

The Comfort of numbers

Paulina Barros Reyes Retana

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Fine Arts
in the Theatre Arts Program of the School of the Arts

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
September 4th 2013

Characters:

Alicia: early thirties. Mexican born and raised, lives abroad.

Pierre: Mid thirties. Experimental physicist, works at a lab in a recognized university.

Aura: Pre-teen/teenager. Has Asperbergers. David and Sylvia's daughter.

Sylvia: Late forties/early fifties. Experimental physicist, Pierre's boss. Aura's mother and David's wife.

David: Late forties/early fifties. Musician and composer. Aura's father and Sylvia's husband.

Minor roles:

Magician: (Played by David) Wonders around Mexico city.

Translator: (Played by guitarist) Hangs around a café, where Alicia and Pierre meet.

Dance teacher: (Played by Alicia) Aura's zapateado teacher.

And the music band: A flexible number of *son jarocho* musicians, minimum a guitarris and the bass player (dancer).

Opening Scene

There are certain chords of music intertwined in the dialogue.

Silvia: If this is what the future looks like.

Pierre: This is what the future feels like.

Silvia: If this is it.

Alicia: This is what it feels like.

Pierre: This is it.

Alicia: The path that lead me here.

Silvia: This is my time. It's mine and it's yours.

Alicia: May the future be kind to us. May time let us pass by.

David: May time be kind to us.

Pierre: May the arrow of the universe never be pointed at us.

Silvia: May the arrow of the universe be pointed at us,

Alicia: take us for a ride.

Julia: Ojalá

David: May time go by easy and light.

Alicia: Ojalá.

Pierre: May the arrow of time push us forward.

Julia: Ojalá. Ojalá. Ojalá.

Silvia: One thing is certain, it will not stop. It never does.

Scene I

In the lab

The place has a couple of prisms and crystals (beam splitters) and possibly mirrors distributed around the place. There should be an apparatus that shoots a laser beam (like an old camera or a thin telescope)

Pierre steps in. (He is wearing a wedding ring)

Silvia: Hello...

Pierre: I'm Pierre.

Silvia: Oh! I wasn't expecting you until Monday.

Pierre: I made it a bit early...

Had a few extra vacation days.

Pierre is inspecting the place, touches things, makes Silvia nervous.

Pierre: You have a very nice set up.

Silvia: ...Thanks.

Pierre: Did you do it all by yourself?

Silvia: Well, yes.

Pierre: *(Pleased with himself)* I'm lucky you picked me.

Silvia: You were highly recommended, and insisted upon. By doctor Hans.

Pierre: Huh.

Pierre: Where's the rest of the team.

Silvia: You're here.

...

Pierre: The Cramer groupies.

Silvia lets out a faint polite smile.

Pierre: the Cramer loonies.

Silvia: The behavior of these photons seem to be pointing at the future causing the past.

Pierre: Of course.

Silvia: The counter has been recording events for a while now, you can start analyzing the last batch.

Pierre: OK.

Scene II

In the kitchen.

David: We have an appointment at the school tomorrow.

Silvia: We'll finally get results from the data interpretation tomorrow, can we go next week?

David: This is the third time we reschedule, you know how they are at that school.

Silvia: What is it about?

David: I don't know, but we wanted special attention for Aura and that's what this is.

This is Silvia's coping mechanism.

It becomes apparent she feels really at ease and centered when she's in that world of ideas.

Silvia: Locality versus non-locality. Locality means we can follow the chain of events: everything that happens is because there is a cause before an effect in direct contact to each other.

David: Maybe it's about Aura's problem with Daniel, it's been going on for a while.

Silvia: (*To them*) Hmm... (*defensive*) Nonlocality means things can be affected by things that are far apart from them.

David: Daniel has been hitting her, she came back with a bruise in her cheek last week.

Aura: I punched him because he was wearing a green shirt, again.

David: You punched him...

Aura: And then he punched me.

David (To Silvia): Our daughter is punching guys.

Silvia: Like magic. And then comes Bell and proves that such thing is real.

David: You can't go punching people, you hurt them, then they'll hurt you back.

Aura:...

David: You can't hurt people for wearing a color. Before this was Kelly and her flower patterns...

Silvia: And now we have a problem, because such idea violates our deepest understandings of how the world is. I mean, Einstein kept arguing that nonlocality simply couldn't be.

Aura: You should not wear patterns on weekdays.

David: This has been going on for too long with too many people...

Aura: If Daniel wears his green sweatshirt again something terrible will happen.

Silvia: Even Bohr though nonlocality was bogus, Bohr! But now it turns out it isn't.

David: There's no way to know what will happen!

Silvia: And we are left to come up with a way to accommodate that to the ideas that we really like, like relativity. Because relativity gets the job done in matching mathematical concepts with our experience of the world.

...

David: What I meant is that nothing bad will happen.

Silvia: Strong, safe, knowledgeable mathematics. And voilà, you have a group of people orbiting around the strangest possibilities to describe how the world really is.

(In earnest) It's just... We are missing something breathtakingly deep about it.

David: Right, Silvia? Nothing bad will happen.

Silvia: *(to the family)* ...Right. So we'll reschedule?

Scene III

She is having a conversation in her mind with Aura.

Silvia: So I came into my lab to keep orbiting, I mean working. You see, I know how to solve equations, I have a natural intuition for that.

David: That's Silvia, she swims like a fish in the sea of math. A beautiful silver fish.

Silvia: Cold like silver, hard like it.

I was lucky that David married me, I've always thought he was deceived in some way.

I deceived him.

I'm a deceiver.

So then life gives me a daughter. A beautiful scrawny daughter, and I don't know what to do about her, what to do with this piece of meat. "She's ugly" I think to myself.

Aura: don't think that, that's not for mothers to think.

Silvia: And then she cries, she mistreats me, and I think, "why am I supposed to want you if you mistreat me?"

I was holding your hand, like any mother. Like one does. You know, we were any mother and daughter doing the groceries in a warm Monday afternoon. I was doing my part in a mindful and careful way. And then, I unleashed the monster.

I don't even know how I unleash it, the one that lives inside you and looks at me with its oblique eyes and laughs in silence.

Aura: I'm coming out.

Silvia: It tells me without words, and I shiver, I shiver but I try to hold it, return a hard face to the sharp smile. We are at war and one day I shall win a battle.

I didn't win the battle at the supermarket. When the monster came out it swept everything in sight, like always. The ice cream cartons, the little boy with his stuffed helicopter, everything swirling around us, shattering in tiny little pieces of glass, screeching as they hit the floor; the alarm goes off. The world starts to melt.

We were in the desserts aisle, or the dairy... It was a cold aisle, I remember that much. It was cold, so I asked her: "Aura, put your sweater on"

Aura: No

Silvia: Why not?

Aura: I don't wear yellow over blue. I have my blue dress on.

Silvia: But you're cold, you're shivering.

Aura shrugs.

Or did I try to put it on you myself? Of course not, that would be stupid.. Maybe I did, I always do stupid things. Like bringing the yellow sweater when you have the blue dress on. I'm stupid or handicapped. I don't have a rubber arm for my daughter to bite, twist, tear off and toss.

When you bite I bleed.

That afternoon I just wanted my blood doing its usual trip around my veins. —Some days are like that, you feel like the world is in place for your river to flow without detours. But the bite comes without notice, the monster shows up with the most unexpected face. Like a yellow sweater.

I could've simply kept quiet, let you shiver.

