ANOMALISA

Written by

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**IT IS THE AUTHOR’S INTENTION THAT MICHAEL VIEWS AND HEARS EVERYONE IN THE WORLD (OTHER THAN LISA) AS ONE PERSON. THIS IS A REFERENCE TO A PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER CALLED THE FREGOLI DELUSION.**

OPEN

Conversation chatter in the background. Voices overlapping.

    BOY PASSENGER
    Hey Ma, look airplane.
    
    MOM
    Huh?
    
    BOY PASSENGER
    Airplane.
    
    MOM
    Uh. Oh yeah.
    
    CROSSWORD PASSENGER
    Who is TV’s Kojack?
    
    ANOTHER PASSENGER
    Darrin Mcgavin.
    
    CROSSWORD PASSENGER
    Kojack not Colichat.
    
    ANOTHER PASSENGER
    Oh. Um...how many letters?
    
    CROSSWORD PASSENGER
    Seven.
    
    ANOTHER PASSENGER
    Do you have any letters already?
    
    CROSSWORD PASSENGER
    Yeah the third letter is a V. I think but I’m not sure. Blank. Blank. V. Blank. Blank. Blank. Right?
    
    ANOTHER PASSENGER
    Yes.
    
    ANOTHER PASSENGER (CONT’D)
    It’s a bald guy right.
VOICE ON SPEAKER
Ladies and gentlemen, as we start our decent please make sure that your seat backs and tray tables are in the full upright position. Make sure your seat belt is fastened securely and all carry on luggage is stowed beneath the seat in front of you or in the overhead bin. Please turn off all electronic devices until we are safely parked at the gate. Thank you.

Michael reaches in to his coat pocket and pulls out a pill bottle. He removes the cap and takes a pill puts the cap back on and places the bottle back in his jacket. He takes a piece of paper from his back pocket and unfolds it.

BELLA
November 12th, 1995. Dear Michael. Fuck you. Just fuck you. You just walk away? After all you said to me? After all we did? After all those fucking promises? After all that fucking fucking?

EXT. AIRPORT - TARMAC - NIGHT
Plane hits the runway.

INT. AIRPLANE - PASSENGER CABIN

VOICE ON SPEAKER (O.S.)
Ladies and gentlemen allow me to be first to welcome you to Cincinnati, where the local time is 7:43 PM and the temperature is 68 degrees Fahrenheit. We will be taxiing for a while so please stay seated until the pilot turns off the fasten seat belt light.

PASSENGER
Sorry I..I grabbed your hand.

MICHAEL
It’s okay.

PASSENGER
It’s a reflex I am usually sitting next to my wife. (beat) But I don’t like to fly.
MICHAEL
I said it’s okay. (pause) You can let go now though.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL

Footsteps. A suitcase being wheeled for a bit. Din of people.

AIRPORT SPEAKER (O.S.)
Robert Hernandez please pick up the white courtesy phone. Robert Hernandez to the white courtesy phone please.

AIRPORT SPEAKER (CONT’D)
Welcome to Cincinnati North Kentucky airport. While on the moving sidewalk please stand to the....

Michael takes headphones and iPod out of his jacket pocket, he puts his headphones in his ears. Lakme begins to play, drowning out the crowd.

EXT. TERMINAL - NIGHT

Cars. Chatter. Michael knocks on a taxi window, it rolls down half way.

MICHAEL
Hello.

DRIVER
Hi.

MICHAEL
I need to go to The Fregoli.
Downtown.

DRIVER
Yup.

Driver gets out, puts Michael’s suitcase in trunk. Michael climbs in. Car door closes.

AIRPORT SPEAKER
Ladies and Gentlemen you attention please. No parking or waiting allowed. Unattended vehicles in this area will be towed.
MICHAEL
Thanks.

Yup.

Michael gets in to the backseat of the cab.

INT. TAXICAB

Michael pulls a pack of cigarettes from his jacket.

MICHAEL
Can I smoke in here?

DRIVER
You see that sigh?

Driver coughs.

MICHAEL
Oh.

Michael puts the cigarettes away. He sighs and then starts to whistle.

DRIVER
You’re from England, right?

MICHAEL
Yeah, I’m from England.

DRIVER
I can tell by your accent and by the whistling that’s British Airways.

MICHAEL
It’s Lakme, actually.

DRIVER
Naw that’s British Airways.

Drivers wheezes and coughs.

DRIVER
Anyway, I have an ear for accents. How’s the weather there now? Good?

MICHAEL
Well, I’m from there originally. I live here now.
DRIVER
In Sin-Sin City, you know as I call it?

MICHAEL
Not here. The states.

DRIVER

MICHAEL
Los Angeles.

DRIVER

MICHAEL
I wasn’t. I’m sure it is.

DRIVER
Damn straight. First time?

MICHAEL
Once before.

DRIVER
Oh it’s changed since then. You ought to check it out, you know while you’re here.

MICHAEL
Yes, I will. Thanks.

Car honking.

DRIVER
You’re welcome. Fuck you, asshole. You oughta check it out...Check...it...out. The zoo is great. World class, they say. Many, many important, you know whatchamacallit, endangered species, breeding programs, you know. They’re famous for it. Pandas. Other things. Owls.
MICHAEL
Uh -huh. That sounds fascinating.

DRIVER
Damn straight.
(pause)

DRIVER (CONT’D)
Ya, you should check it out. And you gotta try some Cincinnati chili. It’s chili like you never had. Trust me. L.A. Chili? England Chili? Forget about it. They make it here with cinnamon and chocolate and the serve it over pasta. Imagine that if you can.

MICHAEL
I will try to, yeah. Thanks. Is there a toy store near the hotel?

Taxi dispatch chatter in the background.

DRIVER
A toy store? You mean a TOY store?

MICHAEL
Yeah toy store.

DRIVER
Yeah there’s a TOY store about two blocks up. It’s open all night. Real class place. Anyway there’s a lot to see in this city. A revitalized downtown--

MICHAEL
I’m only here for a day.

DRIVER
What?

MICHAEL
I’m just here for a day.

DRIVER
I’m sorry. I’m not getting that. The accent.

MICHAEL
I’m just here for a day.
DRIVER
Well, the zoo then. You don’t need more than a day for the zoo. It’s just zoo-sized. (pause) And the chili. You only need like an hour for the chili.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY
Michael walks through a crowded hotel lobby to the front desk.

DESK CLERK
Harris can you get these bags please? Hello. Welcome to The Fregoli.

MICHAEL
Hi. I’m checking in. Stone?

DESK CLERK
Welcome, Mr. Stone. (keyboarding) There we go. Michael Stone. Smoking, king-sized bed. And you’ll be with us for just one night, sir?

MICHAEL
One night. Yes.

DESK CLERK
I’ll just need to make an imprint of your credit card, for incidentals, and we’ll be all set.

MICHAEL
I’d like a quiet room, if you have one.

DESK CLERK
Yes, sir. Of course. (pause)

Desk starts to type while staring at Michael.

DESK CLERK (CONT’D)
I have a charming deluxe smoking junior suite on the tenth floor with a king sized bed. Far above the street noise.

MICHAEL
That sounds good.
DESK CLERK
Great. So it’s all set then.

The sound of a credit card imprint being made. A bell is rung.

DESK CLERK (CONT’D)
Dennis here will show you to your room.

MICHAEL
Oh, thank you.

DENNIS
Right this way sir. My name is Dennis.

MICHAEL
Hi.

Dennis and Michael walk towards the elevator. An elevator being summoned. Doors open.

DENNIS
After you sir.

INT. ELEVATOR

They step into an elevator. The doors close. A button is pressed. The elevator ascends.

DENNIS
So how was your trip in?

MICHAEL
It was fine, thanks.

DENNIS
Good. (pause) Bumpy? At all?

MICHAEL
Um, no.

DENNIS
I’m sorry?

MICHAEL
No.

DENNIS
(pause) Oh well, you’re safe now. (pause) I think the room will be to your liking, sir.
Silence. The elevator doors open.

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY

DENNIS
Just up here to the left, sir. There you go, after you.

