



Synopsis

Manuelita, the owner of the Blue Bird Hotel, tends to her garden, thinking about Pépito, her betrothed since childhood. She laments his absence, as he is serving in the military in Cádiz. Although she has not received a letter from him in four months, or seen him in three years, she has been saving up her hotel profits in order to help Pépito come home sooner so that they can be married.

Meanwhile, Vertigo, a jack of all trades, fluba player, and owner of the Hotel Crocodile (the rival hotel in town), tries to persuade Manuelita to go on a date with him. Steadfast in her devotion to her fiancé, Manuelita rejects Vertigo's advances.

Later, Manuelita sees her old friend, Miguel, who is home from college in Madrid and searching for a wife. They recall their time together as children, and Miguel realizes that he and Manuelita were destined for each other. Miguel tells her that he and Pépito exchange letters and in their latest correspondence, Pépito had informed him that he is getting married. Upon hearing this, Manuelita rejoices because she is now sure that Pépito is still faithful to her.

Always one to stir up trouble, Vertigo secretly tries to convince Miguel that Manuelita will never love him because she is already engaged to Vertigo. But Miguel is not one to give up easily. When they sit down to eat Vertigo's famous gâteau Basque with a glass of apple cider, Miguel makes sure that Vertigo stuffs himself so full that he falls asleep at the table.

With Vertigo out of the way, Miguel expresses his feelings for Manuelita and tells her that if Pépito really cared, he would have never left her. This gives Manuelita pause. However, she maintains that she is completely devoted to her promise to Pépito and leaves Miguel alone to think about how he has hurt her feelings by speaking ill of Pépito.

Vertigo wakes up and realizes that his leg has fallen asleep. He jumps up from the chair in pain and Miguel says that he deserves it because Vertigo lied about being engaged to Manuelita. Vertigo admits that Manuelita "can't stand" him. Suddenly, he realizes that he is late for a church service in San Sebastián where he has promised to play a solo on his fluba! He runs away in a panic.

Pépito

Manuelita comes out of her hotel. Miguel apologizes and says that he only wants her to be happy. He is so impressed by Manuelita's virtue and loyalty to Pépito that he volunteers to take the young soldier's place in the military so that Pépito may return to marry Manuelita.

When he returns from church, Vertigo, who is also the town's postman, announces that he has just found a letter that Pépito sent to Manuelita over a year ago. Miguel hurries to open it and reads with great joy that Pépito has married another woman!

Manuelita is shocked. How could Pépito betray her? After much deliberation, Manuelita realizes that her loyalty to Pépito was not out of love, but out of the obligation to keep the promise she made so many years ago. Seizing his chance, Vertigo quickly asks Manuelita to marry him, but Manuelita declares she will marry Miguel instead, as her feelings for him are true.

Though unhappy at his own misfortune, Vertigo cannot let a lucrative business opportunity pass him by. He agrees to bake the wedding cake and play his fluba for Miguel and Manuelita, who are ecstatic that they can finally be together.