Aura: A mother doesn't do that, she makes sure the temperature is right, warm and cozy.

Silvia: The angular mouth opens wide, grows and grows, sings my nightmares. I'm terrified. I can see in your eyes that you're afraid too, oblivious of how you horrify the world.

Your own mother, terrified by you, the dislocated beast sweeping off my mother and daughter at the supermarket day.

Something snaps inside me.

It snaps and I lose connection to you. You flee, go to Venus or Mars, no dialogue with the earth. The cruel mother drags her daughter out, sweeping the floors with the blue dress.

I talked, I begged, I think I even prayed. But the Venus tremor wouldn't calm down. That was the first time I realized:

I can't do this.

I am not well.

Scene IV

Silvia is finishing packing. She closes the suitcase takes a deep breath and picks it up.

As she is leaving Pierre picks up the microphone, he talks while she does the action.

Pierre: I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to the big theme: the arrow of time. You know how time just keeps moving forward? You can't touch time, but it's real, you can see it in how the sun goes up and comes down everyday, and you can feel it too, in your heart rate, or the wrinkle that wasn't there a few weeks ago, or the memories you have from your last birthday party.

*She gives a few steps towards the door, then stops and looks back. She resumes her walking.
Leaves.*

Scene V

Pierre and Alicia's house.

Pierre is cooking. Alicia is looking at the DVD of Dirty Dancing.

Alicia: You know? I think I'm finally ready to throw this away.

Pierre: (Dirty Dancing). We've only seen that movie twenty three and a quarter times. Why would you want to get rid of it?

Alicia: I think I don't need it anymore. I'm feeling hopeful.

Pierre: Nahhh, really? we obviously need the sacred totem to protect us from all harm.

Alicia: Of course we did! How else was I supposed to keep the bad days away?

Pierre: So now you're out of bad days for good?

Alicia: I think so. Twenty three and a quarter? Have you been counting?

Pierre looks at her.

Alicia: Naturally... When was the quarter?

Pierre: That night you had a cold, you fell asleep in minute eighteen.

Alicia: And I was good as new next morning.

Pierre: It was the movie, no doubt.

Alicia: What are you doing with such precision?

Pierre: Chopping onions...

Alicia: I can see that. I mean, what are you making?

Pierre: My specialty, rabbit. We need more onions.

Alicia: I had to marry you to find out you have a cooking specialty?

Pierre: ... It takes me some time to prepare, mentally I mean.

Alicia: ... Onions a la rabbit.

Pierre: You can have this as your new doomsday saver.

Alicia: OK.

Pierre: I'll do it for you, as soon as you feel a bad day coming.

Alicia: Just like that, out of an impulse?

Pierre: Yes. Why?

Alicia: Nom'as... When did you plan this cooking session?

Pierre: Well, last week. But that's because I knew I had the night off from the lab, you have to stick to a schedule, you know?

Alicia: I love you.

Pierre: Because I cook doomsday food for you?

Alicia: Yes, but maybe not rabbit for comfort.

Pierre: You don't like it?

Alicia: I like rabbits out of hats better than served on a plate.

Pierre: keep the DVD, just in case, we don't want to push our luck.

Alicia: I'm going to get your onions, how many?

Pierre: Five. Big ones. Look for the more round ones, and not too white.

Alicia: Five?... OK

Scene VI

Silvia is at her lab, scribbling next to a mountain of papers. The suitcase is there.

David comes in, they look at each other for a few seconds.

Silvia: Hi.

David: Aura asked about you.

Silvia: She did?

David: Twice.

Silvia: What did you tell her?

David: That you were coming tonight.

Silvia: You shouldn't lie to your children.

...

David: You shouldn't disappear on them without saying a word.

Silvia: I did not disappear (*she pats her arm*). I was sort of hoping ...

David: So tonight, tomorrow, next week?

Silvia:... Don't tell her anything yet.

David: You didn't take much stuff.

Silvia: I can do without things.

David: The question is if they can do without you.

Silvia laughs.

Silvia: Sure they can.

David: Want to hear my new song tonight? I'm having trouble finishing it.

Silvia: ... (*troubled*) I have this thing to solve. We have a deadline, I'm way behind.

David: That's OK, when you're done with work. I don't go to bed early.

Silvia looks at him, smiling painfully.

Silvia: I don't think I'll make it.

David: Tomorrow then? Next week?

Silvia: David...

David: It's a great piece, you'll like it.

Silvia: I don't know! OK? You can tell Aura that. Her mother doesn't have all the answers.

David: This is not a grand mystery of the universe, this is you making a fifteen-minute trip/

Silvia: (*Very low voice*) I don't think I'm coming back...

David: Mhhh?

Silvia: I don't think I can go back.

David starts laughing.

David: Oh that's funny.

He laughs some more.

David: Aura is going to find that very funny. That's what I'll tell her.
We'll have a good laugh.

Silvia: ...

David: ...

Silvia: I'm sorry.

...

David: This is unexpected...

Silvia: Yeah.

...

Silvia: Yeah, for me too...

David: How is that...?

Silvia: ...I don't know...

David: OK... I'm just gonna let you figure it out.

As David is leaving:

Silvia: Hon? Don't tell her that...

David looks at her, he looks very sad for a second.

Silvia: So we had a daughter.

David: A precious dazzling daughter.

Silvia: A fragile little monster.

David: So beautiful you couldn't touch her.

Silvia: So fragile she could break you if she squeezed too hard-

David: A sharp untouchable angel.

Silvia: You can't touch, you can't speak with

David: ... Well.

Silvia: Well what?

David: Sounds familiar.

Silvia: You think she got it from me?

David: I didn't say that.

Silvia: You think I gave her autism.

David: She's not autistic.

Silvia: ...I'm sorry.

David: I don't think you gave it to her.

Silvia: Sometimes I do.

David: So we have a daughter and after a while we realize there is something not quite right about her. She's so quiet and still.

Silvia: Except for when she cries endlessly. And you don't know why and she won't give you a clue.

David: You just want to hold her, but she shies away.

Silvia: She's very smart, it's like math runs through her veins.

David: I couldn't hold her so I would make music for her. Sometimes she liked that.

Silvia: Sometimes.

David: Silvia? Our daughter has a real problem.

Silvia: Yeah, she does.

David: So one doctor, two doctors, three and four.

Silvia: Asperbergers they say.

David: No cure they said.

Silvia: Not so bad they also said.

David: And it's not, that's true, we just have to keep working on it every day.

Silvia: An angel so fragile she will burn you to ashes if she looks at you.

Scene VII

Alicia is on the phone. (Alicia is wearing a wedding ring)

Pierre: I thought you had phone phobia.

Alicia: Oh, but here you don't have to speak, look.

Alicia hands the phone to Pierre, Pierre listens.

Speaker: This terror, then, this darkness of the mind,
Not sunrise with its flaring spokes of light,
Nor glittering arrows of morning can disperse,
But only Nature's aspect and her law,
Which, teaching us, hath this exordium:
Nothing from nothing ever yet was born.

Pierre: What's that?

Alicia: A Poet's hotline.

Pierre: What for?

Alicia: What for? I don't know... What do you mean? Nothing is for nothing.

Pierre: Exactly.

Alicia: No, I mean things don't have to have a use, a goal.

Pierre: Yes, they do... Most of them at least.

Alicia: Well, none the important ones.

Pierre: The important ones are a goal on themselves.

Alicia: Cómo... Like something you'll get to?
No! what matters is where you are now, not where you'll probably be in some imaginary future.

