

Backstage at the Hi-Hat Club, Rosie observes Rita (on her sax) and Cora (on the ukulele) jamming and teaching Ernie Mae how to do a Latin rhythm.

RITA

*(to Ernie Mae, ad lib)*

Más en the backbeat.

ERNIE MAE

Like this?

RITA

Sí, sí, not bad.

They play some more.

RITA

Dale más fuerte.

ERNIE MAE

Huh?

RITA

Si tú quieres aprender a tocar nuestra música, tienes que primero aprender nuestro idioma.

Rosie approaches.

ROSIE

Hey. Can I play?

RITA

Sorry, we don't have a chart, we're just jamming.

ROSIE

But that's great, that's what I want to learn. To improvise, you know, take off and ride.

RITA

Ay ay ay.

ROSIE

Will you teach me?

RITA

It's a feeling, Rosie, it's a hard thing to teach.

ROSIE

Not you, too.

Rosie turns away.

RITA

Ay caramba. Rosie, wait. We'll try. Grab your horn.

ROSIE

Ok!

Rosie gets her trumpet.

RITA

How about we start with something we have written down, like "Stompin' the Trace".

Cora and Rita start to pull out sheet music.

ROSIE

What about -- what about "Battle of the Bugles"?

RITA

Unh unh, no, Rosie that's off limits.

ROSIE

Why? I've been looking over the music, and I know I can play it.

RITA

That was Velma and Bessie's big number and if Velma heard us teaching you that, she would blow a gasket. Or three.

ROSIE

Come on, please. I know it was one of your big numbers, Willy even said \ it was his favorite and --

RITA

*(overlapping)*

Wepa, you sweet on him, hoping to impress him?

ROSIE

No, no, it's not that, I want to impress Mrs. Lafayette. I want to prove to her that I can solo. I figure if I can play that, then she'll give me a chance.

Pause.

RITA

It's your neck.