They walk out of the elevator into the hallway. Michael slows down to let Dennis lead the way.

DENNIS (CONT’D)
Nice weather we’re having.

MICHAEL
Yeah.

DENNIS
What?

MICHAEL
Yes.

DENNIS
Yes, the weather is very good. (stretching it out) Very, very, very good. It’s 68 degrees fahrenheit. And here we are.

Key card in the door. Door opens.

INT. MICHAEL’S HOTEL ROOM

DENNIS
After you, sir.

Footsteps on carpet. Door closes.

DENNIS (CONT’D)
It’s the bathroom. Um, air conditioning and heat controls here. TV remote control. Mini-bar. All self-explanatory, I think. Um, ice machine down the hall and would you like me to get some ice before I leave?

MICHAEL
No, I’m ok, thanks. Here you go.

Michael hands Dennis a tip.
DENNIS
Oh, thank you very much, sir. If you need anything at all, please give us a ring. My name’s Dennis.

MICHAEL
Thanks.

DENNIS
Good night.

MICHAEL
Good night.

Dennis closes the door after him. Michael walks in to the bathroom, lifts the toilet seat up with his foot, unzips his pants and pees. Michael sighs. Pants zipped. He flushes the toilet and leaves the bathroom.

He walks in to the room, zips up his pants and takes off his jacket and throws it on the bed. He looks at the magazines on the desk and it reads “Try the Chili.” He picks up the TV remote and hits the on button.

TV VOICE (O.S.)
...touch the door to the room, if it feels hot, do no open it. Fill the tub with water, soak a towel, and place it in the space at the bottom of the door. If the door is not hot, you may leave the room, but bring your room key with you in case exits are blocked and you need to get back in.

He turns the TV off. Flips through a book. Picks up phone. It rings on the other end.

ROOM SERVICE
Room service. How may I help you, Mr. Stone?

MICHAEL
Um, I’d like to order some room service.

ROOM SERVICE
Yes.

MICHAEL
Um, I’ll have the bibb lettuce salad. And the salmon.
ROOM SERVICE
Yes, sir. Would you like anything to drink tonight?

MICHAEL
No. I’ll find something in the mini bar.

ROOM SERVICE
Very good. Dessert? We have a lovely --

MICHAEL
No, no, no, no thanks.

ROOM SERVICE
Very good, sir. So that’s a Bibb lettuce, Gorgonzola, prosciutto, and walnut salad...

MICHAEL
Yes.

ROOM SERVICE
...with honey raspberry vinaigrette dressing

MICHAEL
Yes.

ROOM SERVICE
...and the wild-caught Copper River Alaskan salmon almandine...

MICHAEL
Yes.

ROOM SERVICE
...with baby asparagus and black truffle broth.

MICHAEL
Yes.

ROOM SERVICE
Very good. And that’s for room 1007?

MICHAEL
Yes.
ROOM SERVICE
Very good. It’s...9:13 now. It should be there within 35 minutes, which will make it...9:48.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

ROOM SERVICE
Thank y--

Michael hangs up phone. Dials a new number.

DONNA (PHONE VOICE)
Hello?

MICHAEL
Hey.

DONNA
Oh, hi. You just get in?

MICHAEL
I’m at the hotel. How are you?

DONNA
Pre-menstrual. Um, how was the flight?

MICHAEL
It was okay. A little bumpy.

DONNA
Oh, I hate that. (calling off)
Just a minute, Henry! I’m on the phone! Just a minute! (pause)
What?! (pause) No it’s Daddy! (pause)

MICHAEL
Donna.

DONNA
Daddy!

MICHAEL
Donna.

DONNA
Daddy!

(MICHAEL)

DONNA
Donna.

(DONNA)

(DONNA) (back in phone) He wants to say hi.
MICHAEL
Okay. Donna, I don’t want to --

DONNA
Hold on. He’s coming downstairs.
(pause) He’s in his pirate suit.
(yelling off) C’mon Henry! Daddy’s waiting! It’s long distance!
(mumbled) Jesus. (to Michael) Here he is.

MICHAEL
Okay. Hi, slugger.

DONNA
(off) Say something, it’s long distance.

HENRY
(long pause) Hi, Daddy. I’m a pirate.

MICHAEL
Are you? That’s great. I’m glad to hear your voice.

HENRY
Did you buy me something?

MICHAEL
Not yet. But I will. I just got here.

HENRY

DONNA
(laughing) Well, he gets right to the point,

MICHAEL
Yeah.

DONNA
So uh, what else? How’s the room?

MICHAEL
It’s, you know, it’s a room. It’s nice, I guess. Big Bed.

DONNA
That’s good, you can thrash about all you like.
MICHAEL
Okay Donna, it’s not that I like it. It’s restlessness. I --

DONNA
Okay. Okay. I’m Sorry. I’m Sorry. You doing anything tonight?

MICHAEL
No. I ordered room service. I’ll watch a movie or something. I don’t know. I should get some sleep.

DONNA
Okay. Well, I better go. I’ve got to get dinner together for Hen.

MICHAEL
Okay. Have a good night.

DONNA
Okay. Good luck tomorrow.

MICHAEL
Yeah, thanks. Okay, bye.

DONNA
Bye.

He hangs up. He walks across the room. Opens the window. He sees a man in another building.

The man is sitting in front of the computer, unbuttoning his pants and putting his hands in to his pants. The man looks up at Michael and Michael jumps behind the curtain. Michael closes the curtains and unfolds a piece of paper from his back pocket.

MICHAEL
(sighs)
Thank you. It is my privilege today to talk to you about Customer Service, what it is and why it’s an essential component of any successful business enterprise. The front line of every customer department is the group of folks who interact directly with the public: the telephone representative at corporate headquarters, the retail associate on the floor of the regional store, the guys or gal ---
He pads to the mini-bar, grabs the ice bucket, pads to the door, opens it, and walks down the hall.

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY

Michael smoking a cigarette walking pass an arguing couple.

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    You knew I didn’t want to get married.

    HOTEL GUEST WIFE
    Yeah well you agreed to it. You’re a grown up.

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    Yeah I’m a grown up. You remind me of it everyday.

    HOTEL GUEST WIFE
    Well someone has to.

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    Bitch.

    HOTEL GUEST WIFE
    Asshole.

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    You know I’m going.

    HOTEL GUEST WIFE
    Where are you going?

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    I’m just going. Fuck you.

He opens a door sticks the bucket under the spout of an ice machine and presses the button. Ice clinks down into the bucket. He heads back down the hall into his room, where we hear the faint street traffic noises.

    HOTEL GUEST WIFE
    Fuck you.

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    Fuck you.

    HOTEL GUEST WIFE
    Fuck you.

    HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
    Fuck you.
HOTEL GUEST WIFE
Fuck you.

HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
Fuck you.

HOTEL GUEST WIFE
Why don’t you fuck off bitch.

HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
You fuck off. You know my mother
was right when she said you were a
bitch.

HOTEL GUEST WIFE
Fuck you.

HOTEL GUEST HUSBAND
Fuck you.

INT. MICHAEL’S HOTEL ROOM

He plunks a couple of ice cubes into a glass, opens the mini
bar, take out a small bottle of booze, twist the top off and
pours it into his glass. He takes a sip. He unfolds the
paper again.

MICHAEL
Thank you. It is my privilege
today to talk to you about Customer
Service. What it is and why...
Shit.

He pulls a cigarette out of a package and lights it. He
inhales.

BELLA
I mean, what the fuck did I do,
Michael? It’s a goddamn mystery.
It’s like the goddamn mystery of
the ages.

MICHAEL
Ah Shit...

BELLA
One minute we were going to spend
the rest of our lives together, and
the next...

Michael pulls open some desk drawers, looking for something.
He flips through a phone book.
MICHAEL
Amarosi. Ok. Hi Bella, it’s
Michael.

He dials the phone. It rings once and he hangs up.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Shit.

He smokes his cigarette a bit, dials again. The phone rings
on the other end.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Hi Bella, it’s Michael. Hi Bella.
Hi Bella, it’s Michael. (sigh)
Fuck.

