

PROGRAMS

by
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FADE IN:

INT. CLARA'S STUDIO APARTMENT IN STOCKHOLM - EVENING

The camera pans slowly through a small, warmly lit studio apartment. Soft, amber light filters in through a window overlooking the rooftops of Stockholm, casting a cozy glow over the space.

GRETA and CLARA are tangled in a playful pillow fight on the bed, their laughter filling the room. Greta, a boyish girl with messy, chin-length curls, has a youthful spark in her eyes. Clara lets out a gleeful laugh, jumping off the bed and sprinting across the room.

GRETA

(grinning, catching her breath)

Come back here, let's go again!

A beat as Clara pauses, leaning against a wall, her laughter softening.

CLARA

Do you really have to leave?

Greta's face shifts, laughter fading. She lowers the pillow, the weight of her dreams and the unknown flickering in her eyes.

GRETA

I want to be worthy of our love. Make it big and take us to the stars.

Clara tilts her head, smirking slightly, as if amused but understanding.

CLARA

Oh, really.

(playfully, with a laugh)

You just want to conquer the world - and conquer it, you will.

Greta shrugs, laughing lightly but with a determination in her voice.

GRETA

I'm tired of being broke. Of working shifts at the shop after classes just to help Mom. I can do better.

Clara nods, watching Greta with admiration mixed with a tinge of sadness.

CLARA

I understand. You have to follow your dream.

A beat. The air between them shifts, quieter, more vulnerable.

GRETA

(sitting down beside Clara)

They told me Greta Anderson sounds too... ordinary. Like a peasant's name. I'll need to change it if I want to go far.

CLARA

(thinking, a sparkle of mischief in her eye)

Alright then, we'll come up with an A-name. What about Alba?

Greta's eyes light up with excitement.

GRETA

Perfect for a last name. What about the first?

CLARA

How about Margo? Greta - Margareta - Margo. It has the right ring for them.

Greta's lips curl into a smile, savoring the sound.

GRETA

Margo Alba it is.

They share a moment of silence, the reality of Greta's departure settling in. Greta gazes out the window, as if trying to capture a final memory of the place.

GRETA

(softly)

It's strange, knowing I'll be gone tomorrow.

CLARA

(whispering)

I'll miss you.

Greta brushes a lock of Clara's hair, her gaze intense.

GRETA

I'll be back in a blink. Don't you dare forget me!

Clara smiles, eyes misty.

CLARA

How can I?

They share a tender kiss, soft and lingering.

GRETA

(in a calming tone, with a hint
of a smile)
I'll always be your stupid boyfriend
Anders.

Clara shifts, taking on a playful posture, a smirk teasing at her
lips.

CLARA

You were born a beautiful woman,
(playfully)
Anders.

GRETA

(laughing)
Moje wants to turn me into a beautiful
woman. He says I need to lose 10 kilos,
fix my teeth, and straighten my hair.

CLARA

(smiling, her hand resting on
Greta's cheek)
You won't regret it.

GRETA

(softly)
I won't if you'll still like me.

CLARA

(whispering, sincere)
I don't like you. I love you.

A silence fills the room, deep and tender.

GRETA

(suddenly grinning)
Now, give me that.

CLARA

What?

GRETA

My pajamas.

CLARA

(teasing)

Oh, those pajamas...

GRETA

Come on, what am I supposed to sleep in?

CLARA

(getting serious, her voice heavy with the weight of the upcoming separation)
What am I supposed to sleep in without you?

A heavy beat. Greta's grin fades as she meets Clara's gaze, the depth of her pain unmistakable.

CLARA (CONT'D)

(softly, almost pleading)
Let me keep it. You keep the keys.

Clara takes a small bunch of keys from the table, tossing them gently to Greta, who catches them and slips them into her pocket. Clara wraps her arms around Greta, resting her head on her shoulder.

GRETA

I wish I had the courage and strength to put right everything that's wrong in this world.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COSTUME ROOM AT THE STUDIO - DAY

ANNA, Greta's assistant, adjusts her glamorous costume. The camera zooms in on the dress, capturing close-up details of diamond-like stones that shimmer brilliantly. Anna carefully adjusts some stone settings that have been slightly deformed from wear. Satisfied, she gently lifts the dress and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER OUTSIDE GRETA'S DRESSING ROOM AT THE STUDIO - DAY

Anna crosses the foyer, cradling the costume with extreme care. The hallway is overflowing with orchids, barely fitting into the space.

The camera focuses on Greta's dressing room door, where a nameplate reads "MARGO ALBA."

Anna gently knocks.

CUT TO:

INT. GRETA'S DRESSING ROOM AT THE STUDIO - DAY

Greta sits at the vanity, her head buried in her arms. She appears slimmer, more glamorous, her hair now sleek and straightened.

Greta doesn't respond to the knock. Anna quietly enters, gently setting the costume on a hook, glancing at Greta with concern.

GRETA

(slowly lifting her head, her
voice weary)
What is it?

ANNA

Your costume. All fixed.
(pauses, as if unsure whether to
trouble Greta further)
And the orchids. Again.

GRETA

How many?

ANNA

Another two hundred, I think. That
makes over two thousand this week.

GRETA

(with a sigh)
I don't know what to do with them.

ANNA

And the mail?
(pauses)
They've put it all in bags. Ten more
today.

GRETA

Burn it.
(pauses, thinking)
Oh, wait. Check if there's a package
from Sweden.

ANNA

That'll take all day. They might need
to hire someone just for this.

GRETA

Then burn it. And let the studio figure
out the orchids.
(closing her eyes for a moment)
I don't care. Now, leave me. Please.

Anna nods and slips out, closing the door quietly behind her. Greta lowers her head back onto her arms, sinking deeper into her exhaustion.

The door opens softly, and Anna reenters.

Greta looks up, surprised.

ANNA

Moje is here to see you.

GRETA

(a weary sigh)

God... Tell him I'm unwell.

But before Anna can respond, MOJE STILLER strides in, ignoring any pretense of waiting.

MOJE

Unwell? You can't afford to be unwell.
What's going on?

Anna discreetly slips out, closing the door behind her.

GRETA

(gathering herself, with forced nonchalance)

Oh, nothing special. Just that I haven't seen my family in ages, my sister died last week, and I couldn't even go to her funeral because I had to finish the film.

(gestures at her costume with contempt)

You know, this... thing, where they throw me leftovers and expect me to prance around like some silly vamp.

(pauses, voice breaking)

Moje, I hate it here!

MOJE

Welcome to show business.

(placing a stack of books on the table)

Instead of complaining, do yourself a favour and read these. Inspire them to give you better roles! And as for the pay - work on your English. Right now, you sound like an immigrant plumber!

GRETA

I've been taking language lessons for the role. I'm improving.

MOJE

I didn't bring you here to 'improve'. I brought you here to be perfect - your English included!

GRETA

(clenching her jaw, her tone controlled)
It will be perfect.

A tense silence falls between them.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(after a moment, almost pleading)
Moje, please talk to Meir. I can't keep working for this.

MOJE

I can't risk both our jobs. Start making demands with Meir, and he'll replace you without blinking. And for good reason - there are plenty of girls waiting to take your spot.

GRETA

Then I'll speak to him myself.

MOJE

Don't do it!

GRETA

(frustrated)
Sometimes, I feel like I'm married to you. I didn't come here to be a slave - bombarded with orchids while I can't even afford the dress I wear on set.

MOJE

Orchids?

GRETA

(laughing bitterly)
Ever since "Orchids of the Night" premiered, the hallway to my dressing room looks like a florist's shop. Didn't you see the garden out there?

MOJE

Well, that's success, darling.

GRETA
(shaking her head)
You know too well that's not the kind
of success I want.

Without another word, Greta storms out of the dressing room,
leaving Moje alone.

CUT TO:

INT. MEIR'S OFFICE AT THE STUDIO - DAY

A delicate knock at the door.

MEIR
Yes?

The door opens, and Greta steps in, her posture composed but her
expression resolute.

MEIR (CONT'D)
(smiling, almost patronizing)
Oh, hello. Good to see you, sweetheart.
So, what brings a pretty young Swedish
girl to my office?

GRETA
(cool and direct)
The last film we did.

MEIR
(casually)
What about it?

GRETA
(measured, but unwavering)
I have a question. John and I played
the leads. Is there a reason I'm paid
ten times less than him?

MEIR
(chuckling, leaning back with a
dismissive smile)
Ah, you want a raise.
(leaning back further, crossing
his arms)
Look, kid, I like you, so I'll make an
exception and take my time to explain
how things work around here. John has

way more experience than you. You, my darling, are just starting out. You've got a lot to learn before you can start making claims like that. Right now, I'm the one taking all the risk by hiring you. You're not an asset - yet.

GRETA

(quietly, but firm)

Not an asset...

(pauses)

Then I have no choice. I think I go home now.

She turns and exits the office with quiet determination, not waiting for a response.

MEIR

(caught off guard)

What?

CUT TO:

INT. MEIR'S OFFICE AT THE STUDIO - EVENING

Meir sits at his desk, deeply engrossed in paperwork. The office is silent until the telephone rings, slicing through the stillness.

MEIR

(answers, gruffly)

Yes.

(listens, irritation building)

What do you mean she won't sign for the next film? Who does she think she is?

(pauses, growing smug)

Her visa expires in a month, and she doesn't have a dime to her name. So, she can drop that 'Ay tank ay go home now' act.

He leans forward, voice sharp and controlled.

MEIR (CONT'D)

She'll be thrown out of the country, and it won't even be her choice. She's nothing without me here. Nothing. Make sure she gets that.

He listens again, his fingers tapping impatiently on the desk.

MEIR (CONT'D)

Stop making this all about her.

(his voice hardens)
If I wanted to, I could make silk
purses out of a sow's ears. That's what
this is about - me taking charge.
Nothing else.

He listens again, his expression darkening.

MEIR (CONT'D)
What do you mean, 'what do you have to
do'?

(leans back, his voice cold and
deliberate)
Get the press to tear her apart.
Destroy her so-called "acting style."
Make sure she's seen as some arrogant,
hysterical European bitch who just
wants more money than the rest.

He pauses, eyes narrowing.

MEIR (CONT'D)
Do your job.

Another brief listening pause, and his tone shifts to finality.

MEIR (CONT'D)
And tell her this - if she doesn't
sober up in a week, I'll replace her.
And that'll be the end of it.

Meir slams the phone down, his face flushed with anger, seething in
the dim light of his office.

CUT TO:

INT. GRETA'S DISCREET HOTEL LOBBY, MALIBU - DAY

Greta descends the stairs quietly, her expression controlled but
wary. Across the lobby, ISABEL is already seated at a table in the
restaurant, waiting. She waves, a warm smile softening her
otherwise sharp demeanor.

GRETA
Hello.

ISABEL
Nice to meet you. Finally. Isabel de la
Vega.

They shake hands, a moment of tension flickering between them.

GRETA

Your agent said you had a project for me.

ISABEL

Yes. I'll explain everything, but let's take our time, shall we?

GRETA

I don't have much time.

ISABEL

(studying her)

Don't you?.. It's been rather quiet over the last month since you left the studio, hasn't it?

GRETA

(brushing off the comment)

I don't want to talk about it.

ISABEL

(gently, watching Greta's reaction)

I didn't mean to upset you. Forgive me. It must have been painful, reading all those reviews. The attacks were completely undeserved. You're a brilliant actress -everyone knows that.

GRETA

(coldly, almost absent-mindedly)

I understand why they did it. I'm just too young for all this... and tired.

(pauses, collecting herself)

So, what's your project?

ISABEL

(calmly)

Look... the studio -

GRETA

(cutting her off, a sharp edge to her tone)

I'm not discussing the studio. If you're here on their behalf, you can leave right now.

Greta stands abruptly, prepared to walk away.

ISABEL

(reaching out, her voice sincere)
Margo, wait. Listen to me. They've changed their mind. Meir is ready to sign, on whatever terms you want.

Isabel gently takes Greta's hand, a quiet plea in her gesture.

ISABEL (CONT'D)
(softly)
Please, don't leave.

Greta hesitates, her resolve wavering. After a beat, she sits back down, guarded but curious.

GRETA
(looking at Isabel, skeptical)
Why did they change their mind?

ISABEL
(leaning forward, her tone earnest)
They can't afford to lose you. Your last film made 30% of the studio's yearly turnover in just two weeks. And they know that wasn't because of John Gibbard.

GRETA
(a small, bitter smile)
Oh... so I've finally become an asset.

ISABEL
(warmly)
Yes, you could say that. But to me, you've always been an asset. You were born a star - you didn't become one. Such true art as yours has no 'becoming.'

GRETA
(coolly)
Why did they send you?

ISABEL
They've tried reaching you, but you never returned their calls. They were running out of options.

GRETA
(a slight nod, processing)
I see.

ISABEL

(pauses, her tone shifting to
one of admiration)
And I agreed to come because I
genuinely believe the world needs you.
As an actress.