...

Pierre: Probable imaginary future.

Alicia: a nice probable imaginary future.

Pierre finds that cute, but gets distracted by something that worries him.

Pierre: With all your goals accomplished.

Alicia: Exactly, had a good time, I'm having a good timee, I will have a good time.

Pierre: That's not possible.

Alicia: What, to always have a good time?

Pierre laughs

Pierre: To want nothing BUT that.

Alicia: Watch me.

Pierre laughs

Alicia: Don't laugh at me!

Pierre: OK... *Keeps laughing*

Alicia: You are weird.

Pierre: Oh, I am weird?

They look at each other, baffled by the other's ideas.

Scene VIII

*David is home, he's composing a new piece, pencil in hand.
Aura is sitting nearby, her back to her dad.*

*Whenever David writes a chord, the band starts playing, the
music dies when David stops writing. When he gets stuck, they
play the same accord various times.*

*When he talks to his daughter his mind is with the piece,
keeps looking at his notes.*

David: Aura, go do your homework...

*Aura doesn't react, except because she rocks herself back and
forth.*

David: You've been sitting there for hours, go do something.

...

David looks at her.

David: Aura, are you listening?

...

David: I know you're listening, look at me.

Aura hides her head between her knees and keeps rocking herself.

David: Please?

...

David goes to Aura and holds her arm, to make her stop rocking. Aura takes David's hand away from her and looks at him.

David: I love you. You know that, don't you?

Alicia: Aura is sad because she doesn't know if her mother is coming back, she thinks it's her fault, she is sad and scared but can't express it.

David: Can I hold you?

Aura looks down, her body tenses up.

David: Ok. I won't.

...

David: Come, sit down with me. You know there's math in music? I'll show you.

Aura doesn't move.

David: Pythagoras decided to investigate why there were chords that sounded good. This one sounds good, right?

He plays a C major chord

David: So he measured the length of the strings that produce the sounds and saw there's a mathematical ratio between them.

David: Hey, I hear you, this sucks.

David plays for Aura, who is sitting by him.

Scene IX

Silvia is taking measurements. Pierre enters.

Pierre: Good morning.

Silvia: You're cheerful today.

Pierre: You're early.

Silvia: We need to give results by the end of the month.

Pierre: And we will.

Silvia: There's not enough time.

Pierre: "There's more time than life"... Mexican wisdom.

Silvia: What does that even mean, that's nonsense.

Pierre: I'm not quite sure, but they use it to say "there's enough time, so take it easy".

Silvia: Well, it's exactly the opposite, isn't? If life is shorter than time then you need to hurry to stack up as much time as you can in your slot.

Pierre: Are you OK?

Silvia: I'm fine!

...

Pierre: OK...

Silvia: I am. Why?

Pierre observes her.

Silvia: What? Why? Do I have a sign that reads "monster"?

Pierre: What happened?

Silvia: Nothing... I'm sorry.

Pierre: Nothing?

Silvia: I moved out.

Pierre: From... Aura?

Silvia: and David.

Pierre: ...

Silvia: Aura will be fine.

Pierre takes out a piece of chocolate.

Pierre: Here.

Silvia: ...

Pierre observes her, trying to figure out how much room there is for him to speak his mind.

Pierre: You think you're making it better for her?

Silvia laughs, uncomfortable.

Pierre: No, really, do you think so?

Silvia: I think that any change in the present condition of the world will necessarily change its past and future.

Pierre: I don't understand, what does that mean? If you leave then maybe you change the past... like she never got it, or change the future like she can get rid of it?

Silvia: I mean I make it worse by being there.

Pierre: Well, It's always comforting to think there is a secret behind what afflicts us, but you know...

Silvia: ...

Pierre: It's one of these chancy things, there's nothing else to it...

Silvia has a moment of recognition.

A machine beeps. Aura reads it.

Aura: Message from Dr Hans: need your assertion on our topic as soon as possible: is there a causal connection or we just have good reasons to believe in one in its absence?

Silvia: We are never going to make it on time.

Pierre: We'll get the deadline extended.

Silvia: Dr. Hans is going to take away the funding.

Pierre: Eat the chocolate, you'll feel better.

Scene X

David and Silvia are sitting face to face at a table.

David: Aura didn't want to come, she doesn't like noisy places.

Silvia: I know.

...

David: So...

Silvia: How's it going?

David: Oh you know, not much... my wife left a few days ago, I have no idea what's going on inside her head.

...

Silvia: How do you feel about that?

David: Like there's a funeral I should be attending but no one has organized it.

Silvia: To bury me alive?

David: That's actually a great idea.

Silvia: You don't want to become a criminal on my account.

David: It wouldn't be on your account, it would be on Aura's. That way she could go talk to her mom whenever she wanted to.

Silvia: Except she never wants to.

David: You think.

Silvia: I know

...

David: So...

Silvia: I miss you.

David: Want to be my lover? I'm sorry I'm taken, I have a wife.

Silvia: You love her?

David: She's beautiful.

Silvia: And lucky.

David: And presumably dead.

Silvia: There's this Mexican song "she wasn't dead, she was partying"

David: She's not the party type.

Silvia: Please send me an invitation to the funeral then.

David: I will.

Silvia: Really, I miss you.

David: So do we.

Silvia: We?

David: We are a family.

Silvia: What about being a couple.

David: Like start dating as if it were fifteen years ago?

Silvia: You were playing in that band, the lonely numbers.

David: Very on point for those science parties.

Silvia: You know? I never come to these parties.

David: Really?

Silvia: It's a fluke that I'm here talking to you.

David: Good luck I guess.

Silvia: I guess so.

David: Except that's not what you said.

Silvia: No?

David: I said: Hi there.

Silvia looks at him with suspicion.

Silvia: Nice noise you have going on there.

David: You think so? Thanks!

Silvia: I don't like parties, I hate bad music, but this lab problem is killing me, had to change the scenery.

David: Well, I'm glad you did.

Silvia smiles

Silvia: I'm glad I did too.

They are about to kiss. David pulls out.

David: We can't act as if Aura didn't happen.

Silvia: ...

David: You can come home if you want to.

Silvia: ...

David: Think about it.

Scene XI

Alicia and Julia are in zapateado class. This scene takes shape according to who the band is and if they have a zapateado dancer. Julia is the teacher.

Son Jarocho music playing.

Julia: *(While she dances)* Café café café. Ahora t'u.

Alicia does it, more like tries it.

Alicia: OK, ah'i va.

There's an exchange of "café café café" steps back and forth. It's not smooth, as Alicia is learning.

Julia: Again.

Alicia does it. Struggles

Julia: I'll do it and play with time, you follow my lead.

They start speaking in Spanish among them while dancing.

They are in the middle of it, concentrated when Pierre breaks in.

Pierre: I'm sorry, don't mind me.

Pierre crosses and goes to sit.

Alicia: What are you doing here?

Pierre: Please, go on.

Alicia: Pierre...

Pierre: Ehhh... Nothing. I just missed you.

Alicia looks at him, suspicious

Alicia: Want to dance with us?

Pierre: Hah... No, you don't want to see me dancing.

Alicia: Yes we do! *(To Julia)* We do, right?

Julia: Ehhh... Sure.

Alicia: Come here.

Pierre: ...

Alicia grabs him by the hand and takes him center.

Alicia: Here, you stand like that and/

Pierre: I don't want to.

Alicia: It's fun.

