

## **Bitten by Tango--Background:**

A few years ago, my friend Arturo Newman, put forth the idea of making a movie which involved tango and vampires. His reasoning was that there is this weird connection between the two—i.e., both vampires and tangueros stay up all night, wear black, shun garlic, and have this sort of compulsive obsessive behavior. Even the classic ending tango pose of the famous tanguero Carlos Gavito (shown here dancing with his partner Marcela Duran) can be interpreted as a vampire ready to strike his willing(?) victim. Finally, some would say there is an eerie similarity between Bela Legosi and the famous tango singer Carlos Gardel.



With this in mind, my friend asked if I had any tango/vampire story ideas. After some thought, I wrote the following “treatment” for a possible movie. The title, “Bitten by Tango” was suggested by Margaret Sax. If you like the story and have any connection with the movie industry, please share or pass on the idea and let me know. Comments are welcome at the end.

## **Bitten by Tango—the plot:**

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Carla Garcia, a strict vegetarian and a young rising singing star beginning to gain national recognition is having mixed feelings about her popularity and success due to a number of threats and attempts on her life. She’s not sure if it’s just some over exuberant fan, or if other unknown factors are involved. Although her dreams and passion are to one day sing in Carnegie Hall, out of fear and desire to cool the hectic pace of her life and career, she decides to take a break and spend time visiting her mother in San Francisco.

At best, Carla’s relationship with her mother is a bit rocky—due to the fact that for unexplained reasons her mother strongly disapproves of her singing career and also because her mother has never been willing to divulge the identity of Carla’s father. Nevertheless, Carla vows to appease and make amends to her mother. During the visit, Carla’s mom invites her to go tango dancing and Carla reluctantly agrees. Although Carla doesn’t really get it, her mother seems transformed by the music and dancing, and after a few drinks begins to open up with Carla. Upon returning home that evening, she tells Carla that her dad was a famous tango dancer (Carlos Gavito?) from Argentina who she had an affair with when he was performing in the U.S. Her mom then shows Carla a video tape of her father dancing tango. The performance ends with the famous Gavito tango bite pose.

That night Carla has a dream that she's singing on stage and her father approaches her and they begin to dance tango. The performance again ends in the famous pose, but when the music stops, she looks down and the front of her dress is covered in blood. The next day she decides to go to Buenos Aires to find her dad. Her mother pleads with her not to go and warns of disastrous results.

In Buenos Aires, she finds out that her father recently died of cancer. She visits the tomb of her father in Chacarita (where else?) where he is much revered. She begins to meet friends and fans and asks more questions about his death and eventually discovers that it wasn't the cancer, but rather it was the side effect of a radical new radiation/chemotherapy—i.e., an overabundance of a silver isotope used in the treatment collected in his heart and caused his death.

Despondent, Carla wants to meet family and goes searching for information about her father's family by attending and dancing tango in the milongas. She is also cajoled into dropping her vegetarian beliefs and into eating Argentine beef. She makes contact with an old milonguero who claims to have the address of her grandmother. She goes to the address. It's in La Boca (of course!).

Her grandmother is old and half crazy and Carla doesn't know whether to believe anything that her Grandmother says. Plus, there's the language problem. But according to her grandmother, Carla's father's death was not an accident. There had been threats on both his life, and there had been threats on Carla's grandfather's life—and by the same people. But who were these people and how were the threats made? After much cajoling and passing around and drinking mate, her grandmother tells her about the threats—and they are chillingly similar to the type of threats Carla had received back in the U.S. Furthermore, it seems that Carla's grandfather was a famous tango singer (Carlos Gardel?) and the plane crash that supposedly killed him was actually a cover up for the true cause of death—the silver tip of an oak cane was found stuck thru the heart of his badly burned body.

Carla begins to suspect that both her father and grandfather were thought to be vampires (which she doesn't believe in) and that they were killed by over zealous superstitious people to prevent the spread of vampires. Furthermore, the possibility of her discovering the murders is the reason for the threats on her own life. But she is wrong. Carla's father and grandfather were in fact vampires, as Carla is herself and slowly discovers as she goes from eating her steaks well done, to rare, and finally in an embarrassing restaurant incident she rushes into the kitchen and devours a steak totally raw. But the most startling discovery Carla makes is that the murders of her father and grandfather were in fact committed by the underground vampire community itself for the purpose of protecting their identity and existence, and their inability to allow anyone who is a vampire to become truly famous and in the public eye—it would just create too much bad publicity!

This, of course, means that her own fame, success and stardom are an absolute death sentence—at which point she receives a message from home containing an invitation to sing in Carnegie Hall.