

ACT I
Scene 11

(LIGHTS UP: SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS
1999: ALEJANDRO & NONA'S house in
Ashland Heights, NJ. FRANK ENTERS)

FRANK

Momi. It's Frank. Where are you?

MIDDLE AGED NONA (O.S.)

I'm in the kitchen. I'll be right out.

FRANK

Hurry up. I want to get home in time for the game.

(NONA ENTERS. FRANK gives NONA a
hug.)

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

Happy Sunday Frankie! How are you, doing? Can I get you something to eat?

FRANK

Not right now.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

I made your favorite cookies.

FRANK

Still treating me like I'm 10 years old.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

So what? It makes me happy to see you enjoy my cookies. **(beat)** How are things at the office?

FRANK

Okay, I guess. We're getting ready for tax season.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

Have you heard from Judy?

FRANK

Momi, I told you never to mention that woman's name to me again.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

But Frankie, you have to let it out. It's not good to hold onto all that pain. It can make you sick.

FRANK

What part of "I don't want to talk about it," can't you understand? Please, I don't want to argue. Let's just drop it. **(beat)** You said you needed me to fix a mistake in the accounting and you dragged me here on my one day off. So, where is the ledger ... and the receipts?

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

They're in one of the drawers in my desk over there. I'm going to make us some coffee.

(NONA points to a corner desk then EXITS. FRANK goes, to the desk and starts rummaging through the drawers. He finds a stack of letters bound in a red ribbon with an old telegram on the top of the pile. FRANK pulls out the telegram and also finds a letter in the same envelope. He starts to read it while NONA is still talking to him from the kitchen.)

MIDDLE-AGED NONA (O.S.)

I'm hungry, how about I heat up some left-over spaghetti and meat balls for lunch.

FRANK

Ah ha. Sure.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA (O.S.)

Okay. I'll put a dish in the oven.

(NONA ENTERS with a tray of coffee and cups and sets it down.)

FRANK

Momi, who's Pvt. Thomas J. Smith?

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

No one important. **(beat)** Just a musician I once knew.

FRANK

Then why did you save his letters?

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

You know how I hate throwing things out. It was a long time ago. Who remembers?

FRANK

Nobody saves letters from someone that didn't mean anything to them.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

Give me those! They're personal and none of your business!

FRANK

None of my business? Were you cheating on Popi?

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

Of course not! I never cheated on your father.

FRANK

The telegram says Smith died in February 1970. The same year I was born. The same month you were married.

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

So what. People die all the time. It's just a coincidence.

FRANK

Really? Your letter with the telegram says you were pregnant. Why are you lying to me?

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

What are you ... a FBI agent now? What good does it do to bring up the past?

FRANK

He was my father, wasn't he?

MIDDLE-AGED NONA

Alejandro Vega brought you into this world ... put clothes on your back...food in your belly... sent you to college ... gave you money to start your accounting firm and is still taking care of you to this day. HE is your father.

FRANK

(Getting angry)

Enough with the lies! First Judy and now my own mother!

FRANK & NONA (SINGING)

HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME

FRANK	NONA
HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME WHAT KIND OF MOM WOULD STEAL HER SON'S IDENTITY DID YOU THINK I'D NEVER FIND OUT OR COME TO KNOW OR CARE ABOUT A BLOODLINE THAT ONCE WAS TRULY MINE	
WHAT KIND OF LOVE COMES FROM A WEB AM I CUBANO OR WHITE, AND IS	