Julia exits silently.

Pierre wants to walk away but Alicia tries to retain him.

Pierre: I said no.

Alicia: Anda... No seas así.

Pierre laughs uncomfortably while trying to get out of Alicia's grip, but she is adamant to bring him to the dancing floor.

Pierre: Alicia... No. I just came to watch.

Alicia: Dancing is meant to be done, not seen. C'mon.

Pierre loses his patience and takes Alicia's hands away from him.

Pierre: Leave me alone.

...

Change of light/ Position

Pierre: Then we had a huge fight.

Alicia: He went crazy.

Pierre: She has to be so pushy all the time

Alicia: All because I want him to have a nice time.

Pierre: Alicia, it's really annoying to feel you're putting me to the test.

Alicia: Well then, just keep in mind that I'm not. Not even when you think I am.

Pierre: No, you keep it in mind and stop doing it.

Alicia: Do what!

Pierre: This! Ever since we got married you always want me to/ (go one bit further).

Alicia has a moment of recognition

Alicia: Ever since we got married? In kindergarden they called me Alicia wooden knife. You know, I used to be (she does the representation with her hands)...

Pierre: You were? I'm telling you: you are.

Alicia: Fine... if you say so.

Scene XII

In the top of the building of the lab.

Alicia: Do you hear that? I love how the wind blows.

Pierre: I thought you wanted to see the laser, the beam splitters and the lenses, not the roof.

Alicia: We'll see them later; you have to climb to the top to know a building's core.

Pierre: Well, the core of this one is very shabby then.

Alicia: I like it.

Pierre: I don't.

Alicia: Don't worry, I'll protect you. I mean, if you want.

Pierre: Errrr...

Pierre gives her his hand, afraid.

Alicia: Let's see the tiny people.

Pierre tries, but backs out, Alicia doesn't push him, she walks to the edge by herself.

Pierre: ... come here.

Alicia: It's not high at all... Well, not that high anyway.

Pierre: We are not allowed to be here.

Alicia is walking towards the edge, trying to carry Pierre.

Alicia: When I was little my mom used to take me to the top of her office —54th floor— it was the tallest building in miles. Everything looked super small underneath.

Pierre: Are you suicidal or just plain irresponsible?

Alicia: Look, how tiny we really are, bug size. Our ant time against the elephant universe.

Pierre: Yeah yeah, I've seen it, let's go inside.

Alicia: Mi amor, your hands are sweating.

Pierre: Please come here.

Alicia: Ok, ok. Let's go.

Alicia holds Pierre's hand and does a small jump to get to the door, somehow she lands the wrong way and lets go of Pierre's hand, Pierre's face is of horror.

Scene XIII

It's Aura's birthday, David and Aura are in front of a cake that has candles in it. That's the only light that lights

them. David and Aura start singing Las mañanitas (Mexican birthday song) after the first few lines. They applaud and Aura blows the candles. There's a complete blackout. In the dark the live band performs the complete song.

Scene XIV

Alicia leaves, we see a flash of light and Pierre's face of horror.

Video projection: Sun beams go through tree leaves. A feminine shape swirls like suspended from a rope.

Numbers start to appear like melted and deformed shapes, that little by little will become clearer.

In the lab

Pierre: I'm standing there, feet pinned to the ground, steel nails trespassing my feet making sure I stand; watching but not moving.

You know how they say that when you're free falling you don't feel your own weight? "Huh, I guess Alicia doesn't feel her weight" Did I think about that? A split second, not enough room for that many words.

The race down the stairs, if Alicia felt weightless I felt the weight of the world falling on me.

Is she OK? Of course she is, if she weren't the world would never move again. Alicia pushes the world with her breath.

I still get amazed about the world doing its causal dance, how's the sky still there, why can I still eat cereal in the mornings if Alicia is not here anymore...

I'm finally out the door, everything was spinning at the speed of light. Broken sounds, unconnected body parts, screams, inscrutable instructions.

Silvia: Don't move her, you might hurt her.

Pierre: Does it hurt?

Alicia: Un poquito... No mi amor, don't make that face, it doesn't hurt, I'm OK.

Pierre: Don't touch her, she's made out of paper. I promised I'd hold her forever. I made the promise to her. A paper promise.

Alicia: Hold my hand?

Pierre: I was touching her, I had her hand in mine, but she couldn't feel it. I try to touch her with my words instead. Little snow flakes covering her eyes.

Alicia: I see things going to white.

Pierre: It's the flakes, love, are you cold?

Alicia: Pobrecito... I'm not cold, I'm burning inside, my ribs are on fire. Talk to me, give me more flakes to burn the fire out.

Pierre: Where's the ambulance? Everything moves so slowly. Did I tell her I love you? Of course I did. I always do, even now.

Then the old woman came and said something I couldn't understand, maybe a curse on us. Was it an old woman? I look again, this time it's a young girl. I look for a third time, there's a young man instead.

Alicia: "That's you mi amor" **Pierre (imitating her):** "That's you mi amor"

Pierre: Is it? Did I curse us?

Was it planned? Like the rest of the world, everything mathematically planned to the last leaf. The course of the stars and the speed of the rotation of the earth, all part of the same plan. The magnificent equation. We all dance to the music of the numbers. I tune in to that melody, I always have: additions, subtractions, I'm lost now. I can't get the result, I can't calculate it. Will you be alright?

Alicia: I will, I just need to sleep for a while. Can I fall sleep?

Pierre: No, don't sleep, it's not time, look, the sun is out.

Alicia: It's bright. Brighter than a thousand suns. I'll try.

Pierre: And she did. She tried. If I multiply by one half the square of the result of the vector the algorithm will change. Maybe not. Maybe the answer was not multiplying but choosing a different basis, I can't think in the middle of all that. Not while I'm been blinded by the light, her light pouring out of her gurgling broken chest, how can so much light be contained in such small mass?

The tears blur the new world I'd have to see for the rest of my life.

As a projection we see first numbers trying to form equations that melt and tingle, little by little an equation will become clear, the rest of the visual noise will disappear. (N.B. Find a proper equation for Cramer's backward causation

in Wheeler and Feynman electrodynamics theory, 1945 or in Cramer, 1980 368-370)

Was I crying? I don't know, I can easily cry but maybe I didn't think this was a good time. The old woman or girl or young man gave me a tissue. Maybe he came from the world of the dead to hold Alicia's hand.

Him instead of me.

Him and not I.

Him, walking down the aisle with her. That's the sharpest image I have. The one image I'm sure I did not see. It's the more real one.

Him, wearing my clothes, walking down the aisle on my wedding. Certainly theirs will be a longer marriage. A more successful one.

Eternal.

Light changes and the equation in the projections becomes brighter.

Silvia is observing them, taking them in.

Scene XV

Pierre walks in, a suitcase in hand, he looks confused. There are signs in Spanish. Sounds of a city.

David: Pierre thought learning Spanish was a way to get her wife back. At least a little piece of her.

All the actors cross the stage every now and then, they look a bit different still they are recognizable. Pierre looks at them, disoriented.

Pierre (to Julia): Disculpe, para llegar a la colonia San Rafael?

Julia points to the bus stop. Pierre goes to sit.

David: La colonia San Rafael was Alicia's childhood neighborhood, she had told him about it so much that Pierre had an imaginary map tattooed in his head.

Alicia: Don't forget to try the tamales in the corner of the plaza, say hi to Don Sebastian for me.

Pierre: ...And then sit on the kiosco morisco to eat them...