He picks up the phone again and dials. It rings.

BELLA
(anxious and urgent) Hello? Hello?

MICHAEL
Hello. Um, may I speak to Bella
Amorosi, please?

BELLA
This is Bella.

MICHAEL
Bella? Hi, I wasn’t sure. Hi, um
I -- um, It’s um --

BELLA
Who is this?

MICHAEL
It’s Michael. I didn’t recognize
your voice.

BELLA
Michael?

MICHAEL
Michael Stone. Michael...Stone.
From --

BELLA
(pause) Oh my God! Michael? Oh my
God! Wow! Where are you?
MICHAEL
I’m in Cincinnati on business and I thought of you and I looked you up in the phone book and there you were...so...uh...

BELLA
(pause) It’s good to hear your voice.

MICHAEL
Yours too.

BELLA
Ugh, I’m shaking. Jesus, how long has it been?

MICHAEL
Ten years.

BELLA
Eleven.

MICHAEL
Oh, right. I’m married.

BELLA
Oh.

MICHAEL
I have a kid.

BELLA
Oh. That’s great. Congratulations.

MICHAEL
Thanks. You?

BELLA
Nope.

MICHAEL
I’ve missed you.

BELLA
Yeah. That’s a weird thing to say.

MICHAEL
I know. I’m sorry.

BELLA
Well, it doesn’t matter. It’s all water under the fucking bridge.
(MORE)
BELLA (CONT'D)
The fucking bridge. Ha. (nervous laugh)

MICHAEL
Yeah. But I am sorry. I do think about you a lot.

BELLA
Yeah I guess the postcards must’ve gotten lost in the mail.

MICHAEL
Do you want to maybe get a drink, Bella?

BELLA
Oh. I don’t know, Michael. This is all very intense. It’s like out of the blue. I just came out of a stupid relationship with a psycho. I just... I don’t know, I’m not sure you want to be a victim to my current emotional imbalance tonight.

MICHAEL
Yeah. Well, I understand.

BELLA
I mean, I could, I guess. I don’t know. Jesus, Michael, it’s been so fucking long. And you just call? Out of nowhere?

MICHAEL
I’m sorry. It was stupid. Everything’s just screwed-up. I’m not thinking straight. There’s something wrong with me.

BELLA
Well, Where are you staying?

MICHAEL
The Fregoli.

BELLA
La-de-da, you’re doing well.

MICHAEL
Eh. You know. It’s boring. Everything’s boring.
BELLA
Okay, I could meet you there. At the bar. I have to go to work early, so -- I can’t stay very long.

MICHAEL
Yeah, that sounds great. It’ll be lovely to see you.

BELLA
This is really weird. I’ve gained some weight. Not terrible or anything, but just so you don’t look at me like freaked-out or something, because I couldn’t handle that right now.

MICHAEL
I wouldn’t do that.

BELLA
Okay. And I have fake tooth in the front because I fell and hit a cement bench with my mouth. But I don’t think you can tell. They matched it pretty well.

MICHAEL
Okay. I look forward to seeing you.

BELLA
Bye, Michael.

She hangs up. Michael hangs up.

MICHAEL
Bye, Bella.

He gets the remote from the desk, turns on the TV.

TV VOICE
Soak a towel, and place it in the space at the bottom of the --

He clicks the channel changer. We hear the music of a TV sitcom opening Seinfeld sound alike.

SCENE FROM MY MAN GODFREY
INT. IRENE’S BEDROOM

Irene is hugging Godfrey.

MOTHER
What is the meaning of this, may I ask?

IRENE
Oh Mother, Godfrey loves me. He put me in the shower.

MOTHER
What ever are you talking about?

IRENE
Godfrey loves me. Godfrey loves me. Godfrey loves me.

MOTHER
Godfrey, I demand an explanation.

IRENE
I don't care what anybody says. Godfrey loves me.

MOTHER
See here young lady you take a bath and put on some dry clothes. And come downstairs immediately. Do you hear? Oh my I've never heard of anything like this in my life.

Mother closes the door and walks away.

INT. HOTEL BAR

Bar sounds. Conversations in the background. Michael sits at a table looking for Bella.
BELLA
Michael?

MICHAEL
Bella!

They hug.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
You look great.

BELLA
Thank you. You too.

MICHAEL
Have a seat. Please.

Bella sits. Michael sits.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
It’s really lovely to see you.

BELLA
Thanks.

MICHAEL
Let me get the waitress’s attention. (off) Excuse me. Excuse me. (pause) It’s busier here than I would’ve thought.

WAITRESS
Hi. Do you know what you want?

BELLA
Oh. Um, what are you having, Michael?

MICHAEL
Belvedere martini with a twist.

BELLA
Same old, Michael. I’ll have one of those.

MICHAEL
Make it two.

WAITRESS
Back in a minute.

The waitress walks off.
MICHAEL  
So. You look good. Tell me what’s going on.

BELLA  
Not too much, I’m embarrassed to say. I’m working for the state, doing graphics for the health department.

MICHAEL  
Graphics?

BELLA  
I design pamphlets. Y’know, teen pregnancy, STD’s, diabetes.

MICHAEL  
I see. Well, that sounds interesting.

BELLA  
It’s okay. My boss is a dick.

MICHAEL  
I guess that fits right in with the teen pregnancy and STD’s.

Bella laughs without enthusiasm. Silence.

BELLA  
Do I look bad? I look bad, don’t I?

MICHAEL  
No, you look good.

Silence.

BELLA  
Why did you go, Michael?

MICHAEL  
I don’t know. I can’t explain.

WAITRESS  
Here we are. Two Belvedere martinis straight up with twists.

The waitress puts down the glasses.

MICHAEL  
Thank you.  
BELLA  
Thank you.
WAITRESS (CONT’D)
You’re welcome. Enjoy.

She walks off.

MICHAEL
Old times.

BELLA
Old times.

They click glasses, take sips and react to the alcohol.

BELLA (CONT’D)
That’s nice.

MICHAEL
Yeah.

BELLA
I’ve missed you.

MICHAEL
Me too.

BELLA
Try to.

MICHAEL
Try to what?

BELLA
Try to explain.

MICHAEL
(beat) I think I might have psychological problems.

BELLA
Oh good. That clears things up. Thanks.

MICHAEL
It’s hard to explain. I’ve been running for a long time now.

BELLA
Running? We were special together. That’s what I thought.

MICHAEL
Yeah. I agree. But things kind of shifted.
BELLA
Just like completely suddenly? I was so pissed at you. I was so fucking hurt. I didn’t get out of bed for a year. Do you realize that?

MICHAEL
Jesus. I’m sorry.

Micheal gulps the rest of his drink and reacts.

BELLA
God, you drank that fast.

MICHAEL
I get a lot of practice. Listen, do you feel that you changed? I mean, do you feel that you changed?

BELLA
What are you talking about?

MICHAEL
I don’t know. I don’t know. Like in any way? Like in any way did you change? Like while we were together. Like did I change you? Did you change? Did anything change? Did a change occur?

BELLA
Michael, you’re freaking me out. I can’t take being more freaked out right now.

MICHAEL
I’m sorry. I’m a mess. I’m just... Do you want to maybe go up to my room for another drink? We could talk more privately.

BELLA
What? We’re not going to fuck, Michael.

MICHAEL
I wasn’t... I just... I’m just really bloody lonely and we had something. And I thought maybe could figure out what it --

BELLA
You’ve go to be kidding.
MICHAEL
This isn’t going well. I’ll just get the check then. Miss?

BELLA
Jesus. Wow. What?

MICHAEL
Miss?

BELLA
I can’t -- What? I can’t believe you. Fuck you, Michael. Fuck off.

She storms off.

MICHAEL
Bella! I’m just trying to understand!

EXT. STREET - TOY STORE

Michael walking down the city street.

BELLA (V.O.)
...and the next minute you’re out the door with barely a goodbye. Have a good fucking life, Michael. Love, Bella.

Michael outside of the storefront. Knocks on the window. The door buzzes.