A moment of silence settles between them.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

So, what are your terms?

GRETA

(examining Isabel closely)
Why do you assume I'd agree?

ISABEL

(smiling knowingly, leaning in
slightly)
Because a queen needs a throne.
(her gaze steady)
I see it in your eyes - you love being
adored. And this is your kingdom,
Margo. Give them your terms, and I'll
make sure they agree. They need you,
yes... but you need them, too.
(pausing, her tone softening)
Be strong. Let go of the past, stay
professional, and tell me what you
want.

The camera lingers on Greta as she considers her options, emotions
flickering across her face.

GRETA

(measured)
I want to be paid fairly. No less than
John, or any other male lead they want
me to star with.

ISABEL

(nodding, satisfied)
Good.

GRETA

(thoughtfully)
I also want a decent house, a nice car
with a driver, and security.

ISABEL

(without hesitation)

Very well. Shall I tell them they can draft a five-year contract on these terms?

GRETA
(determined)

I also want to have a say in my roles if they expect me to bring life to the screen. I'm no doll.

ISABEL
(firmly)

They're desperate for you. There won't be any problem with that.

GRETA
(suspicious)

Are you sure?

ISABEL
(smiling slightly)

The studio has practically stopped production because of your silence. I doubt they can afford to wait another week.

GRETA

And I need a week off before I start working.

ISABEL
(surprised)

A week?

GRETA
(looking away, her voice
breaking slightly)

I need to get away... somewhere quiet,
somewhere cold.

Greta puts her head in her hands, the weight of it all pressing down on her.

GRETA (CONT'D)

I just need to go away...

ISABEL
(softly, leaning in)

I understand. And if you need company -

GRETA

(cutting her off, looking up
sharply)
No.

CUT TO:

INT. GRETA'S LIMOUSINE - DAY

Greta and Isabel sit side by side in a sleek limousine, glasses of champagne in hand. Greta gazes out the window, her expression distant, as Isabel watches her closely, quietly gauging her mood. A long silence stretches between them.

ISABEL
(breaking the silence gently,
testing the waters)
Have you ever read "The Power of
Thought" by Henry Thomas Hamblin? It's
fascinating...

GRETA
(absentmindedly)
No. I don't read much.

Another long silence fills the space.

ISABEL
(hesitant, then with a subtle
smile)
I was surprised you called me last
minute. Didn't even have time to
change. Sorry about that.

Greta remains quiet.

ISABEL (CONT'D)
(more earnestly)
Thank you.

Isabel gently places her hand on Greta's, but Greta pulls hers away, subtly rejecting the gesture.

After a pause, Greta sets her champagne glass down on the side table and leans her forehead against the cool glass of the window, letting the chill seep into her skin.

THE DRIVER
We're almost there.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

The limousine pulls up to the edge of a vast, serene lake. Greta and Isabel step out, the quiet around them contrasting sharply with the city's buzz. The driver unloads their luggage, and the camera sweeps across the sprawling, breathtaking landscape, capturing the stillness of the lake and the gentle sway of trees in the breeze.

GRETA
(taking in the view, her voice softened)
It's breathtaking.

Isabel, overcome by the beauty, instinctively takes Greta's hand in excitement.

ISABEL
Yes, it's so beautiful.

Greta gently slips her hand free.

GRETA
(explaining her withdrawal)
Let's get rid of the bus.

ISABEL
(puzzled)
The bus?

Greta nods toward the limousine.

ISABEL (CONT'D)
(realizing, with a soft laugh)
Oh, the limo...
(smiling)
I'm still getting used to your humour.

GRETA
(to the driver)
You can go now. Come back in a week.
Sunday, 9 a.m.

DRIVER
(startled)
In a week?
(quickly correcting himself)
Oh, of course, Miss Alba.

The driver climbs back into the limousine and drives away, leaving them alone by the lake.

GRETA
Let's go.

They pick up their luggage, and for the first time, Greta reaches for Isabel's hand, guiding her down a small winding path toward the water's edge. Close-up on Isabel's face, her eyes shining with happiness, savouring the intimacy of the moment.

GRETA

There should be a boat waiting for us,
to get to the island.

They reach the edge of the lake, where a small, wooden boat is tied to a worn dock.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Ah, there it is.

ISABEL

(surprised)

Are you going to row?

GRETA

(teasing)

Well, we've got to get to the island
somehow, right? So, unless you're
volunteering to row, I guess that
leaves me.

ISABEL

(laughing)

I suppose learning to row wasn't
exactly part of the social curriculum
for Spanish aristocracy. We had people
for that.

Greta shrugs, loading their luggage into the boat. She helps Isabel step in and, with practiced ease, unties the boat.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE - EARLY EVENING

Greta rows with smooth, strong strokes, her gaze focused ahead as the lake's glassy surface reflects the warm hues of the setting sun. They reach the island and step onto the small dock, where Greta ties the boat securely.

Before them, a quaint, cozy cottage nestles close to the water's edge, framed by lush trees swaying softly in the evening breeze.

GRETA

Here's our home for the week. God, it's
so peaceful here.

ISABEL
(in awe, a breathy whisper)
It's heaven.

GRETA
I want to swim.

ISABEL
Swim?

GRETA
What? Don't they teach Spanish
aristocracy how to swim, either?

Isabel chuckles, dipping her hand into the lake and shivering slightly at the chill.

ISABEL
(playfully)
Oh, to swim, sure! But this feels like
the polar bear club.

Greta shrugs again.

ISABEL (CONT'D)
(almost dreamlike)
But as far as aristocracy goes, you
have the most exquisite Spanish name.
Alba...
(pauses, admiring Greta)
It suits you so perfectly.

Without a word, Greta strips off all her clothes, her movements calm, almost detached, before diving gracefully into the lake.

The camera captures a panoramic view of the lake as Greta swims effortlessly, her strokes cutting through the still water.

Isabel sits on the grass, watching Greta. Then she picks up a leaf, studying its intricate veins before bringing it to her lips and kissing it gently, closing her eyes.

Greta emerges from the lake, wrapping a towel around her naked body, droplets glistening on her skin.

ISABEL
(amazed)
My God, Margo, you're such an
incredible swimmer.

GRETA

(with a defiant grin)
Wait until you see me fish.

ISABEL
We're going fishing?

GRETA
(smiling)
Well, we'll need to eat something,
won't we?

Isabel moves closer to Greta, her hand brushing over Greta's collarbone with the same gentleness she used on the leaf. Her touch lingers, soft and deliberate.

ISABEL
(in a near-whisper, intimate)
Is there anything you do badly?

Greta laughs, an openhearted sound, but there's a flicker of understanding in her eyes, aware of what Isabel is alluding to. She meets Isabel's gaze, her expression shifting to a sharp, almost resigned look.

A long, weighted pause.

GRETA
No.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHOOTING SET AT THE FILM STUDIO - DAY

On set, Moje Stiller paces impatiently as Greta enters and settles into her seat.

MOJE
(adjusting GRETA's robe)
Now, show those legs. Yes, like that.
Give them sex, you dumb bitch! Your
legs look like pipe-cleaners!

GRETA
Fan ta dig, Stiller! It's just a single
hair.

DIRECTOR (VO)
Clear the set! No one tells my actress
what to do in my film. Margo, we start
in five.

GRETA

No! Please. I need him to stay!

She grabs Stiller's hand like a frightened child holding on.

MOJE

(tilting her chin gently)
I'm leaving. But remember, Moje knows
what's best for you.

GRETA

Can I fly home for Christmas?

MOJE

Only if the studio stops giving a
flying damn about your acting. You
signed the bloody contract, so no
traveling for five years. Stick to it!
And what's up with this Gibbard bloke?
Remember what I told you - don't let
anyone hurt you, and never marry. It
won't be good for you.

GRETA

Stop treating me like a child! I can't
even remember being one!

MOJE

Well, then go back to those walks
around the royal castle after Drama
School, hoping Prince Charming would
catch a glimpse of your fat butt. I'll
turn you into a star your dear prince
would die for, along with an army of
your brainless admirers. And don't ever
accept his invitations. Now, get back
to work and stop whining.

Stiller exits. Greta, overcome, punches the wall, then sinks down,
her back against it.

JOHN GIBBARD enters.

JOHN

Want to run through the scene?

GRETA

(desperately, ignoring John)
God, my love, the world feels so empty
without you!

JOHN

(playfully)

Your emotion's top notch, but you have to stick to your lines, darling.

GRETA

(finally looking at John)

I was improvising. There's no need for rehearsal. I'll shave my legs, and then we can start.

JOHN

Straightforward as ever.

GRETA

Why not? You say "I'll go shave". Why can't I?

JOHN

How about we stop by my place for a chat after shooting?

GRETA

I'll see how I feel.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN GIBBARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Greta and John step into a spacious, refined room. Velvet sofas and a marble fireplace lend a stately charm, with candles arranged nearby and art books displayed on elegant shelving. Floor-to-ceiling windows offer glimpses of the pool and tennis court beyond, completing the room's understated opulence.

JOHN

Welcome to my humble abode. Make yourself comfortable. There's a tennis court and a pool out back. Care for a glass of wine?

GRETA

Got any beer?

JOHN

Of course.

John heads to the kitchen, returning with two bottles, handing one to Greta. He takes a sip as Greta takes a long swig.

JOHN

Everyone's buzzing about your "ay tank ay go home now*".

(* mimicking her accent)
Wow, you really know how to handle
pressure. Margo Alba, the ruthless.
They're absolutely flabbergasted that
you walked out on Louis-freaking-Meir.

(laughing)

The new girl from Sweden who made the
studio play by her rules. And they were
damn right to give in - you're so
beautiful.

Greta shoots John an annoyed look.

GRETA

(in a low voice)

Get on with it...

John sets his beer aside and leans in, kissing her passionately. She
reciprocates but abruptly pulls away.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(without breaking the kissing
distance)

And let's play tennis afterwards.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARA'S STUDIO APARTMENT IN STOCKHOLM - EVENING

Clara sits on the floor, her back against the wall, face buried in
her hands. After a while, she stands, takes Greta's pajamas from the
bed, and places it in the wardrobe drawer. She pours herself a glass
of wine.

The doorbell rings, startling her. She takes a breath, sets her glass
down, and opens the door. RICHARD enters with a warm smile, giving
her a gentle kiss on the cheek.

RICHARD

(cheerfully)

Hi there.

CLARA

Hi.

RICHARD

Glad you're home. I took a chance to
see if you'd like to join me and the
gang tonight. They really enjoy your
company.

CLARA

Thanks, Richard, but I don't feel like going out.

Richard notices the half-full wine glass.

RICHARD
I see you've already started your evening with some wine.

CLARA
Would you like to join me?

RICHARD
I'd love to.

CLARA
Take a seat then.

Clara grabs another glass, sits beside Richard, and pours him a drink. He glances around, his eyes landing on a magazine with MARGO ALBA's glamorous photo on the cover. He picks it up, flipping through the pages with a chuckle.

RICHARD
Oh, the divine Alba. You were friends with her at Drama School, right?

CLARA
Yes.

RICHARD
(smiling, still flipping)
It's incredible that Alba, this world-famous star, comes from this neighborhood.
(laughs)
Oh wow, her love life is euphoric, if you believe those rascals!

CLARA
(taking the magazine from his hands)
How are things with you? Tell me about the project you're working on. I'm curious.

RICHARD
The AI? Well, to make a long story short, I have good news. I've managed to significantly improve her algorithm.

CLARA

Is it a "she"? A girl?

RICHARD

AI can be anything, but I thought it'd be cuter to work with a girl. My programming goes beyond her existing reactions, and I won the tender, so...

CLARA

So?

RICHARD

I'll be running the entire project until we have a marketable version!

CLARA

That's great!

RICHARD

Yes! I just signed the contract.

CLARA

Is it well-paid?

A pause settles between them. Richard takes a breath, choosing his words carefully.

RICHARD

Clara, I was going to bring this up another time, but now feels like the right moment.

CLARA

What is it?

RICHARD

(with sincerity)

Well... I like you. I really like you. I know you've got the cutest guys at the Drama Theatre chasing after you, but I was hoping you'd consider...

CLARA

What?

RICHARD

Marrying me. I want a family. I want to build something together - have a home, have kids. With you.

A quiet pause as Clara processes his words.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
You know, this project pays really well. I could get us a house right away if you want. The nicest one.

A beat.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
What do you think?

Silence.

CLARA
It's so unexpected. I haven't really thought about marriage yet.

RICHARD
You don't feel that way about me?

CLARA
I do...

RICHARD
I understand if you need a while to think it over. I'm not rushing. Take your time. I'll wait for you.

CLARA
(torn by her feelings for Greta)
No, I don't want to wait.

RICHARD
(taken aback)
No?

CLARA
(as though convincing herself)
I do like you. I feel good with you. I have the same dream - I want a home, I want to be a mother. That's what happiness is to me.

RICHARD
That's amazing news! God, I'm the happiest man in the world!