Alicia: When the night is falling and the park is the couples' playground.

Pierre: I can't do that. Not without you.

Alicia: But you came here to be with me.

Pierre: and I can't find you.

Pierre steps into the imaginary bus. Does the awkward interchange with the driver, he has no idea how you're supposed to do things.

David: Pierre's loneliness fell on him all at once, he had never felt so alone, there sitting on the bus stop he felt like he was the sole inhabitant of the planet.

Pierre is traveling sitting in the pesero, as the motion in his body lets it show.

Alicia: Mexico is another planet, I've told you a thousand times.

Pierre: I keep thinking I see people I know, people that have no reason to be here, like you.

Alicia: Had we come last year, I would have showed you everything, my school, my favorite tree/

Pierre: But I had to start my post doc.

Alicia: You know where to find my favorite tree.

Pierre: In the corner of Fresno and Heliotropo.

Alicia starts laughing.

Alicia: Heliotropo mi amor, he-liooootro-po.

Pierre: Stop making fun of me, I'm staying to learn Spanish.

Alicia: There is no physics here/

Pierre: You mean there's no gravity in this part of the world? I think all the laws of physics are in place...

Alicia: No labs for you to do experiments, no people walking in lab coats, only the warm colors, the round geometry.

Pierre: I want it all.

Alicia: You just missed the stop.

Pierre: What stop? There was no stop!

Alicia: You ring the bell, the pesero stops and you get off, back there in front of the red house.

Pierre: How was I supposed to know?!

Alicia: You know, the red house where that ugly old woman lived, the one that yelled at me "hija bastarda!!" for stealing the apples from her tree.

Pierre: Bastarda... What a funny word, you used to say it all the time.

Alicia: She was really mean, labeling me like that.

Julia (To Alicia): Poniendo el dedo en la llaga.

Alicia: Exacto, sticking the finger in the wound... Pero mi amor, aren't you gonna get off? I don't want you walking through the streets of El molinito, that's a very bad neighborhood.

Pierre: Right, right.

Pierre gets up, rings the bell, gets off the bus.

Alicia: You didn't come here to get stabbed, did you?

Pierre: Wouldn't be so bad.

Alicia: No, not in my city. Now turn right to find the tree.

Pierre stops, he's contemplating the tree.

Alicia comes and stands next to him, they hold hands. Alicia kisses him. Pierre looks very sad.

Then Alicia lets his hand go and disappears.

Scene XVI

He's at the beach

Pierre is writing a short equation in the sand. Erases it and writes it again.

Aura goes and sits next to him, looking at the equation.

Pierre: You like it?

Aura nods Pierre looks at the equation, it seems he's looking at it for the first time.

Aura: What's that?

Pierre: I'm not sure...

Aura: Is it special?

Pierre is still looking at it, thinking.

Aura: Does it have a secret message? Equations have messages. I like to read equations.

Pierre: Might be.

Aura: A secret message of love. My mother says there is love in numbers, that is why she spends so much time with them.

Pierre: ...You think she is right?

Aura doubts but then she nods.

Aura: Maybe this was sent from someone by another dimension. I sometimes think about that, my father doesn't like it, so I stop saying it. But maybe this one is.

Pierre (with a faint smile): Mmhm.

Aura: We could ask my mother, but she left, my father says she is not coming back.

Pierre: I'm sorry.

Aura: Why?

Pierre: I don't know.

Aura: Are you sad?

Pierre: Why? Do I look sad?

Aura shrugs.

Aura: I don't know, I can't read sad faces, or happy ones. I had a notebook with different faces and what they meant, but it got very confusing in my head so mister Anderson told me I could leave it home.

Pierre: I am sad.

Aura: When I am sad I also do math.

Pierre: You like numbers.

Aura: Statistics are my favorite, a map of how the world might turn out.

Pierre: the probabilities of one thing going one-way or the other. Or not going at all.

Aura: I get scared if I think long and hard about it. It's like you can rely on numbers telling you it's going to be OK but at the end they only give you a maybe.

Pierre: I guess we have to take it and be content with that.

Aura looks at him with interest.

Aura: But what if the number for the thing you want is not high enough?

Pierre laughs bitterly.

Pierre: It doesn't matter, at the end your particular case can turn out either way. You can only hope things go your way.

Aura: Still... It's reassuring to know bad things are improbable. Right?

Pierre: Improbable, but never impossible.

Silvia: Physicists work a lot with Statistical mechanics. That is applying probability theory—a mathematical tool—to study the behavior of large number of particles systems.

Silvia writes in a blackboard.

Aura is getting scared.

Aura: So you better stay in the corner of your room.

Pierre: I guess the best way to go about is to know that no matter which way the coin lands it's going to be OK.

David goes to them, he comes in a hurry.

Silvia writes down a small drawing of a square with particles in it.

Aura: ... But how?

Silvia: And then we relate the properties of these microscopic particles to the macroscopic properties of things we can see in everyday life, like you or me.

Pierre shrugs, he doesn't have a clue.

Pierre: Know that you are going to be OK.

David: Aura, you were supposed to be taking a bath.

Silvia: In other words, it gives us the ability to make macroscopic predictions based on average microscopic properties.

Aura: There was a butterfly inside the bathtub.

Drawing in the blackboard:

Silvia: Our starting point is the fundamental postulate: Given an isolated system in equilibrium, it is found with equal probability in each of its accessible microstates.

David: You know not to get into other people's business.

Aura: We were talking about odds.

Silvia: This means that a system in equilibrium does not have any preference for any of its available microstates.

Drawing in the blackboard: Given Ω microstates at a particular energy, the probability of finding the system in a particular microstate is $p = 1/\Omega$.

David: Go back to the room and take a bath.

Aura: I was doing small talk.

Silvia: We conclude that for a system at equilibrium, the macrostate which could result from the largest number of microstates is also the most probable macrostate of the system.

David: Good. Now go.

Silvia: This gives us the information function: You plug in the numbers and there you have it: your probabilities for a particular event to happen.

Blackboard drawing: $I = -\sum \rho \ln \rho = \langle -\ln \rho \rangle$

Aura: Do you believe it?

Pierre: What?

Aura: That no matter which way the coin lands you're gonna be OK?

Pierre: ...Yes. I do.

Aura starts walking away.

David follows his daughter. Pierre Looks at the sea.

Scene XVII

Pierre talks on skype from the beach.

Silvia is at the lab

Silvia: I finally got you!

Pierre:...

Silvia: Have you read what I sent you?

Pierre: Yes...

Silvia: We can feel at ease, we'll get funding for the next ten years...

Pierre: Huh.

Silvia: The lab next door will have to change their methodology, find a new direction.

Pierre: ah.

Silvia: And the French are going to be raging with envy, we got there first! why are you not excited?

Pierre: ...

Silvia: Pierre we could win the Wolf prize next year.

Pierre: I don't want a prize. I don't want to do physics anymore.

Silvia: Nonsense, we've been working towards this all of our lives...

Pierre: (*disapproving*) I know...

Silvia: It was the smoothest mathematical process I've ever done, didn't have to go back once.

Pierre: I think it was Alicia.

...

Silvia: OK... Well... this should be a reason to feel better.

Pierre: Now the numbers won't stop eating away at my brain.

Silvia: It's been a confusing time... If it is connected to her all the more reason to be in high spirits.

Pierre: Not to her, connected to her death.

Silvia: This proof is beautiful ... If it has something to do with Alicia you should listen to that, not run away from it...