INT. TOY STORE

STORE OWNER
Hello. May I help you?

MICHAEL
Hello there. I am looking for a toy for my son Henry. Perhaps you’ve heard of him, he’s a pirate.

Michael pulls out an invisible sword and swings it through the air. He knocks over a dildo on the counter by mistake. The dildo hits the floor and turns on.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Oh...
Michael picks the dildo up off the floor, turns it off, and places it back on the counter.

Oh dear, this is not quite the store I expected.

STORE OWNER
No I suppose not those kind of toys.

MICHAEL
It’s not my night. What’s that behind you?

STORE OWNER

MICHAEL-
It’s pretty.

INT. MICHAEL’S HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM/SHOWER

He undresses (O.S.), turns on the shower, gets in.

MICHAEL
Hot hot hot...

He adjusts the temperature.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Arghh! Arghh! Fuck! Fuck! Cold!
Fuck you! Fuck! Fuck you!

He bangs insanely on the shower controls.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Fuc -- Okay. Okay, there we go.

He soaps himself up and sings “Dome Epais” from Lakme. He turns off the shower, steps out, dries himself off. He starts to shave, but stops. Michael becomes semi aware of his face plate, changing expressions rapidly, he leans in a starts to pull his lower face plate off, but is interrupted...

Someone walks by in the hall. She seems to be talking rather loudly on a cellphone.

LISA (O.S.)
Anyway I can’t wait to see you when I get back. How’s Thursday?

(MORE)
No, it’s super fancy. Oh my God, is he cute? Really?

MICHAEL
Jesus. Someone else.

LISA (O.S.)
Like how? Well, what does he do? Oh my God, that’s great!


MICHAEL
Where are my fucking pants? Fuck.

As the voice registers, Michael runs from the bathroom and hurriedly gets his clothes on. He opens the door to his room and runs out into the hall. It’s quiet.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

MICHAEL
Ah...hello, miss? Shit. Shit!

He walks down the hall, knocks on a door. The door opens.

HOTEL GUEST
Yes?

MICHAEL
I’m sorry to bother you. I was just looking for my friend’s room.

HOTEL GUEST
Not here.

MICHAEL
Sorry.

HOTEL GUEST
S’okay.

Guest closes his door. Michael knocks on another door. A dog barks behind it.

He continues down the hall and knocks on another door. The door opens in a hurry.

HOTEL GUEST THREE
(breathelessly excited) Hi! (beat) Oh, hello. Can I help you? I thought you were someone else.

MICHAEL
No, sorry. I thought you were someone else.
HOTEL GUEST THREE
That’s okay.

Hotel Guest Three closes the door. Michael continues down the hall and knocks on another door.

EMILY (BEHIND THE DOOR)
Yes?

MICHAEL
Uh...

EMILY
Yes?

MICHAEL
I’m sorry to bother you.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
My name’s Michael Stone and --

EMILY (BEHIND THE DOOR)
Oh, oh, hold on!

The door opens.

EMILY (CONT’D)
Hi! Oh my God! It’s you.

MICHAEL
Hi, I’m sorry to bother you --

EMILY
Not at all! Do you want to come in?

INT. EMILY AND LISA’S HOTEL ROOM

MICHAEL
I was just looking for someone. I think I have the wrong --

LISA (FROM BATHROOM)
Who’s there, Em?

EMILY
It’s Mr. Stone! Michael Stone!

LISA
Really? Oh my God?
The bathroom door opens. Lisa enters.

LISA (CONT’D)
Oh my God. Hello! Oh, I look awful. I was just taking my make-up off. Oh my God. Ugh. Don’t look at me.

MICHAEL
Hello. No, you look lovely.

LISA
I can’t believe you’re in our room. We came here from Akron just to hear you speak. Oh my God. Please don’t look at me.

MICHAEL
Well, I’m certainly very flattered.

EMILY
You can look at me.

LISA
Emily. Is there something we can do for you? I mean -- I don’t mean that in a weird way. Although... No, I’m kidding! I’m just -- Oh my God.

MICHAEL
Oh. I was -- I was trying to find my friend. I thought this was his room and --

LISA
Oh. Nope. Nope. Unless he’s hiding under the bed!

Lisa giggles crazily.

EMILY
We think you’re super-brilliant. We both read your book.

LISA
Oh - Yay for your book!

MICHAEL
Oh, thank you. Are you ladies in customer services?
EMILY
Well, yes, as a matter of fact.
We’re team leaders in a phone room.

LISA
We read your book and productivity went up ninety percent in our department. You’re so smart; I’m not sure I should even say words in front of you, because you’ll see how dumb I am. Shut up, Lisa.

MICHAEL
No, don’t, don’t shut up, Lisa.
You have a miraculous voice.

LISA

EMILY
Lisa, you’re being nuts.

MICHAEL
Say, would you ladies like to get a drink at the bar, maybe? We could chat. Talk about phone system innovations.

LISA
Oh um...

EMILY
Um, Yeah! I think we could manage that. Right, Lisa?

LISA
Do you need to find your friend though?

MICHAEL
Nah. Two beautiful ladies trumps my friend.

EMILY
Oh my goodness. Thank you so much! I’m blushing.

LISA
Yes, thank you so much! I’m blushing too.
INT. HOTEL BAR

LISA
I can’t believe we bumped into you. Y’know we sprung for this hotel because this is like a mini-vacation for us. We can’t even afford it. But look what happened! It’s so worth it. Oh I love this song. (singing) How long, to be near... shut up Lisa.

EMILY
I even got a massage tonight in the room! Mmmmm.

MICHAEL
It’s good to splurge every now and again.

LISA
Emily and I work for Tessman in Akron. We’re only customer service reps, so you can imagine our salaries.

MICHAEL
Tessman?

LISA
Tessman Foods. We make packaged bakery items shipped all over the midwest. Nibble-O’s, Choco-bricks, Apple-Flats, Strawberry Trifles, Knick-Knacks, Scroochies --

MICHAEL
Oh, yes, Splendid. I’m familiar.

EMILY
Brownie Balls, don’t forget.

LISA
Brownie Balls. Yeah, they’re new.

WAITRESS
Hello again. What can I get you?

MICHAEL
Oh, Hi. Do you ladies know what you want?
EMILY
Um, I’ll have an apple mojito, please. Can you make those? With apple schnappes? Yum. Yum. Yum.

WAITRESS
I think probably.

LISA
That sounds really, really good. I’ll have the same.

WAITRESS
And for you, sir?

MICHAEL
Belvedere martini, dry, straight-up, twist.

WAITRESS
I’ll be back in a minute.

MICHAEL
So what do you ladies do for fun?

EMILY
Besides drinking?

LISA
Emily, stop! God!

MICHAEL
Well, I like to drink.

LISA
I do, too! But we do lots of other things. We hike and bike ride. I love to read. Go to the movies. I’m pretty good at Scrabble. Um --

EMILY
Strip poker.

LISA
Emily!

MICHAEL
Have you two been friends long?

LISA
Since Junior High. Oh, I play the Jew’s Harp a little. I don’t like to say Jew’s Harp because it’s offensive to Jews.

(MORE)
Anyway I bought one of those, um, self-teaching. Self-teaching? Is that right? Or self-learning?

MICHAEL
The Jew’s Harp is an underrated instrument.

LISA
I know! People think of it as this thing, you know?

Waitress returns with a tray of drinks.

WAITRESS
Here we are folks. Two apple mojitos.

Glasses being placed on the table.

EMILY
Thank you.

LISA
Mmmm. Thanks.

WAITRESS (CONT’D)
You’re welcome. And a Belvedere martini for the gentlemen.

Glass place on the table.

MICHAEL
Thanks. To us.

They clink glasses.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

The elevator chimes. Lisa, Emily, and Michael pile drunkenly in.

INT. ELEVATOR

LISA
(laughing)
Emily, stop it. What floor are we, anyway?

MICHAEL
Ten.

LISA
Are you sure. I think -- No, I want to press it! Darn it.
MICHAEL
Sorry. My hand just jumped.