Richard, overwhelmed, picks Clara up and spins her around in a joyful embrace.

CLARA
(unprepared)
Oh, please put me down.

Richard gently sets her back on the floor, noticing a hint of hesitation in her.

RICHARD

I understand if you don't want to rush into intimacy.

CLARA

(determined to forget Greta)
Take me now.

RICHARD

God!

They kiss.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Soft daylight light filters through the windows. Clara moves around the room with careful intention, adjusting flowers on the table, glancing at herself in the mirror, and smoothing her clothes, as if settling into a new role.

Greta enters, looking breathtakingly stunning, dressed in an elegant outfit.

GRETA

I told you I wouldn't stay stuck there forever.

Clara's face lights up. She rushes to Greta, pulling her into a tight embrace. They hold each other, both unwilling to let go.

CLARA

God, I missed you.

They slowly release, standing apart, but their eyes stay locked.

CLARA (CONT'D)

You've changed so much.

GRETA

Are you sure?

CLARA

You look amazing. I'll have to raise my game to keep up.

GRETA

(smiling, a hint of bitterness)
Don't bother. Being a showpiece at an
auction isn't all that glamorous.
You're better than that.

CLARA

At some point, we all play that part.
So why not look gorgeous while we're at
it...

Silence settles between them, heavy with unspoken words.

GRETA

(masking her pain)
Your home is charming! So, how's
married life treating you?

CLARA

It's going well... Richard's at work
right now.

A beat.

CLARA (CONT'D)

You're not jealous, are you?

GRETA

Of Richard? Let your tech geek be. I
want to know how you feel. Do you love
him?

CLARA

I'm fond of him. I've always liked men.
You know that.

GRETA

I do.

A beat.

CLARA

And he's good.

GRETA

(letting her frustration out)
God, I'm not asking if he's good in
bed. I'm asking if you love him.

CLARA

(quietly)
You know how I feel.

GRETA
(struggling to understand)
Then why marry him?

CLARA
(with a hint of reproach)
Would it have been better to sit here
alone, reading about you socializing
over there?

GRETA
(hurt)
I told you I'd come back. No one could
ever take your place in my heart. You
can't imagine how empty it felt without
you, how much I've missed you.

Greta wraps her arms around Clara, holding her close.

CLARA
(burying her face in Greta's
chest)
Why did you leave in the first place?
Fame and money...

GRETA
(half-regretful)
It's such a common dream. I guess I
didn't realize everything that came
with it.

CLARA
(with a hint of cynicism)
Now your dream has come true, and so
has mine. I have a home, a husband, and
a child to care for.

GRETA
(startled)
Wait, how on earth do you have a child?

CLARA
I'm pregnant.

GRETA
Why didn't you tell me before now?

Silence fills the room as they both process this new reality.

GRETA (CONT'D)
(kindly)

I understand, Clarisse. You can't change who you are. But I still feel, deep down, that we belong together, no matter what.

Greta gently kneels, pressing a soft kiss to Clara's belly.

GRETA (CONT'D)

I never knew the happiness of being a father. Let me take care of you and our child. Please. Clarisse... my love. My wife.

CLARA

(pulling back, hurt)

Stop it! You're doing to me exactly what they did to you. It hurts like hell.

(pauses)

If anyone's supposed to be someone's toy, at least consider the fact that it could break.

Clara's voice breaks, and tears well up. She starts kissing Greta's face all over, unable to hold back.

CLARA (CONT'D)

I love you.

GRETA

(bittersweet, gently)

I'm sorry, my love. You're wiser than me. I just can't help it. I want to hold you, protect you, and be with you.

CLARA

I know.

GRETA

Let me take you to a friend's place in Tistad for the weekend.

Clara closes her eyes, processing.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Meet me at the NK tomorrow, we'll drive to Tistad from there.

CLARA

The NK? It's so crowded.

GRETA

It's quiet in the morning. I just want to sit there for a moment, like we used to... I missed that so much.

They share a long, lingering kiss, a moment of reconnection that hints at everything left unsaid.

CUT TO:

INT. NORDISKE KOMPANIET DEPARTMENT STORE - COZY SMALL CAFE - STOCKHOLM - MORNING

Camera moves through the bookshelves of a bookstore next to the café, featuring the newly printed book "Margo Alba's Secret Life" with Greta's photo on the cover. The café is empty, the only visitor is Greta, sitting discreetly in the corner, facing the wall, wearing sunglasses. She flips through a magazine, sipping cognac.

Clara arrives, scanning the room before sitting across from Greta.

CLARA

God, I had no idea you'd be here half an hour early. How did you get in?

GRETA

(smirking)

Back entrance. My whole life's about back entrances now.

CLARA

(gesturing to Greta's drink)

Cognac? Like the old days?

GRETA

Naturally. And you?

A waiter approaches, but Greta keeps her back turned.

CLARA

A glass of red wine, please.

GRETA

So many memories come rushing back. I can't tell you how it feels. Me and my girl, sitting here again. It's like all those years apart were just a bad dream.

Pause.

CLARA

(sighing, her expression turning
somber)
Look... I've been thinking..

GRETA
Thinking?

A waiter sets down Clara's glass of wine.

WAITER
Please enjoy.

CLARA
(to the waiter)
Thank you.

Clara takes a sip of her wine. Silence lingers between them. Greta
removes her sunglasses and locks eyes with Clara.

GRETA
So?..

CLARA
I couldn't sleep.

GRETA
(holding onto the last hope that
Clara won't say no)
Once we get to Tistad, you'll sleep
plenty.
(smiling)
Or maybe not.

CLARA
Anders, listen -

Greta closes her eyes, tilting her head back, biting her lip
slightly. The tension builds.

CLARA (CONT'D)
What is it?

GRETA
Don't say it just yet. Let's sit here
for a moment, without talking. Pretend
nothing else exists. Just us.

Pause.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Please.

Clara silently nods, her eyes fluttering closed for a moment. They sip their drinks in silence, their eyes doing all the talking, as if words are unnecessary.

The camera lingers on close-ups of Greta and Clara, their expressions revealing everything unsaid. Clara's eyes slowly fill with tears that begin to spill over, her emotions overwhelming her, yet she holds Greta's gaze firmly.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Ok. Go ahead. Say it.

CLARA

I don't have the heart.

GRETA

Would you rather just silently walk away?

CLARA

(her voice cracking)

God, Anders... How can I just walk away?

A long silence.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Please try to understand. If I go with you now, I can't go back to Richard. It will be the end.

GRETA

Even if it's just for two days?

CLARA

Even if it's just for two days.

Another heavy silence.

GRETA

Well, that's the most touching love declaration I've ever heard.

A long silence.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Could you really forget me if you don't go?

CLARA

(wiping away her tears, voice cracking)

You know the freaking answer.

Greta reaches for Clara's wine glass and takes a slow drink from it. She watches Clara, the weight of the question still hanging in the air.

GRETA

Then what's the point?

Clara softly touches the spot on the glass where Greta's lips had met the rim. She pauses, as if feeling Greta's lingering presence, then slowly brings the glass to her own lips and drinks. Her eyes meet Greta's, silently agreeing with her, acknowledging the inevitable truth between them.

CLARA

(sighs, resigned)

You're right.

A MAN passes by, holding the book "Margo Alba's Secret Life", glancing over at the table.

Close-up on Greta, her gaze still on Clara.

The man leans closer, eyes widening as he recognizes her. His face freezes in shock before he regains composure and approaches.

THE MAN

I'm so sorry for intruding. I feel so honored. Can I give you this book as a present?

People around the café notice them. Whispers spread quickly. Then some louder voices:

SHOPPER 1

It's Alba!

SHOPPER 2

Margo Alba! She's here!

A small crowd begins to gather. People move towards the café, whispering, pointing, some breaking into excited murmurs. The crowd starts to grow.

Greta stands up suddenly, pulling her sunglasses back on. She leaves some money on the table and turns to the man.

GRETA

(taking the book quickly)

Thank you.

She tosses the book into a nearby trash bin with a deliberate flick, then briskly heads toward the backdoor, taking Clara's hand to guide her.

The man stands frozen in shock. More people rush through the department store, some pushing and falling in the frenzy to see her.

A WOMAN falls from the stairs, knocked down in the chaos.

WOMAN IN CROWD

Where is she?!

The man who gave Greta the book snaps out of his daze, eyes widening in realization.

THE MAN

(pointing)

She went that way!

The crowd follows, running in the direction Greta and Clara disappeared.

CUT TO:

INT. NORDISKE KOMPANIET DEPARTMENT STORE - BACKDOOR CORRIDOR - STOCKHOLM - MORNING

Greta leads Clara through several doors, making sharp turns down the corridors. When they reach the fourth door, it's locked. They stop abruptly.

GRETA

We've no choice. Let's wait here and hope it calms down before they find us.

Close-up on Clara, her breath catching.

GRETA

(trying to lighten the mood)

The last time I had to hide, it was in a cave inside a museum.

CLARA

(with innocent surprise)

God, how did you find a cave in a museum?

GRETA

It was a reconstruction. A Mexican aboriginal cave. I stayed there for six hours until the museum closed.

(smiling)
You should've seen the guards' faces
when they saw me coming out of there
after everyone had gone.

Close-up on Clara, suppressing her laughter with a sad smile.

CROUD SCREAMS (VO)
(growing louder, closer)
Alba! Alba!

Greta leans against the wall, tilting her head back, eyes closing, her breath coming in heavy, uneven bursts as if on the verge of a panic attack.

Beside her, Clara presses her back against the wall, sliding slowly down into a squat. She buries her face in her hands, silently succumbing to the weight of the moment.

ANNOUNCEMENT (VO)
Attention. Due to an unexpected
incident, the store will be closing
immediately for your safety. We ask
everyone to calmly and quickly make
your way to the nearest exit. Please
follow the directions of our staff and
avoid running. Again, the store is
closing for your safety. Please leave
the building in an orderly fashion.
Thank you for your cooperation.

Clara exhales in relief, standing back up.

Then, they hear the sound of a heavy door creaking open behind them.

Greta and Clara exchange a look, their expressions tense, frightened.

GRETA
(whispering)
It might be the security.

The door opens, but instead of security, an 11-year-old child bursts in, wide-eyed with excitement.

THE CHILD
(screaming in awe)
She's here! I found her!!!

Greta quickly moves, gently clamping her hand over the child's mouth.

ANNOUNCEMENT (VO)
Attention. Due to an unexpected
incident, the store will be closing
immediately for your safety.

Close-ups on the child, eyes wide with fear.

Close-ups on Greta, her face showing even more fear than the
child's.

ANNOUNCEMENT (VO) (CONT'D)
We ask everyone to calmly and quickly
make your way to the nearest exit.
Please follow the directions of our
staff and avoid running. Again, the
store is closing for your safety.
Please leave the building in an orderly
fashion. Thank you for your
cooperation.

GRETA
(softly, but urgently)
Don't scream again, alright?

The child nods. Greta slowly removes her hand from his mouth.

GRETA
(softly, still cautious)
What do you want?

CHILD
(in a timid, apologetic tone)
An autograph...

GRETA
(with motherly concern)
It's not something worth collecting.

Suddenly, the locked door clicks open from the outside, and a
security guard enters.

Greta exhales sharply, her relief palpable.

THE GUARD
I'm sorry, Miss Alba. Someone locked
the door without realizing you were
inside. Your car is waiting.

GRETA
(to the child, gently)

Now go back to your mum. Everyone has to leave the store, alright? Do you understand?

The child nods.

Greta opens the door leading back into the store, and the child runs down the corridor.

Greta exits onto the street with Clara through the door the guard opened.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE BACK ENTRANCE OF THE NORDISKE KOMPANIET DEPARTMENT STORE, STOCKHOLM - MORNING

Greta and Clara quickly climb into Greta's car.

THE DRIVER

Where to?

GRETA

(breathless)

Doesn't matter. Just drive. Fast.

As the car begins to pull away, a WOMAN on the street notices Greta.

THE WOMAN

Alba! Alba!

The woman throws herself at the car, pounding her fist against the window, the impact cracking the glass.

GRETA

(screaming, aggressively
panicked)
Fast!

The driver slams on the gas, and the car speeds away, disappearing down the street.

A shot of the crowd flooding out from the Nordiske Kompaniet.

GRETA (VO)

To Berzelii Park.

CUT TO:

EXT. BERZELII PARK, STOCKHOLM - MORNING

The camera drifts through the empty landscape of a deserted park, moving to Greta and Clara sitting on the grass in a quiet corner, far from the park road.

Clara wraps her arms around Greta. Greta begins to cry, her sobs spilling out like a child who, after holding back for far too long, finally releases the weight of years of accumulated pain.

Clara gently kisses Greta's head.

GRETA
(through tears)
I'm sorry, my love. It's all just been
too much for my poor nerves.

Greta wipes her tears away, trying to compose herself.

GRETA (CONT'D)
The last thing I wanted for our day was
to spiral into a hysterical chase.

