama can take. The doctor says it might take six months for Mama to get her strength back. Mama is still sleeping.

Esperanza finds her suitcase. She opens it, pulls out Abuelita's blanket and smells it. Esperanza grabs crochet needles and starts crocheting. Esperanza crochets more and then place the blanket over Mama. Esperanza kisses her mother. The scene changes.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Washtub:

Miguel and Isabel appear. They want to show Esperanza something they ask her to close her eyes. Alfonso brings out a shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe made from a washtub and surrounded by roses. Esperanza notices they are Papa's roses. Alfonso explains after the fire he and Miguel dug down the root. Many of the roses were still healthy, so they brought them to America with them. They were in the bag he carried with him on the train. Esperanza thanked them both. Esperanza kneels in front of the statue to pray. Miguel sings Esperanza's song. Esperanza shares her desire to work in the sheds to make money to bring Abuelita to America. Miguel tells Esperanza she is not old enough to work in the shed. He suggests she work with his mother cutting potato eyes for three weeks. Esperanza agrees with Miguel's suggestion.

Potato Eyes:

Hortensia is sitting on a crate with a burlap sack and a bin full of potatoes. Hortensia holds up a potato and tosses the potatoes chunks into the sack and Esperanza joins in.

What Happens in the Play?

La Navidad:

"Mama appears in the hospital bed. Esperanza stops cutting potatoes and starts crocheting a blanket. In the background, Hortensia is still working. On Christmas day, Esperanza visits the hospital."

"Marta appears thanking Miguel for the ride. She lets Esperanza know that her mom is praying for her mom and she provides her with information about the strikers. the scene shifts."

Tying Vines:

Alfonso prunes while Hortensia ties grapes. At the beginning of the year, thick grapevines are pruned and tied to wires stretching from post to post. Esperanza watches and then joins. From time to time, Esperanza massages her hands and return to working.

Avocado Hands:

Esperanza stares at her hands. Isabel appears holding a bowl. Hortensia places her hands in the bowl and rubs Esperanza hands. Esperanza is reminded of how her mother used to soak her hands in avocado after working in the garden.

Esperanza shared during the last hospital visit with her mother the doctor said the infection was making her mother weak. They are giving her medication for the infection, but her mother does not want to have visitors for at least a month.

Esperanza shared that when she was braiding her mother's hair, she told her not to worry. Isabel hugs Esperanza. Miguel appears sharing that he got the job at the railroad, in the machine shop.

The strike

Esperanza and Hortensia pack asparagus, Marta appears holding flyers and chanting. Esperanza and Hortensia keep working. It is asparagus season. Today is the day of the strike. Marta leaves, but the audience continues to hear chanting from time to time. One of the strikers throws a rock at one of the ladies who refuses to join them. Finally, there is silence. Hortensia stops and listens. Immigration officials appear, look around, then leave. Esperanza stops working to see what is happening. Hortensia tells Esperanza to get back to work. As Hortensia leaves, Esperanza hears a noise. Esperanza approaches a stack of crates. Marta is hiding from the immigration officers. Esperanza grabs some asparagus, takes off her apron and gives it to Marta so that she would look like a worker.

Marta goes to find her mother. Esperanza can't stop thinking about Marta. She hopes she finds her mother without getting caught. The next day, Esperanza visits the farm where Marta stayed. It's desolated except for a goat tied to a tree, crying for freedom.

What Happens in the Play?



Asparagus:

Isabel holds a bundle of asparagus while Esperanza and Hortensia measure flour, rolls dough balls, and make tortillas. Isabel shares that she loves peaches, and she hopes to be chosen as the best student in the third grade by her teacher. This student gets to be queen for a day. So, Isabel is going to pray every day that her teacher will choose her.

A very dirty Miguel appears. He shares a group of men showed up willing to do the work for half the money so his boss told him he didn't need him and said he could go dig the ditches if he wanted. When Esperanza hears this, she gets upset and throws a dough ball and leaves.