LISA
I love pressing the buttons.

MICHAEL
I’m sorry.

EMILY
You always get to press it, Lisa. Don’t be greedy.

LISA
I know. Cause I love it. It’s so...I don’t know...buttony. No, that’s not it. Buttonish? (laughing) Is it stupid to like to press buttons? Shut up, Lisa.

MICHAEL
Pressing buttons is good clean fun.

LISA
Exactly! That’s exactly right. See, Em?

MICHAEL
It was nice getting to meet you ladies.

EMILY
Oh, it was an honor spending time with you. Thank you for all of those mojitos!

MICHAEL
My pleasure.

LISA
Yes, thank you kindly. Mojitos. Mojitos. What a funny word?

MICHAEL
You’re welcome.

LISA
Mo-hee-toes.

The elevator dings and the door opens. They stagger out into the hall.
INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

MICHAEL
Well, I go this way, so I’ll say good night.

EMILY
Oh, pooh.

LISA
Yeah, pooh on you. Pooh pooh pooh.

EMILY
Good night Michael.

She kisses him on the cheek.

EMILY (CONT’D)
Say good night, Lisa.

LISA
Good night, Michael. Pooh.

MICHAEL
Good night.

They walk towards their room.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Oh, Lisa?

LISA
Yes?

MICHAEL
Um, I was wondering if maybe you’d want to come to my room for a little nightcap.

LISA
Oh...

MICHAEL
I feel odd asking in front of you Emily. But I didn’t know how else to --

EMILY
(sullen) No, no. That’s okay. I understand.
LISA
You sure you don’t mean Emily?
Everyone always likes Emily better.

Michael pauses.

EMILY
Ugh, this is awkward. I’m going to
the room, Lisa. I’ll see you later
maybe. Have fun.

LISA
Em, I came out with you. I’m not
going to just abandon --

EMILY
Oh, don’t be an idiot, Lisa. He’s
gorgeous.

LISA
Yeah, it’s okay?

EMILY
Have fun. Night.

Emily walks off.

MICHAEL
So, I’m over this way.

LISA
Okay.

Hotel door closes OS.

EMILY
Have fun.

LISA
Good night.

Lisa trips and falls.

LISA (CONT’D)
Uh!

MICHAEL
Jesus! Are...are you OK?

LISA
I’m OK I’m OK, it happens all the
time.
They walk down the hall to Michael’s room. The door doesn’t open the first few times. Michael and Lisa exchange a glance. Michael shrug and tries the door again. The door opens and they enter.

INT. MICHAEL’S HOTEL ROOM

LISA
Oh, look, how neat your left your room, with the little slippers laid out next to the bed and the blanket turned down all ready for sleepy time.

MICHAEL
No, the maid did that. They come in and fix it up at night. It’s called turn-down service.

LISA
Oh, God, I’m so embarrassed. Lisa the moron. I don’t...I don’t stay in hotels like this. Emily and I splurged, because it’s like a vacation. I’m an idiot.

MICHAEL
No, you’re not. Would you like a drink?

LISA
Yes, please. I would really like a drink.

MICHAEL
I don’t think I can make an apple mojito. I can order one.

LISA
No, that’s okay. I’ll just have a glass of wine, please.

Michael goes about opening the wine bottle as he talks.

MICHAEL
I’m glad to get you alone for a while.

LISA
Yeah?

MICHAEL
Yea.
LISA
You don’t like Emily? Everybody likes Emily. Emily’s a prince.
Ess. Emily’s a princess.

MICHAEL
She’s very nice. I just felt a sort of special thing with you.

LISA
Really? Most people...like Emily.

MICHAEL
Here you go.

LISA
Thank you. (pause) Most people don’t really like to look at me too much because -- you know.

MICHAEL
I think you’re lovely.

LISA
No you don’t. I’ve always done phone work because I’d never get hired to work in a store. Or a restaurant. Or --

MICHAEL
How did it happen, if it’s okay for me ask?

LISA
I don’t -- I don’t like to talk about it.

MICHAEL
May I kiss you there?

LISA
Oh my God. Oh my God. No. Oh God.

MICHAEL
Sorry.

LISA
You’re not like a pervert or something? Like some weird version of a chubby chaser?

MICHAEL
No.
LISA
I just don’t understand why you’d
want to kiss me there.

MICHAEL
Because...because I like you.

LISA
Why? I mean, I’m not smart like
Emily. And I’m ugly. You’re a
really smart guy. You should like
Emily. I don’t even understand a
lot of the words in your book. I
sat there with a dictionary. I try
to learn. But I’m never going to
be smart. And I’m ugly.

MICHAEL
I find it enormously charming that
you read any book with a dictionary
next to you.

LISA
(sigh)
My last boyfriend was eight years
ago. And he wasn’t even my
boyfriend. He was almost sixty and
fat and he worked in Human
Resources and he had a wife and a
his daughter was older than me.
And the only reason he pursued me
was because he thought he’d have a
good shot. Which he did.

MICHAEL
I think you’re extraordinary.

LISA
Why?

MICHAEL
I don’t know yet. It’s just
obvious to me that you are.

LISA
I never went to college. I’ve
never even made it past team leader
in my department.

MICHAEL
Your voice is like...magic.
LISA
Oh, really? Wow. Well, y’know, I have been doing phone work for a long time now, so I pride myself on sounding pleasant and professional, on having a pleasing phone voice and manner.

MICHAEL
It works. Do you sing?

LISA
What? (giggling) No! No! God! You’re weird! I mean, I sing. Everybody sings. I just don’t sing well. I sometimes sing along with the radio. I love Cyndi Lauper. Because she’s got such a great voice and she doesn’t care what people think about her. She is just herself and that takes a lot of courage. I admire that. You know what I mean?

MICHAEL
I think so. Would you sing one of her songs for me?

LISA
(giggling) No!

MICHAEL
C’mon. It’d make me so happy to hear you sing.

LISA
You’re being weird.

MICHAEL
Please. It’ll make me happy.

LISA
(pause) Okay, crazy man. Just a little. Okay, here goes. Don’t laugh at me!

(singing)
I come home in the morning light,
My mother says “When you gonna live your life right?”
Oh, mother, dear, We’re not the fortunate ones,
And girls, They wanna have fu-un.
Oh, girls, Just wanna have fun.
LISA (CONT'D)
(singing)
Some boys take a beautiful girl,
And hide her away from the rest of
the world.
I wanna be the one to walk in the
sun.
Oh, girls, They wanna have fu-un.
Oh, girls, Just wanna have
That's all they really
want.....Some fun....
When the working day is done,
Oh, girls, They wanna have fu-un.
Oh, girls, Just wanna have fun...

MICHAEL
That’s beautiful.

LISA
(singing)
Girls,
They want,
Wanna have fun.
Girls,
They wanna have. Just wanna.
They just wanna. Just wanna.
They just wanna. Oh girls.
They just wanna. Just wanna.
OK That’s it. Happy?

MICHAEL
That was so beautiful.

LISA
No, it was -- Oh, my God, are those
tears?

MICHAEL
It was beautiful.

LISA
It’s such a great song. I want to
be the one who walks in the sun.
That describes so perfectly who I
want to be. You’re so sensitive
Michael. It’s incredibly sweet.

MICHAEL
It’s your voice, Lisa. Keep
talking. Tell me everything.
LISA
You’re like amazing. Why are you doing this? Are you making fun of me?

MICHAEL
No. No.

He kisses her.

LISA
Oh God. Oh my God. Thank you.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

LISA
Will you--will you kiss me again?

MICHAEL
I hope to.

LISA
I hope you do, too. Sometime.

They kiss again. They walk over to the bed kiss and lay down.

LISA (CONT’D)
I haven’t been with anybody in eight years.

MICHAEL
Let’s just lie together and you can tell me about your day?

LISA
Yes. Okay.

They lie down. He kisses her again and again on her face and neck as she speaks quietly.