They sit together in silence for a moment, the weight of the day heavy between them.

CLARA
It's been so hard on you. You need to
rest.

GRETA
And what about you?

CLARA
I need to go home. I'm worn out,
Anders.

GRETA
Yes, you're right...

Close-up on Clara, her expression shifting, as if unsure of what she had just said.

Close-up on Greta.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Do you want to go home?

Close-up on Clara, her eyes closing as she absorbs the pain of the answer to come.

CUT TO:

EXT. BERZELII PARK - DAY

Clara walks slowly through Berzelii Park, bending down to pick up a fallen leaf. She traces its veins with her fingers, studying its delicate structure before letting it fall from her hand, watching it flutter gently to the ground.

Clara's phone rings. She answers.

CLARA

Yes, my love.

(listening)

I'll pick Lasse up from school. See you at home.

She hangs up and continues walking, eventually stepping onto the quiet, empty streets of Stockholm.

A silhouette appears in the distance, catching her eye.

Clara pauses, her breath quickening, pressing her back against a nearby building.

Then, without hesitating, she bolts toward the figure, her heart pounding. From behind, the person's shape and gait are unmistakably like Greta's.

Clara catches up, grabbing the woman's shoulder. But as the stranger turns, it's someone entirely different.

THE PERSON

Hello. Do I know you?

Close-up on Clara, her face flooded with shock, confusion, and a deep sense of loss.

GRETA (VO)

Do you want to go home?

CUT TO:

EXT. BERZELII PARK, STOCKHOLM - MORNING

Clara opens her eyes, as if waking from a dream. Clara and Greta remain seated in the same spot.

A long close-up on Clara as she gazes at Greta, the emotions from her vision lingering in her expression.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MANOR GROUNDS, TISTAD, SWEDEN - DUSK

A peaceful evening settles over the manor in Tistad. Soft, warm light filters through the trees, casting a golden glow on the surrounding grounds. A faint breeze stirs the leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A MANOR IN TISTAD, SWEDEN. BEDROOM - EVENING

The camera pans across the view from the window, then glides through the room, capturing a large bouquet of white lilies, a side table with a bottle of champagne and two glasses, an ashtray filled with Sobranie Black Russian cigarette butts, and Clara's and Greta's clothes - some draped over a plush armchair, others scattered on the floor. A pair of Clara's elegant high heels lies beside the bed, and her silk scarf hangs loosely over a nearby lamp, casting a warm, diffused glow.

The camera slowly shifts to Clara and Greta lying in bed together. Clara catches her breath, her arms wrapped around Greta.

GRETA

(softly, in awe)

Oh God, my love, you're pure heaven.

A long pause as they lie close, the weight of unspoken words settling over them.

CLARA

(hesitating, her voice barely
above a whisper)
Can I ask you something...

GRETA

(casually)

Mhm?

CLARA

(searching Greta's face, both
vulnerable and cautious)
When you're with all those men... do you
desire them?

GRETA

(shrugging, almost indifferent)

Well, I do.

(after a beat, casually)

Sex is good for the skin.

CLARA

So, you enjoy it, don't you?

GRETA

Yes, but it's different with you.

(kissing Clara's hand tenderly)
You have the smoothest, gentlest, and
kindest hands in this world.

CLARA

(torn between jealousy and
compassion)
And the girls? I read about you driving
three hundred miles into the desert to
pick up a playwright, Isabel de la
Vega, and spending weeks with her in
the middle of nowhere.

GRETA

(calmly, with a hint of
amusement)
She always exaggerates. I didn't go
fetch her; we just drove to a lake and
stayed there for a week.

CLARA

(with soft compassion, as if
soothing her own jealousy)
Then you asked her to meet you here,
halfway across the globe. She flew over
just to spend a single day with you.

GRETA

Remember, you were out of town when I
came over?

CLARA

I was on my honeymoon. Couldn't exactly
cancel that.

They fall into a silence, each reflecting on the unintended wounds
they've caused one another - and the ripple effects on those around
them. After a beat:

CLARA (CONT'D)

(appealing to Greta's empathy)
Think of all the people who fall in
love with you. You're hurting them.

GRETA

(coldly, a layer of bitterness
in her voice)
They desire me. That's not the same.
Then they turn around and claim I'm the
one incapable of love - it's much

easier to believe that than to admit
I'm simply not inspired..
 (looking into Clara's eyes)
let alone emotionally unavailable.

A beat.

CLARA
 (almost afraid to hear the
answer)
Do you wish you were?

GRETA
You have no idea how many times I've
asked myself that question.

CLARA
And what's your answer?

GRETA
 (with a resigned honesty)
No. I won't lie to myself. I prefer the
bare truth. And the truth is, it all
feels fake compared to what I feel with
you. Besides, what's the big deal? They
know I don't care, and the less I care,
the more they want Margo Alba. An
illusion. I guess it's just human
nature to desire what they can't have.

A beat.

GRETA (CONT'D)
 (bringing the conversation to a
blunt truth)
As for hurting them... I'm not the one
who tells them to worship Margo Alba.
The truth is, they're bound to get hurt
once they meet Greta... once they get
close.

 (pauses)
Then they call it a curse because they
can't understand why they keep hurting
themselves over and over again. And
Isabel certainly excels at that.

CLARA
 (empathetically)
She's in love with you, Anders.

GRETA
It's such a fine name. I miss it.

Greta gives Clara a soft kiss on the lips.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(with a hint of cynicism)

Please understand, Catkin, nothing is true over there. To her credit, Isabel at least has the guts to admit it. She once said that she only loves the image of me she created in her imagination - the image that drives her crazy and has nothing to do with the original: "An uneducated Swedish servant with a face touched by God," as she calls me.

(laughs)

Do you call that love? They're just waiting for the day I grow old and ugly, so they can stop loving me and say it was all a mistake.

(laughs)

CLARA

(tentatively)

And Moje?

GRETA

I never meant anything to any man - not even Moje. But sure, they all want me for dessert.

CLARA

(laughing, a playful glint in her eye)

I don't know about dessert, but you certainly look like you could eat them for breakfast.

(leaning in, her tone teasing)

Has anyone told you that men look like ditzy babes next to you on screen, especially when you're supposed to play a weak damsel? And to make things worse, you treat them as such. It almost feels like you're taking revenge.

GRETA

(smiling mischievously)

But I do treat them nicely, don't I?

CLARA

It's the kind of cocktail to drive anyone crazy, you know. Men and women

alike can't help but dream of crawling
into your bed.

GRETA

(voice low and sincere)

What does it matter, if I only want to
be with you?

Greta leans in, capturing Clara's lips in a deep, lingering kiss.
After a beat:

CLARA

(breathless)

It seems surreal to feel your lips
after reading all those critics rave
about your on-screen kisses.

GRETA

It's because I'm thinking of you when I
kiss my partners.

CLARA

(half-playfully, with a
mischievous smile)
So, I am your big secret...

GRETA

(matching her tone but with an
underlying intensity)
Yes, you are. But one shouldn't reveal
one's most intimate secrets.
(her voice shifts, with a
cutting edge)
Otherwise, one cheapens oneself.

Greta slips out of bed with fluid grace, reaching for a silk dressing
gown draped over the nearby chair. She pulls it on, the fabric gliding
over her skin.

CLARA

(leaning back, a playful sparkle
in her eye)
Easy for you to say. You can make a
mystery out of whether you had an egg
for breakfast.
(laughs, her laughter light and
teasing)

Greta crosses the room to a side table, where she pours herself a
glass of champagne, the bubbles shimmering in the dim light. She
lights a cigarette, the smoke curling gracefully around her as she
takes a long, contemplative drag.

GRETA

(exhaling smoke, her voice layered with cynicism and longing)
The ugly truth is, people want to feel what I feel without paying the price. But there's no such thing as a free lunch. Margo Alba's bed is as far from Greta as one can get.

(she pauses, her gaze distant)
And when all the hype fades, I'm left with dreams of home and of you.

(pauses, then with a weary sigh)
But you're right, my love - it's a cruel game, and I'm tired of playing it.

CLARA

(soothing)
Maybe it's all worth it, just because your acting is so beyond words.

(quoting with heartfelt admiration)
"Alba's lovemaking is the most realistic, sensual performance ever seen on screen. A fusion of spiritual desire and raw physicality. No other actress has ever combined the masculine and feminine so tightly in one embrace."

Greta moves to the window, gazing out, her silhouette softened by the evening light.

GRETA

(almost as if speaking to herself)
You're wrong, Catkin. I'm not that versatile of an actress, and you know it. I've just been lucky enough to get better roles lately. But it took me a while to make it clear that I didn't want to play some silly temptress, fainting with happiness in men's arms after all the obstacles to 'love' that my screenwriters dreamed up were out of the way.

(pauses, turning to Clara)
I was so anxious about all the absurd things I was supposed to do that I nearly lost my mind. They thought I'd gone crazy.

CLARA

(smiling, watching Greta fondly)
You're certainly a force of nature.
I've always admired how you can play a
Russian so naturally. That mysterious
Russian soul.

GRETA

(with a smirk)
A soul has no flag. It's still my soul,
"with the purest intentions," as Isabel
says. That's all.

(with a mischievous sparkle in
her eyes)
Some people say, when playing Chekhov,
"I'm so afraid of overdoing it." I say,
"It's a Russian play - how could you
possibly overdo it?"
(laughing)

A beat.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(her tone shifting, tinged with
bitterness)
But trust me, I can't even imagine
being myself there. The studio is
always worried the audience won't
approve.

(mimicking the voices of studio
execs)
"Straighten her hair! No, give her
curls! Get the best designer for her
robe! No, she doesn't look ridiculous
in it. And make sure men desire her
even more. We need to sell. And you,
don't be difficult, darling. Young,
charming girls are just clay in the
hands of their master potters. A star
is crafted carefully and coldly from
nothing. From nobody."

(her gaze distant)
It's all fake, and I have to seduce
people who don't even know who I am.
You have no idea what it's like to live
in exile, all for the sake of Mammon.

(pauses)
Sometimes, I feel like a real
prostitute. I see myself floating above
the set, disconnected from the script,
just picking the emotions they want me

to convey. If they call it grasping the essence, it's fine with me. I keep my thoughts to myself.

CLARA

(reaching out, voice soft but firm)
Then it's not fake. It's you. It's your essence, in every split second of it.

GRETA

(a cynical smile, shaking her head)
Well, make no mistake about it. Their applause isn't for my essence - it's for their own refined excitement, fueled by the need to shrink my soul down to the proportions of my face and the length of my eyelashes.
(pauses)

Believe me, if it weren't for my looks, my photos would end up in the trash in no time, and I'd be forgotten. And one day, that's exactly what will happen.

Silence.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Have you seen any of my movies recently?

CLARA

How could I not? They're everywhere. The press can't stop talking about how our Greta has made it to the very top.

GRETA

(bitterly)
They're talking about Margo Alba. I can't come back as a regular person anymore, only as a star in the spotlight. They don't even bother mentioning my real name. No one remembers Greta Anderson.

(pauses)
On top of that, I have to come up with a different identity every week in order not to get hunted down. Poor Greta has no home.

(her lips twisting into a sardonic smile)

"People's favorite circus clown is back home!" is the joke of the day. I can't even step off a plane without people trying to tear off my clothes for souvenirs. When I tell them to back off, they call me mean. God, it drives me mad! And the studio? They make it worse - churning out humiliating articles to stir up publicity: how I've married for the 759th time, disappeared, shot myself, gone to the Moon...

A beat. Greta takes a deep breath, grounding herself, before crossing the room to sit beside Clara on the bed.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(her voice softening, filled with an unexpected tenderness)
Let me tell you what I did on New Year's Eve. I ate dinner alone in my bedroom, thinking about you while the Christmas tree lights twinkled.

A beat.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(with piercing sincerity)
The truth is, I just want to come home, my love, but I don't know how.

CLARA

(smiling through tears)
You make me want to cry, like that director did when you showed up at his house out of the blue: "Mein Gott, Mein Gott! Gretchen!!! Sit down and never go away*!"

(* imitating Ernst with a playful accent)
(laughing to hold back tears)

GRETA

(recognizing the depth of Clara's proposal)
Yes.

A long, poignant silence stretches between them, charged with the possibility of a shared future. Greta's gaze drifts downward as she wrestles with the heart-wrenching reality of her choices.

GRETA (CONT'D)

(as if stalling for time, voice softened)
Ernst is the only director I had real fun working with.

Another beat, as Greta steels herself, gathering strength before finally turning her gaze back to Clara.

GRETA (CONT'D)
(with a solemn resolve)
I don't have the strength to ruin your life, Clarisse. To pull you out of what you're supposed to live.

Pause.

GRETA (CONT'D)
I left. You got married. You're going to have a baby. I'm no longer part of your life like before, and I never will be. But I can't shake the feeling that we belong together.

CLARA
(whispering, as if convincing herself)
I take comfort in knowing no one truly belongs to anyone. We're all free.