Pierre:...

Silvia: I've checked it a thousand times, let's send it to Dr Hans.

Pierre: Do whatever you want, I don't want to have anything to do with this.

Silvia: It's just as much yours as it is mine.

Pierre: All I wanted is to be a regular happy husband.

Silvia looks at him, touched.

Pierre: You can have it, you came up with these equations.

Silvia: We came up with them.

...

Silvia: We'll send it to Dr Hans and go from there. OK?

Pierre has the air of a little boy.

A machine is beeping.

Aura: Message from Dr Hans: Is spacetime structure so malleable that places which we believe to be very far apart are actually quite close together?

Scene XVIII

Back in Mexico City Alicia will go silent.

Pierre: So I'm nominated for the Wolf prize, I think they're gonna give it to me.

Alicia: What are you doing talking to that tree?

Pierre: I'm talking to you.

Alicia: What are you doing here? You're supposed to be at the lab.

Pierre: Estoy aprendiendo español, ¿ves?

Alicia: Puedes aprenderlo en cualquier lado, por qué aquí.

Pierre: I wanna be in you city, your streets, your smells.

Alicia: You are not saying I smell like this place, I will be very offended.

Pierre: That's not what I meant, I meant... I saw Ana and Martín, they are really nice.

Alicia (*Mocking him*): They are, are you going to look for my great Aunt Marla as well? I'm sure you'd love to spend some time with her.

Pierre: I'm planning on renting a house facing the kiosco.

Alicia: And then?

Pierre: Nothing. Live.

Alicia: You'll go crazy in this place, Mexicans are intricate people, their minds are full of alleys.

Pierre: I liked you.

Alicia: Oh, great. You are gonna fall in love with the tamales vendor... Ay Pierre, no. You belong in your lab, with the six-lane highway mind people.

Pierre: I turned the paper in, they'll make good use of it.

Alicia: So now you are gonna do nothing but rest in an hamaca all day?

Pierre: They say that your major work always happens always before you're forty.

Alicia: Nonsense, go back to the lab.

Pierre: I prefer to be here, talking to you.

Alicia: : you're a scientist, why are you acting all new agy?

Pierre shrugs.

Alicia: But Pierre, do you really think I'm here, in a tree? What would I be doing in a tree? Dummy.

Alicia fades.

Pierre: Where are you then?

...

Pierre: Alicia?

David: And Alicia went silent for good.

Scene XIX

David, Aura and Silvia are in the park.

David: So you want to come back.

Silvia: Can I?

David: ...

Silvia: Tell me, can I?

David: I don't know, can you?

Silvia: I'll do my best.

David: ...

Silvia: OK. I'll let you think about it.

...

Silvia: Want to come with me for a walk, Aura?

Aura shakes her head.

Silvia: It'll be fun, we'll take the winding path... OK.

...

David: We did that yesterday, right Aura?

Aura says nothing.

David: She doesn't do it twice in a row.

...

David: How's the lab?

Silvia: Pierre is leaving. We are publishing results.

David: The long awaited prize.

Silvia: How's the music?

David: It's good. Might get into the studio next week.

...

Silvia: Pierre is leaving; I need to find a new team.

David: You're a one man band, you're better off doing everything on your own.

Silvia: I need a team.

David: ...

Silvia: I miss you.

David: I... Don't know.

They look at each other.

Scene XX

Pierre is at the cantina, poor light, loud music, Mexican loud music.

He is sitting at a small table by himself, a guy dressed as a children's party magician comes and sits with him.

Magician: American?

Pierre: ...

Magician: You look like you need some magic.

Pierre: I have alcohol, thank you.

The magician produces three cups turned upside down.

Magician: Choose one.

Pierre looks at him bored and gives a zip to his drink.

Magician: Underneath one of these lies happiness.

Pierre: Fuck off.

Magician: You have a 33.33 ad infinitum probability of being happy.

Pierre:...

Magician: Pretty high probability, I'd say.

Pierre: Leave me alone.

Magician: C'mon, pick one!

Pierre hits one of the cups, the closest to him, he's just trying to get rid of it. The cup doesn't fall of the table.

Magician: Good! Now, because I like you I'll help you out: I'm taking this empty cup out of the game.

He takes one of the three cups.

Magician: This one was not the winner. Now, do you want to stick to the one you chose or you want to exchange it for the remaining one?

Pierre stares at him with real hate in his eyes.

Magician: OK, you look like you could use a hint. I'll tell you a mathematical secret. If you exchange this cup for the one that you had earlier you have higher chances to pick the right one.

Pierre: I'll punch you in the face...

Pierre gets up and grabs the magician, starts dragging him to a corner.

Magician: See, it's magic -in theory there should be a fifty fifty probability to get happiness. But no, this cup has way higher probability to have it than this one.

Pierre lets go. In a realization:

Pierre: It's mathematics...

Pierre looks at the magician as if he was Alicia or someone who just said something very important.

Magician: I'd say be smart and choose it, change your mind from your first choice.

As Pierre starts walking away:

Magician: Take the cup with you! There is a two in three chance that you walk away with happiness! That's a 66.66 ad infinitum probability..

In an impulse Pierre comes back and grabs the cup.

Scene XXI

Pierre puts on a jacket and grooms himself a little bit

Silvia embraces him and hen stands back.

Pierre takes the microphone, tests it and speaks to the audience, as if he was giving a conference. There's white light on him, he has his speaking notes.

Pierre: And so in conclusion it is that the course of present events depend on the future and the shape of the future is in part determined by the present. It's all about ascribing probabilities to the possibilities.

He puts his speaking notes down, walks away from the stand.

Scene XXII

In the kitchen: Aura and Silvia

Silvia: I found a dance school that looks good. It'll be good to try it again, different type of dance.

Aura doesn't answer but she feels more present.

Silvia: We can go look at it this weekend.

David: She quit her lessons, she doesn't like it.

Silvia: Who likes ballet —it's boring, but dancing is cool. Yeah?

Aura doesn't shake her head.

David: I can take her tomorrow, Thursdays are good days to try out new things, right?

Silvia: Thank you, but as I recall Saturdays are acceptable too.

Aura: Thursdays are better.

David: Done, you and I will go tomorrow.

Silvia: I just said I'd do it.

David: You also said you wanted to move back in.

Silvia: And you said you didn't know if it was OK.

David: It's Ok, of course it's OK!

...

David: We've been waiting for you to stay longer than dinner.

Silvia:...

David: What? You don't want to stay?

Silvia: Yes, I do, but/

David: Uh huh? (so then?!)

Silvia: But... I don't know... (something is off about it)

Awkward silence.

Silvia: I'm taking Aura to the dance school this Saturday. If you want to, Aura.

Sound of a message

Aura: Message from doctor Hans: Is it that the attribution of pastness, presentness and futureness to events is determined only by the perspective we (human beings) put on the world?

(This hopes to be the wink to the audience that there's a time shift)

Scene XXIII

Alicia is reading a book in Spanish. Pierre is crossing and by chance sees her, he completely stops.

He stares at her for a few seconds, not knowing what to do, he is going to keep going but at the end decides to go up to her, he's really nervous.

(From this point on neither of them wear a wedding ring)

Pierre: Hi...

Alicia looks up, without saying anything.

Pierre: Oh, you don't speak English?

Alicia is amused, she still says nothing.

Pierre: ... wait.