LISA (CONT’D)
Um, well, Em picked me up at like seven this morning so we could drive down here. We stopped at Starbucks and I got a grande mocha frappuccino. Emily got a grande chai. I looked at the road atlas and figured it’s a little over 200 miles, so at sixty miles an hour we could do it in under four hours with bathroom breaks and whatever. The 71 goes pretty much straight here, so it was easy.

(MORE)
LISA (CONT’D)
We listened to a lot of No Doubt, which Em likes. And I brought my Sarah Brightman CD’s. She sings this beautiful version of Girls Just Wanna Have Fun in Italian. It’s called Le Ragazze Vogliono Solo Divertirsi. Do you want to hear it?

MICHAEL

Please.

LISA
(singing)
Ritorno, tardi la mattina
Mia madre dice “quando imparerai mai?”
Oh madre mia
Non siamo i più fortunati Le ragazze,
Vogliono il meglio.
Le ragazze,
Vogliono solo il meglio.

MICHAEL

Very pretty.

LISA
Oh my God, it is. I want to learn Italian some day. It’s so wonderful. It’s just so romantic.

Pause. Michael kisses Lisa.

MICHAEL
(whispering)
Keep talking.

LISA
Um...I like different languages. I love French and Italian the most. I don’t like German. Sounds mean to me. All those ach’s. And I love Japanese obviously.

Michael continues to kiss Lisa on the face and neck.

LISA (CONT’D)
Oooh, I love Portuguese. I love to listen to Brazilian singers. They sing in Portuguese in Brazil, a little known fact.

(MORE)
LISA (CONT’D)
It’s kind of weird because it’s the only country in South America where they sing in Portuguese. It’s an anomaly, right?

MICHAEL
Uh-huh.

LISA
I learned that word in your book. I like that word. Anomaly. I like the way it sounds and I like what it means. I feel like an anomaly. Before I used to know there was a word for it, it made me feel bad to be different. Now I kind of like it. Sometimes. I mean, not a lot, but sometimes. Makes me special, sort of. Y’know what I mean?

MICHAEL
(drowsy) Anomalisa.

LISA
Ooh, I love that! It’s like “anomaly” plus my name. Will you call me that all the time? I guess it’s kind of long to say all the time. I mean, I guess I’m assuming there is going to be an “all the time.” There’s not going to an “all the time”, is there? It’s just now. Some weird thing for just now. It’s okay though. It’s really nice for just now. It’s an anomaly --

Michael kisses her long on the lips. She sighs. He unbuttons her blouse and takes off his jacket. There is some sighing and moaning and rubbing. Lisa giggles.

MICHAEL
What? Did I tickle you?

LISA
(giggling)
Just a little.

MICHAEL
Sorry.

LISA
It’s okay. Just right there I’m a little ticklish.
MICHAEL
Okay. I won’t touch you there.

LISA
No, you can. It’s okay.

MICHAEL
No, it’s okay.

LISA
No, it’s okay.

He kisses her again.

MICHAEL
Do you talk during sex?

LISA
God! I don’t know! It’s been a long time. Do you want me to? Or not? I could do either.

MICHAEL
If you could. Or just, y’know, make some noises.

LISA
Noises?

MICHAEL
Like moaning or something.

LISA
Oh. Okay. I could do that.

She tries moaning. It’s awkward.

LISA (CONT’D)
Ah.

MICHAEL
That’s nice. (silence) Does this feel okay?

LISA
Yes. Sorry. I’m just, I’m a little shy.

MICHAEL
It’s fine.

LISA
Ouch. Ouch. My hair.
MICHAEL
I’m sorry.

LISA
It’s okay. I’m sorry.

MICHAEL
It’s okay.

LISA
Maybe if we can just turn a little bit like this?

MICHAEL
Sure.

He moves on top of her.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Is that better?

LISA
Much.

MICHAEL
Good.

Michael is kissing the front of her body.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
You feel so good.

LISA
You do too. Oh. Oh. Oh.

MICHAEL
What? You don’t want that?

LISA
No, I’m just...I’m kind of shy about that too.

MICHAEL
Don’t be shy. It’ll be good. I really want to.

LISA
(pause) Okay. Okay, go ahead.

Michael removes her panties and kisses Lisa between her legs.

MICHAEL
You’re being quiet? It’s no good?
LISA
No, it’s fine. It’s good. Just a little bit more gentle maybe. At first, maybe.

MICHAEL
Sorry.

LISA
It’s okay.

He continues to lick and kiss Lisa between her legs.

MICHAEL
Better?

LISA
Yes.

Lisa begins to moan, small and quiet at first, then louder. Michael grunts and groans and slurps.

LISA (CONT’D)
Could you come up here please?

They climb on to the bed, pull back the sheets, and take each others clothes off.

Lisa leans back and bumps her head on the headboard. They giggle.

Michael enters Lisa and they make love. It builds to a climax, then subsides with little residual groans here and there and heavy breathing.

LISA (CONT’D)
(giggling) That was really nice.

MICHAEL
Mmm-hmm.

Michael lights a cigarette.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
I don’t want to lose you. I lose everyone.

LISA
What do you mean?

MICHAEL
I don’t know. It doesn’t matter.

Pause
Oh.

Musical interlude. Michael turns off the light and we see the Cincinnati skyline. Night turns to day with a timelapse.

In the morning the phone rings. It’s an odd ring, warbling and weak and sort of underwater.

MICHAEL
(groggily) Hello?

HOTEL MANAGER (PHONE VOICE)
Hello, Mr. Stone?

MICHAEL
Yes.

Lisa makes morning stretching and groaning sounds in the background.

LISA
It’s early. Who is it?

HOTEL MANAGER
Good Morning, sir. My name is Lawrence Gill and I’m the General Manager of the hotel.

MICHAEL
Yes?

HOTEL MANAGER
Uh, I have a matter of some delicacy I need to talk to you about?

MICHAEL
What’s going on?

LISA
Who is it?

HOTEL MANAGER
Would it be possible for you come down to my office to chat for a few moments?

MICHAEL
I suppose.
HOTEL MANAGER
I’d greatly appreciate it. If you take the elevator to the basement level and turn left when you get off, you’ll see the administrative offices. You can just ask for me. My name is Lawrence Gill.

MICHAEL
Yeah, okay.

Michael hangs up and lights a cigarette.

LISA
Who was that?

MICHAEL
Lawrence Gill.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY

Footsteps down and echoey hallway. The whoosh and grind of pipes and a massive air conditioning system. Michael passes a man in the hall that speaks indistinguishable Spanish.

INT. SECRETARIES OFFICE

Office. Typing sounds. Phone ringing. Hustle bustle.

MICHAEL
Hello, I’m here to see Mr. Gill.

SECRETARY
Yes, of course, one moment.
(punches buttons on phone)
Mr. Gill, A Mr....?

MICHAEL
Stone.

SECRETARY
A Mr. Stone is here to see you. Yes, sir. You can go right in.

INT. LAWRENCE GILL’S OFFICE

Michael enters inner office through door. The outer-office sounds fade away, replaced by the bubbling of a fish tank. This office feel enormous. When the Hotel Manager speaks, he sounds as if he’s a football field away.
HOTEL MANAGER
Thank you for coming, Mr. Stone.
Over here. It’s big I know. They
offered me 300 square on the fifth
floor or this down here. Not a
hard decision, right? Take the golf
cart. That’s what it’s for.

Michael gets in the golf cart and drives. The manager’s voice
gets closer. He hears echoes of voices.

HOTEL MANAGER (CONT’D)
Watch out for that sunken meeting
area. No, you can just go around
those. Don’t try to drive through.
There you are.

The golf cart is turned off.

HOTEL MANAGER (CONT’D)
Ah. Have a seat. Do you like the
fish? I just had them put in. Salt
water tanks. They’re hard to
maintain. Those are leprechaun
fish. The ones with the sort of
Irish faces.

MICHAEL
Is there some problem?

HOTEL MANAGER
No, sir. It’s nothing like that.

MICHAEL
What then?

HOTEL MANAGER
Nothing.

MICHAEL
Excuse me?

HOTEL MANAGER
It’s just...

MICHAEL
What?

HOTEL MANAGER
Well...