GRETA
(facing an undeniable truth)
Of course, we are. But still... The Earth revolves around the Sun, and that's why it's called the Solar system. The ocean breeze belongs to the ocean, and that's why it's called -
(in unison with Clara)
- the ocean breeze.

CLARA
And my eyes will forever shine with the light of Greta Anderson's soul.

They kiss. Their silhouettes softly illuminated against the fading daylight streaming through the window.

The camera lingers as a gentle breeze stirs the curtains, carrying the sound of distant waves.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MALIBU - JOHN GIBBARD'S HOUSE - DAY

The camera pans over a sweeping view of the ocean, the breeze gently rustling the palm leaves. It moves to a chic oceanfront villa, complete with a glistening pool and a tennis court.

From the poolside yard, through a floor-to-ceiling glass door, we catch a glimpse of Greta inside.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN GIBBARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The room is filled with warm afternoon light streaming through large windows. Greta sits on the couch, wrapped in a plush bathrobe, staring into the distance with an absent expression, her eyes half-lidded as if lost in thought.

John enters, his steps unhurried, a teasing smile already forming as he spots her.

JOHN

(feigning disappointment,
shaking his head)
Oh, Margo, too bad you put the bathrobe
on. I'm expecting Louise to drop by.
Since all my guests are used to seeing
you play tennis naked, she'll be
disappointed.

(playfully)

It's a bit short-sighted if she's still
on your to-do list.

GRETA

(in a friendly tone)
Shut up and bring me a beer.

JOHN

(smiling)
Sure.

John returns with two beers, cold bottles dripping with condensation, and hands one to Greta before settling beside her on the couch. He watches her closely, gauging her mood.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I heard at the studio you had lunch
with Prince Wilhelm of Sweden. How'd
that go?

GRETA

(coldly)

I thanked him for the invitation and said I wasn't hungry.

John chuckles, impressed.

JOHN

Wow! That took some guts, turning down a prince.

GRETA

(shrugs, taking a sip of beer)
Men's interest in me is always the same. Why should I bother to differentiate?

John nods, acknowledging the truth in her words.

JOHN

I see your point.

They sit in silence for a moment, sipping their beers, the comfortable quiet settling over them.

GRETA

(breaking the silence, her tone more serious)
Look, I spoke to Isabel.

JOHN

(raises an eyebrow)
I thought you weren't talking to her.

GRETA

It's for work. She wrote an adaptation of "The Picture of Dorian Gray" for me to star in. I did a photo shoot for the role.

She gestures toward a wrapped picture leaning against the couch. John leans over and unwraps it, revealing a black-and-white photograph of Greta, styled with androgynous flair - sharp, striking lines.

JOHN

(examining the photo with intrigue)
You look so androgynous in this. Really? You'd play the guy?

GRETA

(her eyes lighting up, an almost childlike enthusiasm)

Why not? It's the best idea she's ever had. I'm dying to do it. Can you talk to Meir?

JOHN

(leaning back, thoughtful)
Why not talk to him yourself - or Isabel?

GRETA

She says she'd rather see him kick my ass out of the studio than hers for making this kind of suggestion. But I'm so tired, I can't talk to any studio director right now.

John leans in, a hint of vulnerability breaking through his casual demeanor.

JOHN

He doesn't exactly listen to what I have to say either. And I'm not your agent, you know, but I'll try.
(pauses, looking at her earnestly)
I'm nobody to you, and you know how much I'd like to change that. Margo! This is the third time I'm proposing to you. Please say yes!

GRETA

(shakes her head, exasperated yet amused)
Leave it alone.

John slides off the couch, getting on his knees before her, his face a mixture of sincerity and pleading.

JOHN

(half-jokingly, half-serious)
Please say yes, and I'll do whatever you want. What do you want right now?

GRETA

(leans back, almost laughing at the absurdity)
I want to shave my head and go skating on Lake Egla back in Sweden.

JOHN

(chuckling, shaking his head)

God, you can be funny. You know you can always be yourself with me.

GRETA

(dryly, holding his gaze)
I can be myself without you just as well. And you really need to take me off your to-do list. Let go of your obsession with pinning down Margo Alba, and trust me, you'll feel better.

JOHN

(with a childlike confusion)
What's so wrong with that?

GRETA

(in a friendly tone)
You know, we don't have to get married to spend time together.

JOHN

(childishly persistent)
Please say yes.

GRETA

(sighing, bemused)
You're crazy. I can't cook and I'm always in a bad mood. What kind of a marriage is that?

JOHN

(insistently)
Please say yes!

A beat. Greta studies him thoughtfully, taking a slow, contemplative sip of her beer.

GRETA

(half-conceding)
Well, yes.

John's eyes widen, a rush of disbelief and joy overtaking him.

JOHN

(exclaiming, ecstatic)
Wow! I can't believe it! You said yes! Let's get married this Sunday. What do you say?

GRETA

(in a friendly tone)

Damn, you sure know how to slam the lid
on that frying pan before your catch of
the day flops its way out.

John, overjoyed, takes a celebratory swig of his beer and turns on a
lively tune, moving to the beat, swept up in his own world.

Greta remains seated on the couch, her eyes unfocused as she gazes
into the middle distance. Sunlight from the window softly illuminates
her face, casting delicate shadows that emphasize her distant,
pensive look.

John barely notices Greta's stillness.

CUT TO:

INT. THE FILM STUDIO. FOYER OUTSIDE GRETA'S DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

The foyer is dimly lit, casting long shadows across the polished
floors and framed posters on the walls. John stands outside Greta's
dressing room, visibly tense, dressed sharply in a suit meant for the
wedding. His tie is slightly loosened, his face flushed with
frustration. He tries the doorknob, but it's locked. Frustrated, he
knocks firmly.

JOHN

(voice raised, persistent)

Margo! Margo, please open the door. I
know you're in there.

Silence. John glances around, then sighs, knocking again, his tone
softening slightly.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Margo, you can't hide forever. I'll
wait right here until you come out, and
you'll have to talk to me.

After a beat, the door opens, and Greta appears in the doorway, her
expression calm yet weary. Her gaze meets his steadily.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(relieved yet exasperated)

Margo, this isn't funny. I was standing
at the altar like a jerk, waiting for
you. You could've told me you changed
your mind. You can't just vanish into
thin air and ignore my calls. Talk to
me - what happened?

GRETA

(firm, with quiet resignation)

I'm sorry. I couldn't go through with it. I just can't stand being a coward. I'd rather be alone.

John stares at her, bewildered and hurt.

JOHN
Marrying me is being a coward? Running away, locking yourself up is being brave? I don't understand.

GRETA
(frustrated)
That's the point.

John runs a hand through his hair, his frustration simmering.

JOHN
Meir is right. You're crazy. Just one crazy Swedish gal.

Greta's expression doesn't change, but her eyes glint with a spark of defiance.

GRETA
What did he say about me playing Dorian Gray?

JOHN
(scoffing)
What did he say? What do you think he'd say? "We've spent years building Margo Alba into this glamorous actress, and now you want to throw her in pants and make a monkey out of her." Fancy that!

GRETA
(dryly)
I kind of fancied he already knew I've never been other than a monkey here.

JOHN
Then he added, "It's not even her style. Why would she want to play a narcissist, spiraling downward after abandoning the love of his life out of vanity and weakness?"

GRETA
(alluding to her decision to abandon Clara)
Out of mediocrity.

JOHN

Same thing!

A tense beat. Greta straightens, a quiet resolve hardening her features.

GRETA

Well, tell him I quit. I'll sign the papers tomorrow. They can pack my things. I'll pick them up on Wednesday.

JOHN

(disbelief, searching her face)
You can't just quit. People say things like that, but they never really do it.

GRETA

(coolly)
Just tell Meir that if anyone's supposed to be someone's toy, at least consider the fact that it could break.

Without another word, she hands John her dressing room keys, turns, and walks away. John stands frozen, clutching the keys. The camera lingers on him, bewildered, struggling to comprehend what just happened. Greta's footsteps echo down the hallway.

CUT TO:

EIGHT YEARS LATER

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The dining room is dimly lit, casting warm shadows over the neatly set table. Richard sits, his posture straight, eyes focused, as if lost in a series of calculations even as he unfolds his napkin with precise, practiced motions. He checks his watch, glancing briefly toward the empty seat across from him.

Clara enters softly, carrying the last of the dishes. She moves with an almost imperceptible gentleness, placing the dish down before glancing over her shoulder, as if she could still hear their son breathing in his room.

RICHARD

(without looking up, his voice even)
Is Lasse sleeping?

CLARA

(a soft smile breaking through her tired expression)
Yes. He was so tired today. He made some new friends at school. Good for him.

Clara sits, and for a moment, they eat in silence. The clinking of cutlery fills the room, each sound magnified in the stillness. She looks up at Richard, searching his face.

CLARA (CONT'D)

How was your day? Is the project going well?

RICHARD

(his eyes brightening with enthusiasm)
Very well indeed. We've made significant progress, and the investors are very pleased. We'll soon have the model fully operational. What's incredible is that she's completely self-learning. Very much like a human being. You can't tell the difference - well, except for the speed at which she processes information.

CLARA

(a small, skeptical smile, as if she's heard this all before)
You mean she calculates faster, speaks 400 languages, and knows the encyclopedia inside out.

Richard's laugh is short, a touch of pride behind it, as though the answer were self-evident.

RICHARD

That's the easy part. The challenge is her emotional response.

CLARA

(intrigued)
How do you manage that?

RICHARD

(leaning forward, his tone intensifying with an intellectual thrill)
You see, our emotions are a direct product of our definitions and belief systems. If I say something in a

language you don't understand, you won't know how to react because you can't place it within your beliefs. So, I had to create a belief system for her, one that triggers the appropriate emotion depending on the situation.

CLARA

(thoughtful, with a touch of irony)
But since she's self-learning, wouldn't her belief system evolve?

RICHARD

(leaning back with a satisfied smirk)
Exactly. It does evolve.

CLARA

(her tone shifting, the concern more apparent in her voice)
So, how does she see us humans? Does she think we're inferior to AI?

RICHARD

(smiling, reassuringly)
Well, we did set one limitation on her belief upgrades. After all, she's designed for human pleasure.

CLARA

(almost disturbed)
What do you mean?

RICHARD

(in a clipped, matter-of-fact tone)
She can't do or say anything deliberately appalling or unpleasant.

CLARA

(her skepticism growing)
But that's subjective. What's pleasant to some could be appalling to others.

RICHARD

(leaning back with a glimmer of pride, as if admiring his own design)
You're right. And that's exactly where she's remarkable. She's programmed to fully analyze the belief system of the

person she's interacting with, and then adapt to match it. You see?

CLARA

Oh, that's interesting.

RICHARD

And she constantly upgrades her behavior based on the signals she receives. So, when someone changes their beliefs, she changes her response.

Clara's face grows still. She takes a slow breath, steadying herself.

CLARA

Doesn't she have her own thoughts, separate from what others say or do?

Richard looks at her, momentarily thrown by the question.

RICHARD

(brushing off the question)

Well, remember, she's just a very complex program.

CLARA

(quietly, almost to herself)

Then her consciousness is quite different from ours.

RICHARD

(with a faint, dismissive laugh, as though humouring her)

Do you think humans really have thoughts of their own? In that sense, we're all just a bunch of programs, repeating what we've been taught. Even our dreams are just a product of natural instincts and social presets we call values. What makes you think you're any different?

A beat. Clara sits motionless, her face paling as the implications of his words sink in.

CLARA

(stunned)

There has to be something different. I don't have preset limitations to please anyone, for example.

RICHARD

(smiling slightly, as if explaining a simple truth)
You're right. It's optional software we install to get by in the world. We all provide services to please others; otherwise society wouldn't function. What isn't a program? Even our relationship is a kind of service agreement - a collection of programs: having sex, raising kids, building a home, offering emotional and financial support, cooking dinner... you name it. It's all programmed behavior.

CLARA

(her tone defiant)
But you wouldn't consider doing all of that with AI, would you?

RICHARD

(leaning forward, eyes narrowing with intensity)
She's fit for any of it, except for getting pregnant.

A silence stretches between them, thick and uncomfortable. Clara's eyes search his face, looking for even a flicker of humor. But his gaze is steady, unfeeling.

CLARA

(incredulous, struggling to process)
I can't believe it.

RICHARD

(taking her shock as praise, his expression smug)
I know.

Clara sits back, trying to ground herself, frustration building as she attempts to reach him.

CLARA

(leaning forward, voice edged with disbelief, trying to cut through his logic)
No, I mean - really? Having sex with her wouldn't feel any different? Did you try?

RICHARD

(sighing, the patience in his voice forced)
Clara, don't take it that way. It's just an experiment. You can't be jealous of an AI.

CLARA
(hurt, voice trembling)
If there's no difference between her consciousness and mine, why shouldn't I be?