Pierre goes to get a member of the band, points at Alicia while he explains something we can't hear. Carlos gives thumbs up as Pierre walks back to where Alicia is.

Pierre: You're very pretty... Tell her.

Carlos: Dice que estás muy bonita.

Alicia: Dile que muchas gracias.

Carlos: She says thank you very much.

Pierre: Ask her if the book she is reading is good... No, don't ask her that... Mhhh

Carlos: How about asking her what it's about?

Pierre: Yeah yeah, that's good.

Carlos: Dice que de qué se trata el libro.

Alicia: De lo que se tratan casi todos: amor, desamor, la muerte, la vida y el destino, la familia, la casualidad y la causalidad.

Carlos: She says it's good.

Pierre: Really? That took long.

Carlos: We like words, what can I say.

Pierre: I never/ this is not something I usually do.

Carlos: Que él nunca hace este tipo de cosas dice.

Pierre: Really I swear.

Carlos: De veras.

Pierre: But I saw you and I thought I didn't want stop looking at you.

Pierre and Alicia look at each other.

Pierre: Tell her!

Carlos: Te vio y quiere seguirte viendo.

Pierre: So... would you consider getting coffee with me?

Carlos: Café?

Alicia's expression is unreadable, she has an almost imperceptible smile.

Pierre: Look, this is the first time I've done something like this, I promise, I never talk to strangers, since I was a kid, they taught me it was dangerous so I never do, and I'm not dangerous, I am jut a physicist, here, I'll give you my

card, oh crap, I forgot my card... But I work at the university
you can call and/

Alicia: Sí

Pierre: Sí? Yes!... right?

Alicia: Yes, here's my phone number.

*Alicia grabs Pierre's hand and writes on it. Pierre is happy
and confused.*

Scene XXIV

At the diner: Silvia and David.

Silvia: I love you.

David: Great.

Silvia: I'm not coming back.

David: Great.

Silvia: I'm sorry.

David: I'm sorry too.

Silvia: No, David, listen: I love you.

David:...

Silvia: I can't be who I am in this equation.

David: That's just idiotic.

Silvia: It is.

David: and unjustified.

Silvia: But true.

Change of light position.

--David's image: The void and the lightness of letting go---

Scene XXV

Silvia observes Aura, who is lying down in a bed, Aura turns around and looks at her. For a moment they just stare at each other, without talking.

Silvia: Are you awake?

Aura stares at her.

Silvia: I'm sure you're tired.

Aura shakes her head.

Silvia: You have school tomorrow...

Aura: I'm not tired.

Silvia: Sure you are.

...

Silvia: *(Somewhat scared)* You don't want to spend the night here?

Aura: ...

Aura sits up.

Aura: I'm hungry.

As the scene progresses Aura demands in silence her mother's attention and Silvia becomes tenser, she is afraid—as if Aura was a huge insect, but she tries very hard to fight it.

Silvia: Then why did you throw all your dinner away?

Aura: Cause the green was touching the yellow.

Silvia: I was very careful when I put them in your plate, they were not touching.

Aura: ...When you hit the table with your fist.

Silvia sighs.

Silvia: You know why I did it?

Aura looks down.

Silvia: Cause your wouldn't talk or look at me, you would not eat.

...

Aura: What is the fundamental postulate?

Silvia: Where did you hear that?

Aura shrugs

Silvia: A fundamental postulate is a statement or formula that is stipulated to be true for the purpose of a chain of reasoning.

Aura: *(waiting for more)* ...

Silvia: That's it.

...

Aura: Mom? Can I have my own fundamental postulate? I like chains of reasoning.

Silvia: I don't see why not.

Aura: *(full of hope)* And it becomes true?

Silvia: Mhhh... No. People have to agree that it's true.

...

Aura: Well if you like it maybe you and I can agree that it's true.

Silvia: I'll go fix something for you to eat and then you go to sleep.

Aura: Can we do a geometry problem?

Silvia: No, you'll eat something and then go straight to bed, you have to get up early tomorrow.

Aura: ...

Aura lies down again, Silvia observes her.

Silvia: I'll tell you something that was supposed to be a surprise.

...

Silvia: I spoke to Claudia today, my friend that runs the math camp.

...

Silvia: She told me she will let you take the test and see if she can give you place this summer.

...

Silvia: Wouldn't it be fun?

Aura turns her back to her, Silvia is confused.

Silvia: It's full of smart kids like you, only the smartest make it. You will have new friends!

Silvia: You'd do math all day.

Aura: You want me to leave?

Silvia is perplexed.

Silvia: No/ it would be only for a week.

...

Silvia: And it's very close, one hour by car... your dad and I will take you and pick you up, there's nothing to worry about...

Aura doesn't make a move. Silvia starts to understand—for the first time— Aura's feelings.

Silvia: (low voice) ...Of course I don't want you to leave.

...

Silvia: Aura? Are you listening? I thought it would be fun... that's all.

...

Silvia: Can I hold you?

Aura shakes her head.

Silvia: Please?

...

Aura does nothing, so Silvia puts her hand on top of Aura's head.

Silvia: Of course I don't want you to leave. We should both agree that it's true.

Scene XXVI

In a café.

Pierre: I'm glad you gave me the right number.

Alicia: I'm glad you are not a rapist.

Pierre: ...

Alicia: You're not, are you?

Pierre: No.

Alicia: So what are you?

Pierre: Your future husband.

Alicia: Ok...

Pierre: And a physicist... I'm not a siquic or anything, (actually) we scientists don't believe in those things, including magic.

Alicia: That's too bad.

Pierre: I'm coming across as a lunatic, aren't I?

Alicia: I little bit.

Pierre: I'm sorry.

Alicia: You Americans apologize a lot.

Pierre: I'm sorry...

Alicia: ...

Pierre: You believe in magic?

Alicia: Mhh... I can't stand magic shows, those magicians that pester little kid's parties. Urgh...

Pierre: You know that magic is merely the feeling of non locality?

Alicia: ...Yeah.

Pierre: Apparently nonlocality is at the core of the laws of nature/ this is boring, isn't?

Alicia: It's funny/ I mean you're funny/ in a good way... You know... I'm having fun.

Pierre: Maybe I can go to the kids' parties, replace the magician.

...

Pierre: I'm really glad you answered my phone call.

Alicia: I don't usually do that.

Pierre: Answer to random guys that ask you out in the street? I got lucky.

Alicia: Answer the phone. Well, talking on the phone in English... It's like an endless precipice opens up, words and sounds and thoughts start falling in there. I actually fear that If the conversation goes on for too long I'll get

swallowed too, and I'll never be able to make myself understood again.

Pierre: Phone phobia.

Alicia: Phone speaking phobia.

Pierre: I have acrophobia, I'm more traditional.

Alicia: I have logofilia.

Pierre: ...Yeah.

Alicia: Love for words. I'm a lit student.

Pierre: A lit student with a phone phobia and a word filia who can't stand magicians.

Alicia: and who believes in magic. I mean, nothing magical has happened to me but I know it happens to people.

Pierre: I sometimes think real magic happens in places when we are not in them, like in my living room, but only when I'm not there.

Alicia: Like the magic of death. There's something magical about it.

Pierre: ... Well... Sure.

Alicia: Aren't you glad you asked me out, talk about death for a while?

Pierre smiles, he's actually happy.

Scene XXVII

At the dance school.

Silvia: Hi.

David: ... Hi.

Silvia: Hi. (asking for his interest)

David: How is it going?

Silvia: ... OK.

David: Good.

