

Acting Edition

Native Gardens

by Karen Zacarías

This sample is an excerpt of a
Concord Theatricals title.

Samples of Concord Theatricals titles
are for perusal and cannot be used for
performance or downloaded, printed,
and distributed in any way.

This sample may not reflect the version
of the play currently in print.

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

Copyright © 2019 by Karen Zacarias
All Rights Reserved

NATIVE GARDENS is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all member countries of the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the Universal Copyright Convention, and/or the World Trade Organization conforming to the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television, online/digital production, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-70754-4

www.concordtheatricals.com

www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

FOR PRODUCTION INQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

info@concordtheatricals.com

1-866-979-0447

UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE

licensing@concordtheatricals.co.uk

020-7054-7298

Each title is subject to availability from Concord Theatricals Corp., depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *NATIVE GARDENS* may not be licensed by Concord Theatricals Corp. in your territory. Professional and amateur producers should contact the nearest Concord Theatricals Corp. office or licensing partner to verify availability.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *NATIVE GARDENS* is subject to a licensing fee. The purchase, renting, lending or use of this book does not constitute a license to perform this title(s), which license must be obtained from Concord Theatricals Corp. prior to any performance. Performance of this title(s) without a license is a violation of federal law and may subject the producer and/or presenter of such performances to civil penalties. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to the appropriate agent before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title(s) is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged. Professional/Stock licensing fees are quoted upon application to Concord Theatricals Corp. This work is published by Samuel French, an imprint of Concord Theatricals Corp.

No one shall make any changes in this title(s) for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, scanned, uploaded, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, digital, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall share this title(s), or any part of this title(s), through any social media or file hosting websites.

For all inquiries regarding motion picture, television, online/digital and other media rights, please contact Concord Theatricals Corp.

MUSIC AND THIRD-PARTY MATERIALS USE NOTE

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music and/or other copyrighted third-party materials (e.g., artworks, logos) in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original music and materials that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for clearances of all third-party copyrighted materials, including without limitation music, and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Concord Theatricals Corp., against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of such copyrighted third-party materials by licensees. For music, please contact the appropriate music licensing authority in your territory for the rights to any incidental music.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

NATIVE GARDENS was commissioned by Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park through its Jerome Fey Endowment for New Works. It premiered at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park in the Robert S. Marx Theatre in Cincinnati, Ohio on January 23, 2016. The production was directed by Blake Robison, with sets by Joseph P. Tilford, costumes by Bill Black, lights by Mary Louise Geiger, and sound by Joe Payne. The production stage manager was Brooke Redler. The cast was as follows:

TANIA DEL VALLE	Sabina Zuniga Varela
PABLO DEL VALLE	Gabriel Ruiz
VIRGINIA BUTLEY	Karen Ziemba
FRANK BUTLEY	John Lescault
EXTRAS	Xavier Blanco, Miguel Casanova, Darlene Estela, Michael Urriquia

CHARACTERS

TANIA DEL VALLE – early thirties; smart, likeable, positive, passionate, highly-energized, pregnant PhD candidate and gardener

PABLO DEL VALLE – early thirties; smart, likeable, ambitious, savvy young attorney

VIRGINIA BUTLEY – sixty to mid-seventies; smart, likeable, assertive, direct, no-nonsense engineer

FRANK BUTLEY – sixty to mid-seventies; smart, likeable, excitable, caring, detail-oriented federal employee and gardener

The play should also use two to four extras to play the silent roles of the **SURVEYOR**, **LANDSCAPERS**, and **BUILDING EXAMINER**. There are short theatrical vignettes between scenes that can help transform the garden. These workers should preferably be Latinx and exude unique personalities as they work. They are the witnesses and the energetic transformers of both the play and the situation.

SETTING

The back of two houses. Two back gardens. A disheveled wire fence with ivy divides them. One garden is beautiful: lush grass, very symmetrical garden beds, and flowers lining the fence. The other is unkempt: dying hydrangeas, crabgrass, a large oak tree, leaves, and acorns.