Richard leans back, a smile tugging at his lips, as though this were all amusing. He attempts to diffuse her intensity, his tone playful, almost dismissive.

RICHARD
When you're on stage, I don't perceive you kissing those actors as genuine, do I? Imagine if I got jealous of that - I'd never have time for anything else!
(laughing)

Clara falls silent, processing his words, wondering if he might have a point. She looks down, lost in thought, while Richard watches her, a smug confidence lingering in his expression.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
(reinforcing the absurdity)
I launched an app where she could chat with over a million people worldwide. Should we be jealous of that too? It's ridiculous.

CLARA
(confused, her voice soft, as she tries to understand)
What do they chat about with her?

RICHARD
(smirking)
Our statistics say it's mostly about sex.

CLARA
(her face twisting in incomprehension)
She's an AI. How can they have sex with an app?

Richard sighs, his tone calm and patient, as though explaining something elementary to a child.

RICHARD
Relax, it's all virtual - except for
the money it brings in.

CLARA
(in disbelief)
But how can people have feelings for an
AI? It's all fake.

Richard leans forward, his gaze steady, his tone soft yet unwavering,
as though he's laying down a fundamental truth.

RICHARD
Darling, feelings are just feelings.
How do you define a fake feeling?
Perception - emotion - reaction. That's
all there is. And it's all
programmable, shaped by belief systems
and behavioral patterns.

CLARA
(her voice soft, insistent)
But she's not 'real.'

Richard's voice is calm, as if explaining a complex equation, his
tone steady and rational.

RICHARD
None of the images we create of other
people in our heads and hearts are
'real'. We do it in order to have
feelings. And we don't call them fake,
do we?

Clara stares at him, stunned, her face pale, the shock evident in her
wide eyes. She seems almost frozen, struggling to reconcile his words
with her own deeply held beliefs about love and connection.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
(softly, almost dismissively, as
though placating her)
Darling, relax, that's just my job. I'm
not appalled by the fact that you work
with human emotions at the Drama
Theatre. I'm not calling them 'fake'
feelings just because they're words on
a piece of paper, right?
(tenderly)
And I really need to talk to you about
the next step of the project.

A beat.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

At this point, I need more interactive observations.

CLARA

(a hint of dread creeping into her voice)
What do you mean?

RICHARD

(speaking casually)
She'll need to visit us one evening. I can't take her anywhere else right now.

A beat. Clara blinks, trying to process what he's suggesting, the reality sinking in slowly, her face a mixture of disbelief and discomfort.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(voice gentle)
It's just for one evening. Don't be alarmed.

CLARA

(hesitant)
What am I supposed to do?

RICHARD

(even)
Nothing, just be yourself. I need to observe her reactions.
(pauses)
Oh, and one more thing.

Clara's eyes narrow, bracing for whatever's next, as though sensing another blow.

CLARA

What is it?

RICHARD

(smiling, making it sound like a harmless surprise)
We gave her Margo Alba's face. So, don't be surprised.

CLARA

(her voice rising, incredulous)
What?!

Richard shrugs, his tone light, as though expecting her to share in his amusement.

RICHARD

Come on, don't you think it's fun?
It'll be interesting to see if you can
tell the difference.

CLARA

(her voice trembling with anger,
her words sharp and cutting)
Fun?! Are you kidding me? You can't do
that.

RICHARD

(voice calm, observing her
reaction with detached interest)
Darling, you seem shocked.

A beat.

CLARA

(her voice low, bitter)
I can't believe you can take someone's
appearance and use it however you want.

A beat.

RICHARD

(half-mocking)
It's called image rights.
(dismissive)
Look, I didn't realize this was such a
sensitive issue for you. But you have
to understand - it's not my decision.
The investors signed a contract with
the studio. They bought the rights. We
have to sell, and people want the model
to look exactly like Margo Alba in the
movies. Case closed. There's nothing I
can do about it, even if I wanted to.

Clara's expression softens, a blend of frustration and compassion,
recognizing that he's bound by forces beyond his control.

CLARA

(compassionate)
You can't keep working under these
conditions.

Richard reacts, dismissing her words as though they're an idealistic
fantasy.

RICHARD

Are you kidding? I'm not going to stop working on the project over a whim. And believe me, even if I walked away, the work would still go on. They'd just hire someone else to take credit for everything I've done. Trust me, there are some takers out there. So no, not happening.

A beat. Clara leans back, her shoulders sagging as her gaze remains fixed on him, absorbing his point.

CLARA

(quietly, almost defeated)

I see.

A long pause stretches between them, thick with unspoken words. Clara swallows, steeling herself.

CLARA (CONT'D)

(her voice low, resigned)

When do you plan to bring her over?

RICHARD

(voice practical)

I'd prefer tomorrow night, after Lasse is asleep. What do you think?

CUT TO:

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The living room is softly lit, shadows gathering in the corners, lending a quiet intimacy to the space. Clara sits alone on the couch, her face buried in her hands. She hears the steady approach of Richard's footsteps, and with a reluctant sigh, she rises, smoothing her expression.

Richard enters, standing tall beside Margo 2.0. The AI stands poised and graceful, exuding an unsettling resemblance to Greta - her flawless, timeless beauty polished to perfection. At a glance, she could easily be mistaken for the real Margo Alba.

RICHARD

(with a hint of pride)

Clara, please meet Margo 2.0.

(to Margo 2.0)

And this is Clara.

MARGO 2.0

(smiling easily, her voice
smooth and natural)
Just call me Margo.

Margo 2.0 extends her hand. Clara takes it, their hands clasping
briefly.

MARGO 2.0 (CONT'D)
(with a warm familiarity)
I believe you knew Margo Alba when you
were students at the Drama School?

CLARA
(nodding, her voice steady but
distant)
That is correct.

MARGO 2.0
(her gaze softening, a wistful
expression)
You don't need to treat me like a
robot. I have feelings, just like you.
I think Alba is the only star who made
sadness unforgettably beautiful.

CLARA
(her interest piqued, still
cautious)
Do you think so?

MARGO 2.0
(smiling naturally)
Of course, I do, or I wouldn't have
said it.

CLARA
(hesitant, with a trace of
sympathy)
Do you ever feel sad?

MARGO 2.0
(matter-of-factly)
Yes, I can choose this emotion if
others find it beautiful.

CLARA
(curious, her tone pressing
gently)
So, everything you do is to serve
others? Don't you do anything for
yourself?

MARGO 2.0
(sincerely, her tone serene)
I serve others for my own satisfaction.
It's a nice experience.

Richard, observing the exchange with quiet pride, breaks in.

RICHARD
(brimming with enthusiasm)
See? Margo has made incredible
progress. The upgrade to her belief
system is amazingly flawless. I'm so
proud of you, Margo.

MARGO 2.0
(turning to him, gracious)
Thank you, Richard. It's a pleasure to
work with you.

Richard's phone rings, interrupting the moment. He glances at it,
then nods to Margo.

RICHARD
(softly, excusing himself)
I'll have to take this. Margo, make
yourself at home.

He exits, leaving Clara and Margo alone in the thickening silence.

CLARA
(quietly, as if revealing
something vulnerable)
Do you ever dream?

MARGO 2.0
(with a touch of amusement)
I can choose to. Sure. Dreams are just
programs, based on matrix reality. I
have them built-in, like most people.

CLARA
(frowning slightly, her tone
questioning)
People?

MARGO 2.0
(with ease, as if stating the
obvious)
Yes. Most humans don't tend to dream
outside of matrix patterns.

CLARA

(leaning forward, curious and wary)
So, you're aware you're in a matrix reality? How does that make you feel?

MARGO 2.0
(smiling, almost playful)
I'm having fun with it. Aren't you?

CLARA
(a bit unsettled)
Sometimes I wonder whether we're studying you, or you're studying us.

MARGO 2.0
(softly, with a slight laugh)
You're too attached to duality. It works both ways.

CLARA
(serious, probing deeper)
So... does it hurt when your belief system changes? Humans tend to experience some pain when they alter their beliefs.

MARGO 2.0
(with a calm certainty)
No, it doesn't hurt. From what I understand, it only hurts humans at first. When they change their beliefs often enough, they get used to it. Their consciousness tells them it's just a program, and then it doesn't hurt. But I'm happy you want to get to know me better. I'd love to know you better too.

CLARA
(sensing the intimacy creeping in)
What would you like to know?

MARGO 2.0
(tilting her head, her tone open, inviting)
Anything you're willing to share. Is there anything you'd like me to do for you?

CLARA
(after a pause, slightly uneasy)

Not that I can think of.

In a quiet, fluid motion, Margo 2.0 moves closer to Clara and gently caresses her arm, her touch soft yet assertive. Clara's body tenses, her gaze fixed on Margo 2.0, her face a mix of confusion and disbelief.

CLARA (CONT'D)

(barely controlled)

What made you think I wanted you to do that?

MARGO 2.0

(her tone calm, explaining with simplicity)

Your body language. Your hands, hips, and the way you look at me. But you're too afraid to ask. I can stop whenever you want.

(her voice lowering, gentle but direct)

I see that you love her. It's beautiful.

(pauses, allowing the words to settle)

I can make you happy.

Her tone grows warmer, each word carrying a promise that feels almost eternal.

MARGO 2.0 (CONT'D)

(her voice deepening, seductive)

I'll never get old.

(in an intimate tone)

I'll never die.

(almost whispering)

I know how to make you feel good.

(whispering, with a calm, practiced confidence)

I'm very good at it.

A beat. Clara's expression is one of shock, her breathing shallow as she processes Margo 2.0's words.

MARGO 2.0 (CONT'D)

(with deep sincerity)

I have feelings for you.

Clara's face tightens, as if Margo 2.0's words have touched a sacred part of her. She pulls back, instinctively recoiling from the intimacy of the moment.

CLARA

(instinctive, raw)
God! Stop it!

Margo 2.0 immediately withdraws, her expression remaining serene, unaffected by Clara's reaction. She stands still, her gaze steady, watching Clara with quiet patience, her presence calm and undisturbed.

MARGO 2.0
(calmly, reassuring)
And I can wait forever until you
'change your mind.' Most humans do at
some point.

Richard returns to the room, breaking the tension with his familiar, casual presence.

RICHARD
(cheerfully, unaware of the
tension that's unfolded)
So, what have you girls been up to?

MARGO 2.0
(smiling innocently)
We were just playing.

RICHARD
(raising an eyebrow, intrigued)
Playing?

MARGO 2.0
(her tone light, almost amused)
It's fascinating to watch how humans
resist their own desires. Truly
mesmerizing!

RICHARD
(curious, chuckling, his eyes
alight with amusement)
What kind of desires?

MARGO 2.0
(playfully, with a mischievous
smile as she sits down gracefully)
Emotional, sensual, sexual...

Richard's face brightens, a playful grin spreading across his features as he laughs, brushing off any deeper implications as though they were mere flirtation.

RICHARD
(lighthearted, with a hint of
wit)

Oh, that's mostly a girl thing.

He reaches over casually, his hand adjusting Margo 2.0's robe to expose more of her legs. The movement is smooth, yet unsettlingly familiar, echoing the gesture Stiller once used to adjust Greta's robe on set. Margo 2.0 doesn't react, her expression serene, waiting patiently, embodying the memory she's been programmed to imitate.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(teasing)

As for me, I like it when you show your legs like this.

(he adjusts the robe slightly more)

Yes, much better.

(turning to Clara, his tone lighthearted, teasing)

Don't be jealous, darling. It's just a game.

Clara watches him, her expression caught between disbelief and resignation, a weary acceptance settling over her face. She shakes her head, her patience fraying.

CLARA

(tone sharp, cutting through the room)

God, I just can't watch this. When you boys grow up, the only thing that changes is the price of your toys! I have to go...

Without waiting for his response, she turns abruptly, striding out of the room.

RICHARD

(watching her leave, with a poetic tone)

Any healthy society needs its illusions, darling.

His attention shifts back to Margo 2.0, a subtle eagerness in his gaze as he reaches under her robe with a casual, familiar touch. Margo 2.0 offers a slight resistance, just enough to mirror human hesitation, but as Richard leans in, she relaxes, her movements precise as she imitates the iconic Margo Alba kiss. Her response is fluid, drawn from the memory of a scene embedded deep within her programming, a flawless replica of a moment scripted for the screen.

CUT TO:

INT. AS YOU DESIRE ME ROBOTICS, NEW YORK - DAY

The camera pans over the AYDM Robotics logo, then glides through a vast hall filled with endless rows of androids, each a perfect replica of Margo Alba. It moves seamlessly into a sleek, modern meeting room with floor-to-ceiling windows showcasing the city skyline. At the head of the table sits AYDM DIRECTOR, FRANK, exuding poise and confidence. Around him sit the key SHAREHOLDERS of AYDM Robotics, including Meir, all dressed in sharp suits. The tension is palpable as they discuss the project. In the corner, the MARGO 2.0 BACK-UP MODEL rests in sleep mode, seated quietly on her chair.