Second-Class Citizens:

Esperanza appears walking fast. She stops for a moment when she hears Miguel calling her. Miguel and Esperanza discussed their experience living in the United States as second-class citizens. Esperanza encourages Miguel to stand up for himself. Miguel tries to help Esperanza see that being in United States he has a chance to change his second-class citizen status. This is not an option for him living in Mexico. As bad as things are they must keep trying.

Prayer:

The next day Miguel is gone. Esperanza approaches Our Lady Shrine and prays for Miguel to be safe and for forgiveness of the things she said to him yesterday.

The Doll:

Esperanza keeps her mind off Miguel by working and spending time with Isabel. Esperanza ate a peach. **Isabel is sad because she did not win the opportunity to be Queen of May for a day, even though she had the best grades. The teacher said the criteria for Queen of the May consistent of more than having the best grades.** Esperanza pulls a doll out of her suitcase and offers it to Isabel. Isabel takes the doll. As Isabel holds the doll, Esperanza returns to the suitcase. She shows Isabel the money she saved to bring Abuelita to America. Only Isabel and Miguel know about the money orders. No one else. Isabel zips her lips shut and then the doll's.

What Happens in the Play?

Mama Comes Home:

The home is being prepared for Mama's return home. All week the cabin is scrubbed, blankets are washed... several crates under the tree are cushioned so Mama can recline outside during hot afternoons. Esperanza, Alfonso, Isabel, and the babies wait. Moments later, Hortensia and Mama appear. Esperanza hugs her mother. Hortensia apologizes for taking so long. She shares she wanted to show Mama Papa's roses. Esperanza tells them she wishes Abuelita could see papa's roses and her desire to bring Abuelita to America. Esperanza goes to the suitcase to show them the money-orders she saved. She digs around and finds nothing. Esperanza believes Miguel took her money orders. Mama assures Esperanza that if Miguel took them, he must have needed them. Alfonso gives her his word that all the money will be paid back.

Plums:

"Esperanza and Hortensia is sorting fruit. Mama is getting stronger and stronger every day. She still takes many naps, but she is eating well. Esperanza and Hortensia take a break and eat a plum."

"Alfonso enters and asks Esperanza to come with him. He received a message from Miguel asking him to bring Esperanza to the bus station. Esperanza and Alfonso runs off."

The Bus Station:

The bus turns the corner and pulls in front of the station. Miguel appears and Esperanza asks him about the money he took. "I brought you something better," responds Miguel. Miguel runs off and returns with Abuelita who is walking with cane. Abuelita and Esperanza hug. Abuelita asked them to take her to see her daughter. They leave.

Is this A Dream:

When arriving at the camp, Esperanza introduces Abuelita to Isabel. Abuelita pulls a stone from her pocket and gives it to Isabel. Isabel hands some wildflowers to Abuelita. Abuelita approaches Mama. Mama opens her eyes asking, is this a dream? Mama touches Abuelita's face and realizes Abuelita is real. Mama screams and hugs Abuelita. Esperanza runs off and returns with the crochet blanket and shows it to Abuelita. Esperanza hands one end to Mama. As Abuelita, helps Esperanza finish the blanket. Abuelita shares how she got to America. Isabel notices a strand of hair falling from Esperanza's head and her sewing it into the blanket. She inquires why she made that choice. Esperanza explained it in the say way Abuelita explained it to her "my love and good wishes will be in the blanket. Esperanza asked Isabel if she would like to learn to crochet? Isabel responses, "she might mess it up." Esperanza encourages her not to be afraid to try and start over. Abuelita asked Esperanza to share with her what has happened since she last saw her. Esperanza shares the event as a field worker, in spans of fruits and vegetables.

What Happens in the Play?



Esperanza's Birthday:

Days before her birthday, Esperanza and Miguel drive to the foothills before sunrise. As Esperanza breaths in the air papa appears. Both Esperanza and papa lay on their stomachs on the ground. "As they listen, Miguel appears. Esperanza pats the ground, Miguel joins her, and they listen. After a few moments they hear the land's heartbeat." Esperanza's song is sung. Esperanza holds out her hand and Miguel takes it. The audience hears the land's heartbeat beating louder and louder. Black out.

End of play.