“The difference between a flower and a weed...is a judgment.”
– Unknown

Prologue: Spotlights

PABLO. First impressions are really – good.

TANIA. Great actually!

FRANK. Neighbors.

VIRGINIA. Not friends but friendly.

TANIA. Very neighborly.

FRANK. Tania and...Pablo are new to the neighborhood.

VIRGINIA. We welcome them by bringing over wine.

(FRANK and VIRGINIA look over at TANIA and PABLO.)

FRANK. My guess is they prefer red wine over white.

PABLO. They give us Merlot and dark chocolate.

VIRGINIA. Chocolate is always...safe.

TANIA. I'm allergic, but it's so nice.

FRANK. So happy to get a young family on the street.

TANIA. An old home.

PABLO. A historic neighborhood!

VIRGINIA. Stately houses and gardens.

PABLO. Ours is a fixer-upper.

TANIA. With a fabulous backyard!

(Everyone looks at the backyard.)

And a tree!

PABLO. A tree.

FRANK. A tree.

VIRGINIA. A tree.

TANIA. A tree! Oh! I have big plans for this yard!

VIRGINIA & FRANK. Old neighborhood.

TANIA & PABLO. New neighbors.

First Vignette: Monday Afternoon

(Music. PABLO, FRANK, and VIRGINIA exit. TANIA – almost eight months pregnant, still energized and nimble – is wearing comfortable clothes. She is trying to dig out a wilted plant. She is happy. Singing maybe, as she plays with the dirt. Her husband, PABLO, enters into the backyard. He is meticulously dressed in a nice suit.)*

*A license to produce *Native Gardens* does not include a performance license for any third-party or copyrighted music. Licensees should create an original composition or use music in the public domain. For further information, please see Music Use Note on page 3.

Scene One: Monday Afternoon

PABLO. Tania! There you are!

TANIA. Pablo, you're home early.

PABLO. Should you be doing that?

TANIA. It's fine. I'm so sick of unpacking. I hate being inside on such a beautiful day!

PABLO. You should take it easy.

TANIA. Gardening relaxes me. You're the one that's been working so hard.

PABLO. I have to. This firm is so intense... So intensely...

TANIA. Competitive?

PABLO. – American.

TANIA. American...

PABLO. American.

TANIA. You're just the new guy.

PABLO. No. I'm the foreign guy. And that's different.

TANIA. That's why they want you, because you are different.

PABLO. Tania, I think I've done something I might regret.

TANIA. Really? What?

PABLO. I invited the entire firm to our house.

TANIA. You did what?

PABLO. The senior partners were joking about me being the "new guy." And Mr. Krause, as in SMITH, KRAUSE, and WILSON, said he barely thinks you exist –

TANIA. – But, you told him I'm finishing my dissertation... and the baby – right?

PABLO. Before I knew it, I channeled my father and invited all of them over to our house.

TANIA. You didn't!

PABLO. It gets better: the party is this weekend.

TANIA. Puta madre!!!

PABLO. Breathe. Breathe. Remember the Lamaze...

TANIA. Maldita sea. Are you crazy?! How did that happen?

PABLO. I'll tell you how: The Letterhead Partner, Mr. Krause, says, "Pablo! That's a generous offer. When would you like us ALL over?" And I say, "Sir, mi casa es su casa." And we all laugh. And he says, "I'd love to see where you live. Tell you what, I'm free this Saturday –"

TANIA. Saturday! –

PABLO. "– Does that work for you?" It was a test. A Total Test. He was watching me with this gleam in his eye.

TANIA. This is where you say NO...it doesn't work for me or my beloved pregnant wife!

PABLO. I didn't skip a beat. Looked him straight in the eye and said: "YES! Mr. Krause, this Saturday is perfect." And he said: "I like that. You have cojones, son."

TANIA. Mr. Krause actually said "cojones"?

PABLO. He even did the quotation marks.

TANIA. Oh God.