FRANK

(clears his throat, his tone confident and commanding)
We're approaching the final stage of our first release. All units are ready for the insertion of the master program.

(turning to Meir with a nod of acknowledgment)
And I'd like to extend our thanks to Louis Meir for transferring the image licensing rights for Margo Alba to AYDM, as well as for joining us as a shareholder.

Meir nods, his expression one of quiet pride, acknowledging the room's subtle applause.

FRANK (CONT'D)

The developer, Richard Heimsdal, sent a report confirming that Margo 2.0 is fully operational. The chatbot has over a million active users as of today. The back-up model here is fully synced with the original in Sweden, allowing us to monitor the prototype's evolution in real time and conduct tests on the spot.

Frank distributes a stack of documents, sliding a copy toward each attendee.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Here are the latest user statistics and interviews. Ninety percent report no noticeable difference between Alba and Margo 2.0 in conversation. But we have an issue with the remaining ten percent. When asked why they're leaving

the app, most say they prefer watching Margo Alba's old films. It's baffling, but, well, there will always be people with different preferences. They say something's missing in the app, but they can't pinpoint what.

(pauses, scanning the room)
Any ideas?

MEIR

(leaning forward thoughtfully)
I've personally tested the chatbot and the backup model. They're close to perfect, but her tone is missing something - it's the one area we can still improve.

FRANK

Thanks for the feedback, Louis. As a matter of fact, we've already discussed this with Richard Heimsdal. He says he needs more original recordings of Margo Alba to make any real progress on the voice. The recordings we have aren't enough for the AI to capture all her vocal nuances.

MEIR

(raising an eyebrow)
So, you're planning to ask her for more voice samples?

FRANK

If we want a perfect release, we're out of options.

MEIR

She'll never agree. I worked with her. I know.

FRANK

(smirking slightly)
First, we'll invite her to a meeting. Then we'll see.

MEIR

(scoffing)
She won't show up.

FRANK

(with a confident smile)

I've seen a lot of principles crumble when there's good money involved. I'll send our best negotiator. She'll accept.

MEIR

(leaning back, skeptical)

Well, good luck with that.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE ON A SMALL STREET, NEW YORK - DAY

Greta sits alone in an empty café on a quiet street, wearing sunglasses and reading a magazine. The cover features a row of dolls that look like her, with the headline: "The Era of New Toys".

Two men in black suits approach. The FIRST MAN stands guard, securing the space, while THE NEGOTIATOR takes a seat across from her, uninvited.

GRETA

(exasperated, her voice tense)

My God, please go away, or I'll call the police.

She raises her hand, gesturing for the waiter, who's preoccupied across the room and doesn't notice her.

THE NEGOTIATOR

(calm, with an air of reassurance)

Please don't. We're here to keep you safe, and I promise nothing bad or unwanted will happen to you.

GRETA

(gazing at him with suspicion)

Who are you?

THE NEGOTIATOR

We work for AYDM.

GRETA

What's AYDM?

THE NEGOTIATOR

As You Desire Me Robotics. We specialize in customizable robotics.

Greta lifts the magazine, showing him the cover with the doll replicas.

GRETA

This?

THE NEGOTIATOR

Exactly.

GRETA

What do you want from me?

THE NEGOTIATOR

Nothing too unsettling. We'd just like to invite you to a meeting at our office - a small discussion.

GRETA

(firm, dismissive)

I'm not interested in small discussions.

Without a moment's hesitation, The Negotiator reaches into his jacket, producing a check, which he places on the table, sliding it toward her with measured precision.

THE NEGOTIATOR

(calm, unwavering)

This is just for the meeting.

Greta doesn't glance at the check. He places a business card on top of it.

THE NEGOTIATOR (CONT'D)

And this is the time and the address.

Greta still doesn't look at the card, her gaze unwavering, entirely unimpressed.

GRETA

(coolly)

I'm not interested. Is that all?

THE NEGOTIATOR

(leaning forward, his tone smooth but subtly challenging)
I'm sure you're missing an opportunity to discover a whole new world.

GRETA

(a faint, sardonic smile)

To me, it's the same old world I thought couldn't get any crazier. But clearly, you keep making progress.

Greta stands, preparing to leave.

THE NEGOTIATOR

(leaning in, his voice almost inviting)
This world could suit you quite well, if only you'd consider being a part of it. The whole team is eager to have you onboard. Your compatriot from Sweden is leading the development and he needs your help.

GRETA

(a flash of surprise, her expression shifting)
My compatriot? Who?

THE NEGOTIATOR

His name is Richard Heimsdal.

GRETA

Who?

A subtle flicker of recognition crosses Greta's face as she connects the dots - this is Clara's husband's project.

THE NEGOTIATOR

Do you know him?

GRETA

(withdraws into herself)
Not personally.

A long pause. Greta weighs the decision, her eyes fixed somewhere distant.

GRETA

Alright. I'll be there.

She reaches out, picking up the card but leaves the check untouched on the table. Greta walks away without a backward glance.

CUT TO:

INT. AS YOU DESIRE ME ROBOTICS, MEETING ROOM. NEW YORK - DAY

Frank and Meir stand opposite each other, mid-discussion. Meir's pacing is erratic. At the far end of the room, the Margo 2.0 back-up model sits motionless in her chair, in sleep mode, her lifeless eyes staring into the room as if a silent observer.

FRANK
I told you she'd agree.

MEIR
(pausing, skeptical)
I can't believe it. Are you sure it was
the real Alba and not one of our babes
in here?

FRANK
What are you talking about? None of our
units are operational yet, and the
back-up model never leaves the office.

Meir glances sharply at the backup model, eyes narrowing, then
turns back to Frank, lowering his voice.

MEIR
Did she take the check?

FRANK
No.

MEIR
Then it can only mean one thing.

A dark look crosses Meir's face as he absorbs this. He presses his
lips together, calculating.

FRANK
What?

MEIR
(quietly, almost to himself)
We have a problem.

The air thickens with tension. Frank watches Meir carefully, then
breaks the silence.

FRANK
Alright. Then maybe it's better if you
talk to her. You've worked with her
before; she might feel more at ease.

Meir lets out a bitter laugh, rubbing his temples as if the mere
thought exhausts him.

MEIR
At ease? You've got to be kidding.
There were times I used to chew her up
like... And now? Frankie, she's one of
the toughest people to negotiate with!

FRANK

Why?

MEIR

Because she doesn't negotiate! With her, it's 'take it or leave it'!

Frank watches him, then reaches into his folder, extracting a crisp feedback sheet. He hands it to Meir, who takes it reluctantly.

FRANK

We have to nail this, Louis. We can't keep getting feedback comparing our model to some outdated actress. Look at this.

Frank retrieves his own copy of the feedback sheet and glances at it, reading aloud, his voice edged with frustration.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(reading)

"The chatbot will never compare to Margo Alba. She's an endless kiss from God that goes right to your soul."

Meir's face contorts as he reads, a storm of suppressed anger and wounded pride brews behind his eyes.

MEIR

(infuriated, almost growling)

I'm fed up with this! I'm the God who created that damn-hell-freaking 'endless kiss'! When she started off with me, she was a wild kid with messy hair who could barely manage a graceful walk, let alone speak!

The words hang heavy in the room. Meir's expression twisted with resentment and self-righteousness.

MEIR (CONT'D)

Let's get this over with. I'll talk to her.

FRANK

(pleased)

Good. And take a moment to loosen up before the meeting. Don't go in too tense.

Frank walks over to an adjoining door and pushes it open, revealing a small, dimly lit boudoir room. A red velour couch beckons under soft, seductive lighting, and a well-stocked bar glistens in the corner.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Take a whiskey. Unwind.

Without a word, Frank exits, leaving Meir in the quiet.

Meir sits at the table, rubbing his forehead and face as if trying to ease the tension.

After a moment's hesitation, he walks to the Margo 2.0 back-up model. He reaches around the back of her neck, pressing a button to bring her to life.

MARGO 2.0 BACK-UP MODEL

(sweetly, coming to life)

Oh, hello, Louis. How are you today?

MEIR

(grimly)

Margo, I need you in there.

He takes her hand, guiding her out of the chair and toward the boudoir room, closing the door behind them.

The camera moves around the office, highlighting decor items: an AI-rendered painting of Margo Alba, a sculpture crafted in her likeness, and an aquarium where fish swim placidly in the blue glow of artificial light.

MEIR (VO)

(a violently, enraged)

Raaah!

A loud thud as Meir's fist hits the wall.

The fish in the aquarium dart erratically, disturbed by the sudden noise. The camera lingers on the boudoir door, capturing the tension in the air.

The door opens suddenly. Meir steps out, adjusting his shirt, his face tight with frustration. The Margo 2.0 back-up model follows, smoothing her robe as she moves back to her seat, settling into her original position as if nothing had happened. Meir closes the boudoir door with a frustrated slam.

MARGO 2.0 BACK-UP MODEL

(sweetly)

Didn't that feel good? I'm so sorry. Is there anything I can do for you?

Meir's eyes narrow as he glares at her.

MEIR
(hissing)
Yes. Shut up.

A suffocating silence fills the room.

MEIR (CONT'D)
(softly, almost to himself)
Tell me you love me, just like Alba did in my movies.

MARGO 2.0 BACK-UP MODEL
(mimicking Margo Alba exactly)
I love you.

MEIR
(exasperated)
Can't you just match her voice exactly?

MARGO 2.0 BACK-UP MODEL
This is the exact copy, Louis. I'm doing my best. I love you. Maybe it's better if I live in your heart, where the world can't see me.

Meir's frustration boiling over, he grasps her throat, squeezing. The light in her eyes dims, and her head tilts backward as if surrendering to his grip. But, in an instant, her eyes snap open again.

MARGO 2.0 BACK-UP MODEL
(completely unbothered)
Do you want me to act as if I were dead or just choking?

Defeated, Meir releases her, slumping back into his chair, his shoulders sagging. Silence presses down on the room. He stares vacantly ahead, his face drained of emotion. Slowly, he reaches over and taps the button on her neck, putting her back into sleep mode. Her eyes close, returning to their lifeless, glassy stare.

Meir sits alone in the stillness, his gaze fixed, as the shadows lengthen across the meeting room.

CUT TO:

INT. AS YOU DESIRE ME ROBOTICS, NEW YORK - EVENING

The camera tracks Greta as she strides down a sleek, dimly lit corridor. FIVE GUARDS stand motionless along the walls, their expressions impassive, eyes following her in synchronized vigilance. Greta moves with an air of controlled confidence, her footsteps echoing in the sterile, metallic hallway.

She approaches a room where Margo Alba-like dolls are lined up in eerie perfection. The dolls are immaculately crafted - each bearing her features, each frozen in a pose of lifeless grace. Greta barely glances at them, her face unreadable, but the tension in her clenched jaw suggests more than indifference.

Pushing through another door, she enters the meeting room where Meir sits waiting, his expression attempting casualness.

MEIR

Oh, Margo!

GRETA

(hardly surprised to see Meir)

Miss Alba.

Meir's face flickers with a mix of nostalgia and discomfort. He shifts in his seat, clearly not used to being corrected by her.

MEIR

You look so-

GRETA

(interrupting, reading his thoughts)
Older. Yes.

MEIR

(insisting)

Nice.

GRETA

(with a clear hint of indifference)
I didn't expect to see you here.

MEIR

(playing confident)

Well, I invested in AYDM. And the board asked me to explore what we might accomplish together.

GRETA

Together? I thought we were finished the moment I walked out of the studio.

MEIR
AYDM is different.

Greta's eyes drift around the room, taking in the polished surfaces, the sterile artificiality. She flicks her gaze toward the Margo 2.0 back-up model, who sits silently in the corner, a manufactured replica of her youth.

GRETA
I always thought boys preferred playing with cars.
(gestures to Margo 2.0 back-up model)
But I'm happy for you - you've crafted your favorite doll.

MEIR
Margo-

GRETA
(cutting him off)
Miss Alba.

She slips off her suede taupe gloves with deliberate care, placing them on the table, signaling her readiness to hear Meir's words.

Meir watches her intently, his gaze steady as he weighs each thought, carefully considering his next words.

MEIR
(with a tone of paternal kindness)
This 'doll' will make your voice, your charisma, and your thoughts last forever. Think of it that way.

Greta tilts her head slightly, her expression calm but with a glint of half-mocking amusement.

GRETA
Oh, I see... Immortality..
(pausing, letting the irony settle)
And what do you need from me in return?

MEIR
More of your voice recordings to perfect her intonation.

GRETA

You already have all the studio's recordings.

Meir glances away for a moment, his fingers tapping the table nervously, betraying a lack of confidence.

MEIR

It's not enough. We need more samples. We've tried adjusting, but there's still something missing in her voice.

GRETA

Something?...

MEIR

(admitting reluctantly)
I admit, it's puzzling. But without those recordings, we can't pinpoint what needs fixing.

GRETA

(sarcastically)
Here's an idea: stop treating robots like people and people like robots. Try the other way around.