Silvia: We should do this more often.

David: Run into each other? I'd say we do it often enough.

...

Silvia: You know? ... Maybe in the distant distant future you'll run into me and say. Hey, remember me?

David: Hey, remember me? I used to share a planet with you.

Silvia: A huge planet, every time I look back the planet past is bigger than before... Of course I remember you, you share a daughter with me.

David: Right.

Silvia: I still go to our planet sometimes... When this one becomes unbearable, you know?

David: ...Right.

They look at each other.

David: It was a good planet. Must be a bit lonely though.

Silvia laughs sadly.

David: There's no one there anymore. We are all here.

Aura is sitting by herself, constructing a triangle. Along comes Alicia, stops next to her, practicing her zapateado steps.

Alicia: Un dos tres, un dos tres.

Aura looks up, pays attention. Alicia keeps dancing in her own world.

Aura starts tapping her feet, following the count, if Alicia makes a mistake she tenses up.

Little by little Aura will join in the dance.

At the end Alicia and Aura have a silent communication as they move together.

Scene XXVIII

Silvia talks to Aura.

Silvia: You see, sometimes I want to travel with the photons through time, learn to do the leap from one point in time to another. Wouldn't it be wonderful? You could come back in time with me and see what I was like when I was your age. We might had been friends back then. I was a bit shy, just like you. I'm sure I would have liked you. I'm sure I would have asked you to be my friend. Wouldn't you like to have a friend? Not be alone all the time, talking incessantly to yourself in that mumbling that floods the rooms, the white noise that prevents everyone around from reaching you.

When I find the pathway to that world, teeming, colorful world I'll take you with me.

We'll be small, so small that no one will be able to see us and then we'll travel along the first beam of light. You imagine going so fast nothing can catch you?

I will share that world with you, but you need to give me time to find it first.

We'll be together then, you just need to trust. Trust the world, trust the work, trust me.

That's all I ask. Trust me.

Scene XXIX

Alicia and Pierre's house.

Alicia is eating ice cream, Pierre comes in.

Pierre: Made the reservation at 8.

Alicia: Ehhh, can we cancel?

Pierre: No, we can't.

Alicia: Look at you, all clean and good smelling.

Pierre: Get ready, we are going to be late.

Alicia: (*Growls*) But I want to watch (*Dirty Dancing*) this.

Pierre: (*The doomsday movie*)... What happened?

Alicia: I think I blew my nineteen-century test.

Pierre: I saw you studying five nights in a row.

Alicia: Professor Peeping doesn't like me, I think he knows I call him professor Peeping.

Pierre: Don't they all call him that? Here, put some make up on.

Alicia: They do, but my eyes tend to give away what I'm thinking, others are better secret keepers.

Pierre: You're being paranoid. Get ready.

Alicia: What's wrong with you?

Pierre: I just really want to go out.

Alicia: I feel the light shattering in my throat, we push it and the whole world will go dark.

Pierre: Yeah... No. We are going.

Alicia: How about we go buy a pizza across the street and we come back? Keep still, avoid tiny misfortunes that might be on their way.

Pierre: (*losing his patience*) How about you stick to the plan for once.

Alicia: Is this... Are we in one of those moments we could break the bird's neck with a squeeze of our hand?

Pierre: What bird? There's no bird, stop talking like you're some weirdo member of a poets sect.

Alicia looks at him, unimpressed.

Pierre: just get ready and let's go.

Alicia: I'm watching my movie.

Pierre: Don't you/!

Pierre takes the remote and turns it off, puts it behind his back. Alicia looks at him.

Alicia: Give me that!

Alicia jumps on him and tries to recover the DVD. They look like little kids fighting.

Alicia: I sincerely don't like you!

Pierre: I don' like you much either.

Alicia let's go. Stares at him.

Alicia: If I had the energy I would pack my stuff and spend the night somewhere else.

Pierre: Don't be ridiculous.

Alicia: Keep going and I'll find the energy.

Pierre: Is that what you want? Go somewhere else? Here's your stupid movie.

Pierre throws the remote on the couch and starts walking away. A pink little bag falls from his pocket. They both stare at it.

Alicia: What's that mariconería?

As he picks it up...

Pierre: Mariconería? Pfff, don't even want to know the meaning of that.

Alicia: What is it?

Pierre: Nothing.

Alicia: Let me see it.

Pierre: Stand back, it's none of your business.

Alicia is now amused.

Alicia: Is that a gift for me?

Pierre: No. It was only a pink bag, didn't you see it?

Alicia: You shouldn't keep important things in that pocket, it has holes in it... You are gonna lose my gift!

Pierre: It's not yours. It's not important. Now go ahead, watch your movie. I'm going to dinner by myself.

Alicia attacks him unexpectedly and gets the bag. Pierre doesn't fight.

Alicia realizes there's a ring inside, she's humbled, offers it back.

Alicia: Let's go.

Pierre: Too late. Here.

He takes out the ring and puts it in her palm. Alicia stares at it.

Alicia: Some heads up wouldn't have hurt.

Pierre: It was a surprise.

Alicia: I'm annoying.

Pierre: You certainly are.

She looks at it.

Alicia: I can't put it on if you don't ask.

Pierre:...

Alicia: Please?

Pierre tries to speak, finds it incredibly difficult, he's nervous.

Pierre: I was thinking/ I want you to...

Alicia: You already did the hard part.

Pierre: I hate speeches! I prefer numbers. Far better language.

Alicia prepares herself to listen, calm.

Pierre: I... What if you say no?

Alicia: We live together.

Pierre: That doesn't mean you/

Alicia: ... I prepared my lime soup for you, I obviously want to spend the rest of my life with you.

Pierre: You do you lime soup for every single person that crosses your way!

Alicia: Only for those who I want to keep in my life.

Pierre: You want to keep professor Peeping Tom in your life?

Alicia: That one time I needed to look good in the Department...

...

Pierre: It's awkward, like I have to give a speech or something, I've said it so many times in my head.

...

Pierre: OK, but don't laugh.

...

Pierre: Alicia?

Alicia: Mhh.

Pierre: ... Would you... mind putting the ice cream in the fridge? It's melting.

Alicia: It's hard like a rock, I want it to melt a little bit, I think there's something wrong with the thingy of the fridge cause/

Pierre: (*Clears his throat again*) Alicia?

Alicia: Yes?

Pierre: ... I would like to/

Alicia: Oh, c'mon! It's me.

Pierre: I'm trying.

Alicia: I love you.

Pierre: I love you too.

Alicia: If you don't ask me soon we'll lose the ring, this house eats things.

Pierre: I want to marry you.

Alicia:...

Pierre: Do you want to marry me?

Alicia: ...

She smiles and kisses him.

Pierre: Answer! Say something!

Alicia: Let's do it. Marry me! Marry me tomorrow, not tomorrow, marry me yesterday.

Pierre puts the ring on her finger and viceversa. And so we jump to the wedding.

Scene XXX

The whole cast is attending the wedding.

Pierre and Alicia are under a beam of light, they are getting married; they kiss

Music starts off stage.

The guests accommodate as to take the group picture. For a moment they freeze, and music stops. The picture has been taken.

Music restarts. The guests mingle and talk among each other.

David: This is it.

Alicia: Time to celebrate.

Pierre: This is what the present feels like.

Silvia: The probability current carried us here.

Julia: What were the chances.

Aura: All here, together in one space.

Lights on the audience

Aura: *(to the audience):* All of us, here.

End of play.