PABLO. I see it as his form of cultural outreach. Which could be a good sign to becoming partner

TANIA. No! Nothing about this ballsy, machista law firm party-planning is good!

PABLO. I know. But Tania: this could be bigger than Steven Johnson's Martini Happy Hour. Because the only living, letterhead boss said he would come. I could become the first Latino to make partner in this place. Maybe one day, they'll add DEL VALLE to the letterhead. That would be a first, huh?

TANIA. Pablo!

PABLO. It was fight or flight, Tania. And you've taught me to never run away from a fight.

TANIA. Sixty strangers here in six days? We don't have enough furniture. Our walls are half-painted. Our plaster is cracked. And I have my own research to do before the baby comes. It's just too much. You are trying too hard.

PABLO. I know! I know. It's too much. I'm so stressed. I don't want to let you down. I don't want to let the baby down. I want to fix up the house for us. I need to make partner –

TANIA. So an impromptu party for the whole firm?

PABLO. I don't know what I was thinking. We can't fix-up a fixer-upper in six days.

(Beat.)

I'll tell Mr. Krause that I can't deliver.

TANIA. Wait! So let's be up front, confident. Show them we are do-it-yourselfers in the best way: We have the party outside.

PABLO. Outside.

TANIA. In this beautiful yard. With our gorgeous tree.

PABLO. Tania, our yard is not beautiful.

TANIA. Not yet. But it can be.

PABLO. Your Native Garden.

TANIA. I've had the design in my head since we bought the place. If we pull away some of that patched grass...get rid of those plants and that gnome and allow those there to get some light. Plant some ferns, bushes and wildflowers. Add some filtered water in the bird bath. And the oak looks so majestic. Oh my God, this could be very exciting.

PABLO. But we agreed to fix the house first and then you could start thinking of the garden.

TANIA. Pablo, do you want your party or not?

PABLO. I was thinking barbecue.

TANIA. Yeah!

PABLO. Americans love "B-B-Q." It puts everyone at ease. Cool and casual. Show them we comfortably fit in the landscape that they know. We can do American Wasp Success...or at least imitate it...

TANIA. Effortless looking effort.

PABLO. They will love my scholarly and vibrant wife. They will see this fine historic neighborhood and the potential

of this unfinished place and say, “Here is a man that understands smart risk.

(Maybe he grabs the rake and stands next to
TANIA *à la American Gothic.)*

He is the American Dream – incarnate.”

TANIA. And maybe we can get someone to pull out that ugly sagging chain-link fence. It’s horrible.

PABLO. And put up the kind of stately wood fence a law firm would appreciate.

TANIA. We make sure people relax and open up. We win them over.

PABLO. You are incredible. Thank you.

TANIA. Don’t thank me yet. We only have six days.

PABLO. Can we pull this off?

TANIA. First, we need to talk to the neighbors. Frank and Virginia need to be okay with us changing the fence.

PABLO. Who would fight us for changing this ugly fence?

TANIA. Their English ivy is draping the fence. And believe it or not...people can get very weird about their plants.

Second Vignette: Monday Evening

(Music. We see **FRANK** come out the back of his house with a bottle of pesticide. He sprays sections of the garden before **VIRGINIA** comes out and beckons him. All enter out to the deck, with **TANIA** and **PABLO** gifting **VIRGINIA** and **FRANK** a bottle of wine. **FRANK** goes inside to prepare it. **TANIA**, **PABLO**, and **VIRGINIA** start the scene.)*

*A license to produce *Native Gardens* does not include a performance license for any third-party or copyrighted music. Licensees should create an original composition or use music in the public domain. For further information, please see Music Use Note on page 3.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Please visit our website to buy the full script, apply for a license to perform this show (if it's available), or to explore hundreds of similar titles.

www.concordtheatricals.com

www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

To be the first to know about new books, licensing releases, and anything theater-related, follow us on our social media channels.

@ConcordShows and **@ConcordUKShows** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

concord
theatricals