MICHAEL
Please, I have a conference to
attend.
HOTEL MANAGER
Yes, of course. Customer service. I’ve read your book myself. Hotel productivity up 90 percent. You and I are in the same business, really, when you come down to it. Service. Wouldn’t you agree?

MICHAEL
Yes.

HOTEL MANAGER
Yes. Anyway, I don’t know how to put this, so I’ll just put it. I understand that you had a guest in your room last night.

Hotel Manager gets up and walks to the treadmill. He gets on the treadmill and turns it on.

MICHAEL
Is that a crime?

HOTEL MANAGER
No, not at all. Certainly hoteliers are in the business of being discreet about our guests’ philandering.

MICHAEL
Philandering?

HOTEL MANAGER
It isn’t that. My choice of words – It’s not about that at all.

MICHAEL
How do you even know that, anyway?

HOTEL MANAGER
Well, I -- Mr. Stone, may I be candid with you?

MICHAEL
I guess. I don’t what the hell you are getting at.

HOTEL MANAGER
Well, I -- um -- I love you.

MICHAEL
Right. I’m leaving.
HOTEL MANAGER
No. Look. I’ve never talked to you like this before. It has not been appropriate. Perhaps it’s not still, but I’ve been unable to contain myself this morning. I love you. And I want what’s best for you. And if you need to have an affair, I understand, but have it with me.

MICHAEL
Goodbye.

Michael gets in the gold cart and drives it away in to sunken meeting area.

HOTEL MANAGER
Have it was anyone at all, anybody, just not Lisa.

Michael runs the long distance to the office door.

HOTEL MANAGER (CONT’D)
No. Wait. Wait. We’re all here for you. We’re all one for you! Come back!

INT. SECRETARIES OFFICE

Michael runs in to the secretaries office. The room filled with secretaries comes to halt and they all look up at Michael. Michael is out of breath.

HOTEL MANAGER
Do you like any of these here? They’re very pretty. That ones Stephanie. Stephanie say hello to Mr. Stone.

Michael is climbing on and over there desks to get to the door.

STEPHANIE
Hello. You can fuck me if you want, Mr. Stone.

OTHER WOMAN
Or me. Any of us. Just not Lisa.

THIRD WOMAN
Not Lisa.
Michael runs out the door of the office.

MICHAEL
Lisa.

INT. STAIRWELL

Michael in stairwell, running up stairs. He passes a bellman carrying a tray, they struggle to get around each-other. Michael rushes past and the man drops his tray OS.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

Michael’s faceplate falls off just after he comes out of the stairwell. He bends over, picks it up, it calls out while in his hand...

Michael panics, and quickly puts his faceplate back on his face, then continues down the hallway.

MICHAEL
(shouting) Lisa! Lisa!

Michael knocking on hotel room door.

EMILY
Yes?

The door opens.

EMILY (CONT’D)
Oh, hello, Michael.

MICHAEL
Where *cough* where is she, Emily?

INT. EMILY AND LISA’S HOTEL ROOM

EMILY
She’s not here.

LISA (FROM BATHROOM)
Michael?

MICHAEL
Lisa, let’s go!

LISA
What?
EMILY
Lisa, don’t go with him. He’s insane.

LISA (IN ROOM NOW)
What? What’s going on?

MICHAEL
I don’t have the time to tell you, just COME!

He grabs her arm.

LISA
Where are you taking me? Em, what’s going on?

He pulls her from the room. They run down the hall.

EMILY
Oh, for God’s sake. Lisa, pull free of him and come back here.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

EMILY (CALLING FROM DOWN HALL)
Where are you going to go, Michael? Be reasonable. There’s nowhere to go.

Lisa falls, Michael stops to help her up.

LISA
You’re hurting me.

MICHAEL
I’m sorry.

Michael tries to open the door but the card does not read. He tries a few more times and it opens. He drags Lisa inside. He closes the door.

INT. MICHAEL’S HOTEL ROOM

MICHAEL
I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I had to get you away. You weren’t safe.

LISA
Safe from what? What are you talking about?
MICHAEL
They don’t want us to be together. I think they’ll kill you if they need to.

LISA
Michael?

MICHAEL
They explained it to me. The hotel manager. He explained it to me. They’re all one person and they love me. Everyone is one person, but you and me. You’re the only other person in the world.

LISA
(pause) Really? That’s so beautiful. I’m going to cry.

MICHAEL
We need to stay together. Forever. To protect each other, to nurture each other.

LISA
Oh my God. Oh my God. That’s -- Are you sure?

MICHAEL
Yes. Yes. Finally. Finally I’ve found you.

LISA
I’ve waited so long for someone to -- And you’re so smart.

MICHAEL
We have to get out of here.

LISA
My clothes. My stuff.

MICHAEL
We’ll get new.

LISA
Your wife and son.

MICHAEL
They don’t exist. They’re just them.

Pounding on door.
VOICE IN DREAM

587 Michael? Michael?

LISA
You’re having a nightmare or something.

MICHAEL
(groggy) Oh. Uh. Oh, man.

LISA
You were thrashing. You hit me in the face with your elbow.

MICHAEL
Oh, I’m sorry.

LISA
It’s okay. I kind of liked it. It’s kind of intimate.

MICHAEL
Oh. Okay, then. Stick around, I’m sure you’ll get more of those. I’m a sloppy sleeper.

LISA
You’re all sweaty. What was the dream?

MICHAEL
I don’t know. Something about the hotel manager.

Michael lights a cigarette.

MICHAEL (CONT’D)
Are you hungry? We can order breakfast. I have to get ready for this speech.

LISA
Can I have scrambled eggs?

MICHAEL
Sure.

LISA
I love eggs. (stretching) Scrambled is my favorite egg style. What about yours?

Sounds of forks on plates, coffee being poured.
LISA (CONT'D)
Mmm, these eggs are delicious.
Scrambled perfectly. You want to try some?

MICHAEL
(mouth full of food) Here’s what I’m thinking.

LISA
(mouth full of food)
Yes?

MICHAEL
(takes a sip of coffee)
I want to be with you.

LISA
What do you mean?

MICHAEL
I need to be with you. I want to leave my wife.

LISA
Really? Michael, that’s a big decision. I don’t --

MICHAEL
No no no, it’s something I have to do. I mean, if you’re interested.

LISA
I mean, yeah. I mean it’s awfully sudden. I mean, I don’t want to be responsible for breaking up a marriage. Do we need to decide now?

MICHAEL
It’s been years since I’ve felt anything like this. It’s like a floodgate has opened. I can’t close it. I don’t want to. I love you.

LISA
(pause) Okay. Um, I don’t know. It seems so big and... Oh gosh, okay. Yeah, let’s do it.

They kiss.
MICHAEL
Great! This is so great! (mouth full of food) Anomalisa. So I’ll, I’ll call Donna and tell her. No, maybe I should go see her. Right?

LISA
(mouth full of food)
Yeah, that sounds right. I think it’s such an important --

MICHAEL
Could you not...You’re clicking your fork against your teeth. Could you not do that?

LISA
Oh, sorry. People have told me that before. I know, it’s a stupid unconscious habit.

MICHAEL
It’s okay. Anyway, you were saying?

LISA
Just that I think it’s more respectful. And you need to speak to Henry. And explain that this isn’t about him.

MICHAEL
But it is. It’s about him, too.

LISA
Oh. Well, don’t tell him that. He’s just a little boy.

MICHAEL
Yeah. You’re right. You’re being a little controlling, don’t you think?

LISA
I don’t mean to. I’m sorry.

MICHAEL
No, that’s okay.

LISA
Good, I’m glad.
MICHAEL
Please don’t talk with food hanging out of your mouth.

LISA
Oh, sorry. I’m a pig. Sorry.

MICHAEL
No, no. It’s okay. So, will you live in Los Angeles? Or do you need to stay in Ohio?

LISA
(mouth full of food) Um, I’m sorry. Hold on. (pause)

Lisa hums as she chews her food.

LISA (CONT’D)
I could move to Los Angeles. I could do that.

MICHAEL
Good.

