



## Don't Cry for Me, Venezuela

Wait, what? “Venezuela”? I thought it was “Argentina.” Whatever happened to Juan and Eva Perón, Evita, Madonna, the struggle, power to the people? Where is Antonio Banderas when you need him?

So, how does it happen that I am seated at a table in the premier restaurant of the Caracas Hilton in 1986, a guest of the hotel’s General Manager, when a young man dressed in a formal tux playing a grand piano in the center of the room breaks into the unmistakable orchestral prelude to the haunting “*Don’t Cry for me, Argentina*” written and composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice for the musical *Evita*? The room of several hundred diners becomes eerily silent, all eyes focused on the piano at the center of the room. A woman, dressed all in white, approaches the piano where a microphone awaits her.

As she begins to sing, a pedestal holding her, and the piano rises slowly from the floor to level of the dining-room tables. The lights in the restaurant dim and a spotlight is on the musicians.

*It won't be easy,  
you'll think it strange  
When I try to explain how I feel  
That I still need your love after all that I've done*

The diners have all but forgotten their dinners, utensils are down, and they are mesmerized by her song. She sings it as “Argentina”, not Venezuela, of course, but the audience would hear something else. As I glanced around the room, I could see tears on some of the faces nearby. My host, sensing my confusion, touched my arm and whispered, “This song speaks to the heart and soul of all Latins.”

## Epilog

I was there as guest of Hilton International Hotels, consulting on labor scheduling software using a package called Time Boss which I created..

*Chandler Arizona December 2019*