As Lisa speaks, Lisa #2 joins her in perfect synchronization but very quietly. It’s start almost inaudibly, but as it continues through their dialogue, Lisa #2’s voice gets progressively louder and Lisa’s voice gets progressively more quiet. By the end of the scene, only Lisa #2 can be heard.

LISA
We should go to the zoo today after your speech. I hear it’s really good. They have --

LISA AND LISA #2
-- breeding programs for all these endangered species.

MICHAEL
I’m sorry what did you say?

LISA AND LISA #2
Oh, they have breeding programs for all these endangered species, so you get to see things like pandas, which I think are awfully cute. They’re not really bears, I read.

MICHAEL
(distracted) Yeah, sure. That sounds fine.
LISA AND LISA #2
What is it?

MICHAEL
Nothing. The zoo sounds good. My stomach hurts. It feels empty. It’s clenched.

LISA AND LISA #2
Oh. Eat some more waffle maybe? Did I do something wrong? I’m sorry. Darling.

MICHAEL
It’s okay. I’m anxious about my speech, I suppose.

LISA AND LISA #2
Of course. Well, we’ll have fun after. We don’t have to go to the zoo. We can just hang out here. I have the whole weekend till I have to get back to work.

MICHAEL
That’s great.

LISA AND LISA #2
I’m so happy, Michael. I’ve waited for someone like you my whole life.

MICHAEL
I’ve waited too. We’ll work it all out, right?

LISA AND LISA #2
Yes. Who would’ve thunk it? It’s just so beautiful. Life can be. Things can work out. That’s the lesson.

MICHAEL
Sometimes there’s no lesson. That’s a lesson in itself.

LISA AND LISA #2
I guess so.
(pause)
I feel anxious, Michael. I feel something. Like you’re different—acting.
MICHAEL
Me? No, no, no. Everything’s fine. I’m just...

LISA AND LISA #2
I know (sigh) I’m not great to look at in bright sunlight.

MICHAEL
No, you’re very pretty.

LISA AND LISA #2
Okay. So, we could maybe go for a walk and talk or something.

MICHAEL
Yes.

LISA #2
So I’ll see you after?

MICHAEL
Of course.

INT. AUDITORIUM

MICHAEL
-- and always remember, the customer is an individual. Just like you. Each person you speak to has had a day. Some of their days have been good, some bad, but they’ve all of them have had one. Each person you speak to has had a childhood. Each has a body. Each body has aches. What is it to be human? What is it to ache? What is it to be alive? I don’t know. What is it to ache? I don’t know. What is it to be alive? I don’t know. Uh, yes. How do I talk to a customer? How do I talk to a customer? These are the important questions for a customer service representative. What do I say? Do I smile while I’m on the phone? They can tell if you’re smiling even if they can’t see you. Did you know that? Try it as an experiment when you’re on the phone with a friend... Try it, go ahead. See, watch. (pause) I’m lost. You see I was smiling when I said that. (MORE)
MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I’ve lost my love. She’s an
unmoored ship drifting off to sea.
And I have no one to talk to. I
have no one to talk to. I have no
one to talk to. I’m sorry. I
don’t mean to burden you with that.
I just don’t know what else to do
because I have no one to talk to.
Be friendly to the customer. Think
of the customer as your friend. I
want to cry but I can’t. Is it the
Zoloft, Dr. Horowitz? Is it the
Zoloft... My face squeezes into
that crying contortion you all know
so well but nothing comes out. I
need tears. It’s like not being
able to come. I need tears to tear
me in two and let this nightmare
escape. Oh, um, anyway yes don’t
forget to smile. It makes a
person’s day. And what does it
cost you? A smile is free. This is
not working. This is not working.
This is not working. The world is
falling apart. The president is a
war criminal.

AUDIENCE
Boo! Boo!

MICHAEL
America is going down the tubes and
you’re talking about goddamn
intelligent design. They’ve
intentionally destroyed the public
education system. It’s easier to
manipulate dumb workers and
soldiers.

AUDIENCE
There’s no need for that! Support
out troops!

MICHAEL
Eh? Oh, uh, yes, ah. Be personable.
Remember to believe in yourself.
Believe in your company. And your
products or services. I sweat onto
my pillow every night. I think
something is very, very wrong with
me. Be friendly. Yes, what does
it cost you? Look for what is
special about each individual.

(MORE)
Focus on that during your conversation. Our time here is limited. We forget that. Death comes, that’s it. Soon it’s as if we never existed. So remember to smile. Remember there is someone out there for everyone. Someone to love. Remember every person you speak to needs love. Remember to --

EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC

Plane taking off.

INT. MICHAEL’S HOUSE


HENRY
Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!

MICHAEL
Slugger.

Henry jumps in Michael’s arms.

HENRY
What’d you bring me?

MICHAEL
In the bag.

HENRY
Lemme look! Lemme look!

Henry jumps from Michael’s arms. Michael sets down his suitcase and bag.

DONNA
(chuckling)
He gets right to the point.

MICHAEL
. Hi, honey.

Michael and Donna kiss.

HENRY
Is this it?

MICHAEL
Yup.
HENRY
What is it?

MICHAEL
A toy.
The heavy plastic package is struggled with.

HENRY
It’s a doll. It’s for girls. It’s a girls doll.

MICHAEL
No. It’s a toy an antique it moves.

HENRY
It’s stupid, it’s stupid and the face is broken.

MICHAEL
It’s an antique, Slugger. That’s a part of its charm.

HENRY
I don’t get it. What are all these...these words here?

MICHAEL
I don’t know. It’s in Japanese. Press some buttons. It moves.

Buttons are pressed. Tinny music starts. Cheap gears whirl. It continues throughout, getting louder and more complicated.

HENRY
What else did you get me?

MICHAEL
Well, I didn’t get you anything--

MANY VOICES
Surprise! (singing) For he’s a jolly good fellow...

MICHAEL
Oh, Jesus. That scared me.

DONNA
Welcome home, honey! It’s a surprise party!
MICHAEL
I don’t -- Who are all these people?

EVERYBODY
(ad-libbed welcome home Michael, good to see you)

MICHAEL
Oh, thanks. Who are they?

DONNA
It’s everybody, honey!

HENRY
What’s it doing now, Daddy?

MICHAEL
I don’t recognize any of them.

EVERYBODY
Michael, how are you?

MICHAEL
Oh yeah, yeah, how are you?

HENRY
Daddy, what’s coming out of the toy?

MICHAEL
I don’t know.

DONNA
God Michael, it looks like semen.

MICHAEL
I don’t know. I just got it at a store. I don’t know.

HENRY
What’s semen, Mommy?

DONNA
Oh, it’s just a liquid Henry. It’s a liquid. Michael don’t you realize that we love. Henry, me, all of us here.

MICHAEL
Who are you, Donna? Who are you really?
DONNA
Oh for fuck’s sake. I’m sorry, Henry. Mommy said a bad word. For fuck’s sake, Michael. I don’t know who I am, I mean. Who are you? Who is anyone? Who could answer that question? I don’t want you to leave.

MICHAEL
Donna, I’m not leaving.

HENRY
Is Daddy’s leaving?

MICHAEL
(pause)
Of course not, slugger. Where would I go?

PARTY GOER
Ha-ah, well. Good to see you.

MICHAEL
Thanks very much.

Momotaro San song comes from the toy.

HENRY
(pause) Daddy, what’s it doing now?

MICHAEL
Singing Slugger.

HENRY
Oh. Oh. Um, can I go out and play?

MICHAEL
Yeah, sure. I’ll stay here and listen to it till it’s over.

After a bit the noise fades. There is just the distant sound of the wind.

LISA #2 (O.S.)
September 16th, 2005. Dear Michael, I’m sorry to see you go but I understand.

LISA AND LISA #2 (O.S.)
Well I don’t understand but I accept it.
EXT. EMILY AND LISA’S CAR

LISA AND LISA #2
I’m so glad we had this time together.

LISA
I don’t think I ever felt love like this, was. (pause) Maybe someday we’ll meet again under better circumstances. Love, Lisa

Fade to black.