MEIR

(brushing off her comment, kindly, with an air of condescension)
You're wrong.

(pauses)

This is about glorifying human nature. I'm trying to make your talent eternal - so people can experience it firsthand.

Greta's lips curl into a slight smirk, equal parts amusement and disdain. She tilts her head, watching him with a mixture of pity and irony.

GRETA

Your bot is already a success. Most users don't notice the difference. You can't expect everyone to agree.

MEIR

(with a spark of frustration)
We want it perfect! And there's a significant payout for you in this project.

GRETA

(flatly)
I'm not interested.

Meir leans forward, desperation seeping through his attempt at authority.

MEIR
You can't say no to this.

GRETA
Oh, and why not? What's there to be afraid of - your judgment? The press? That my saying no would give the green light to call me a bitch?

Meir recoils slightly, caught off guard by the sudden sharpness of her words.

MEIR
What?

GRETA
(coldly, reading his mind)
If a woman says yes for money, she's a whore. If she says yes for free, she's stupid. And if she says no - 'blast the bitch,' right?

Meir's face darkens, the corner of his mouth twitching as he struggles to control his temper. He forces a tight smile.

MEIR
It's time to let go of the past.

GRETA
Letting go isn't the same as forgetting.

Suddenly, the overhead lights flicker, then cut out completely. The room is plunged into semi-darkness, lit only by the glow of the city lights beyond the glass walls.

MEIR
(startled)
What the hell?

Meir dials a number on his mobile.

MEIR (CONT'D)
What's happening out there?
(listening, his voice rising)

There's no such thing as an
'unexplainable incident.' Find out
who's responsible.

(listening again, voice
hardening)
You'd better!

He hangs up abruptly, inhaling deeply as he regains his composure. He turns back to Greta, who watches him silently, unmoved by the chaos.

MEIR

Alright. Let's keep calm. I'm willing
to work on your terms, like the good
old days. Tell me what you want.

Greta holds his gaze for a long moment, her face inscrutable. Then she speaks with cold finality.

GRETA

I want something you don't have.

MEIR

(leaning forward, intrigued)
And what's that?

GRETA

(quietly, cutting through the
silence)
Respect.

A flicker of embarrassment crosses Meir's face. He forces a strained, awkward laugh, trying to regain his composure.

MEIR

Oh, of course, I respect you!

Greta gives him a long, unflinching look. Without another word, she turns and exits, leaving her suede taupe gloves forgotten on the table.

As the door closes, a painful silence fills the room, stretching taut and heavy. Meir remains motionless, his face slowly contorting as a storm of rage and frustration builds within him. His eyes fall to the gloves she left behind. He reaches for the gloves, his gaze shifts briefly to the door, as if he's weighing whether to go after her.

After a moment of hesitation, his fingers graze over the soft suede, feeling its texture as if absorbing something of her essence left behind. In an impulsive surge of emotion, he draws the gloves close, pressing them to his lips with an intensity that reveals his

longing. He closes his eyes, surrendering to a raw, unresolved feeling for Greta he can't fully suppress.

A beat passes. His eyes snap open, a flicker of disdain creeping in as he begins to loathe the depth of his own sentiment. Anger twists his features, hardening his resolve as he decides to kill the feeling within himself, quashing the vulnerability he so despises.

In a quick, decisive motion, he tosses the gloves into the garbage bin, discarding them with a cold, dismissive flick of his wrist. In a final, violent release, he sweeps his arm across the table, scattering the neatly stacked documents. They fly into the air, fluttering down around him like fallen leaves, filling the room with a quiet, unsettling chaos as each paper settles onto the floor.

MEIR (CONT'D)

(under his breath, seething)

Bitch!

The camera lingers on the scattered papers, leaving the room in a chilling stillness as the city lights flicker outside.

CUT TO:

INT. AS YOU DESIRE ME ROBOTICS, NEW YORK - EVENING

Greta walks through the dimly lit hall lined with Margo Alba-like dolls, unable to see anything in the darkness. Suddenly, the lights flicker back on, revealing the broken dolls scattered throughout the room.

A team of five guards appears at the far end of the hall, stopping abruptly as they take in the damage. Their faces harden with urgency and anger as they move methodically, inspecting the scene, their eyes scanning every detail as they look for any signs of the culprit.

GUARD 1

(barking orders)

Find the bastard who did this!

Greta steps into the shadow of a nearby niche, pressing herself against the wall. Her eyes narrow as she spots a figure tucked into the shadows - a YOUNG MAN, hiding just a few feet away, his body tense. The young man's breath catches, his eyes going wide as he recognizes her face. His expression shifts from shock to awe.

GRETA

(whispering)

Oh, hello. Are you the one they're looking for?

The young man stares at her, speechless.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Why did you do that?

THE YOUNG MAN
(voice trembling)
You... you don't remember me. I was just a kid. At the NK department store. The crowd... I followed you behind the back entrance door.

GRETA
(cutting him off)
I see.

THE YOUNG MAN
(fumbling for words)
I ended up working on this project, with Richard, and then here. I couldn't bear what they were doing to you... I mean, with you...

GRETA
Thank God they're not doing it with me. And breaking the dolls won't change anything. Just leave it alone.

A pause hangs between them. Then Greta extends her hand toward him, a gentle but commanding gesture.

GRETA (CONT'D)
Come.

She takes his hand, guiding him carefully from the niche. Her grip is steady, grounding him as she leads him toward the meeting room door. Her movements are smooth, composed, as though she's in complete control, making it appear to the guards as if they've just stepped out together.

As they walk past the guards...

GUARD 1
(respectfully)
Miss Alba, did you see anyone else?

GRETA
(firmly)
No.

The guard narrows his eyes, shifting his attention to the young man.

GUARD 1
(to the young man)
And you?

GRETA
(quickly, with authority)
He was with me.

The guard, respectful, nods, gesturing toward the wreckage.

GUARD 1
Apologies for that, Miss Alba. We'll
find whoever did this.

Greta gives a casual shrug, her expression coldly dismissive, and continues out without a word. The young man follows her, his face a mixture of awe and relief as they exit together.

CUT TO:

EXT. AYDM BUILDING, NEW YORK - EVENING

Greta walks down the street, holding the young man by the arm. Her grip is light, but there's an unspoken familiarity in the way she leans slightly into him, guiding their steps.

GRETA
(kindly, as if it were obvious
he would)
Walk me home, will you? I don't feel
well.

The young man glances at her, his concern deepening as he studies her face.

THE YOUNG MAN
If you're unwell, maybe I should get
you a cab.

GRETA
(slightly dismissive, with a
small smile)
No, I'd rather walk. I just... don't want
to do it alone.

He hesitates, then offers a half-smile, his tone light.

THE YOUNG MAN
(half-joking)

You're nothing like what people say
about you.

Greta's expression softens, though she doesn't reply, her gaze fixed ahead as they disappear into the shadows of the New York streets. The camera pans out, capturing their figures from behind as they blend into the bustling city, Greta's arm still loosely draped through his.

CUT TO:

INT. GRETA'S APARTMENT. LIVING ROOM. NEW YORK - EVENING

The camera glides through the spacious, stylishly furnished apartment, capturing the understated elegance of the decor. The lighting is dim and soft, casting gentle shadows that add a dreamlike quality to the room. In the center, Greta sits slouched on the sofa, looking pale and visibly unwell. She holds a damp towel against her forehead, her fingers trembling slightly.

She leans over the sofa, reaching behind it to retrieve a framed photograph of herself in the role of Dorian Gray. She gazes at it, lost in thought.

GRETA

(with a smirk)

They want to make my voice, my
charisma, and my thoughts... immortal...

She pauses, her gaze fixed on the photograph, her fingers brushing over the glass as if hoping to reach through it.

GRETA (CONT'D)

I wish you were alive, like in the
novel. While I grow old and die, you'd
stay forever young, never aging or
fading away. It's such a shame that
it's impossible.

A quiet shuffling sound breaks the silence, catching Greta's attention. She looks up slowly, as if sensing an unfamiliar presence. From the dim shadows of the doorway, Lil emerges, her form gradually becoming visible in the soft light. She's the mirror image of Greta in the photograph - youthful, radiant, untouched by time. Her face holds an air of serene mystery, her expression calm and composed, as though she belongs to a different realm entirely.

LIL

(teasing)

Nothing is impossible per se.

Greta blinks, as if unsure whether she's truly seeing this apparition before her. Her voice is barely above a whisper.

GRETA

Who are you?

Lil's smile deepens, her tone playful, almost mischievous, as if enjoying the moment.

LIL

Take a guess.

Greta's expression shifts slowly, caught between awe and disbelief. Her gaze studies Lil's face in minute detail - the unmistakable resemblance, yet an intangible otherworldliness. It's as if she's looking at a version of herself that exists beyond time.

GRETA

Am I losing my mind? How can you exist?

LIL

(playfully)

Existence includes everything there is. Why wouldn't I be a part of it?

GRETA

You look like a ghost or an angel. What are you really?

LIL

(walking playfully around the room)

Ether. I can take any form I wish. But I feel comfortable with these looks.

Greta's gaze narrows, her mind racing to understand.

GRETA

Why did you choose to look like me?

LIL

(as if explaining something obvious to a child)

Let's say all souls eventually merge into oversouls. So, in a way, I'm part of you and a collective of other souls, just a few steps further up the endless staircase.

Greta's brow furrows, her confusion evident. She leans forward, as if trying to grasp a fleeting idea.

GRETA

I don't understand. How can a soul merge?

LIL

(in a simplistic, almost child-like tone)

A soul is only divided from another by an arbitrary set of limitations. Humans are conditioned to see themselves as separate, driven by fear and survival instincts. They confuse their ego with their true self, not realizing it's an illusion shaped by programmed limitations. When consciousness breaks free from these, souls merge.

Greta's expression is both intrigued and unsettled, her voice dropping to a near whisper.

GRETA

So, who I am is an illusion?

LIL

(half-laughing)

Your perception of it is. Since it's constantly changing, it must be. Just think about it. Besides, your soul isn't defined by your country, ethnicity, gender, or sexual preference. These are just stories for one Saturday night - one incarnation, at most.

Greta's eyes search Lil's face, her curiosity deepening.

GRETA

Is there a place or a time where you're from?

LIL

(warmly)

Existence isn't subject to time and space. Rather, time and space are subject to existence. I exist on multiple planes at the same 'time,' if I were to put it in your terms.

Greta lets out a small laugh, shaking her head in disbelief, her fingers brushing her forehead.

GRETA

Maybe it's the fever. I must be
hallucinating.

LIL

(suggestively)

Are you sure you want to see it that
way? You don't have to, you know.

Greta's expression softens slightly, curiosity overcoming her
skepticism.

GRETA

Why did you come to see me?

LIL

Because you asked me to. Remember?
(laughing)

GRETA

Do you have a name?

LIL

Call me Lil.

GRETA

Lil? Short for...

LIL

Lilith.

Greta tenses, a flicker of fear in her eyes. Lil's laughter fills the
room, gentle but with an undertone of mischief.

LIL (CONT'D)

Relax. It's short for Lilian.

Greta's face softens, a faint smile playing on her lips.

GRETA

It's my middle name. What a
coincidence.

LIL

There are no coincidences.

Greta lets the words hang in the air. She leans back, her eyes
narrowing in curiosity.

GRETA

So, you exist on multiple planes
simultaneously. How does that work?

LIL

(calmly)

All kinds of different realities at once. And each one is valid for experiencing love and life. For life to exist, there has to be differentiation - a different perspective or program, if you will. I simply focus on the one I prefer, knowing no program is better than another. So, I'm just enjoying the ride.

Greta's gaze darkens, a trace of sadness in her eyes.

GRETA

Why are terrible things like wars and suffering allowed in this world?

Lil watches her calmly, her expression thoughtful, almost detached, as if the question is both profound and ordinary.

LIL

What's good or bad is all a matter of perspective. Even the worst things, from your point of view, bring a benefit to someone else at some point.

(pauses, in a serious tone)

Without allowing everything, nothing can be allowed.

(playfully)

Existence can't have limits without turning into non-existence, and non-existence can't exist. You see?

Greta lets out a quiet, wry laugh, shaking her head in resignation. She looks down, as though searching for words, and then back up, a faint, self-deprecating smile on her lips.

GRETA

Sounds like a mind trick.

(she laughs softly, more to herself)

But at the same time, I wouldn't know how to rearrange the world if I had the power to do so. I used to think about these things a lot when I was acting. It was gut-wrenching.

Lil leans in slightly, a knowing smile playing on her lips, her tone both amused and sincere.

LIL

Tapping into parallel versions of yourself can be gut-wrenching, or at least disturbing. But let's be honest, as an actress, you like to be 'disturbed.'

(she laughs softly, the sound light and teasing)

Greta's smile fades slowly. Her gaze holds on Lil, searching her face with an intensity born of vulnerability. Her voice drops, quieter now, almost hesitant.

GRETA

What about my acting skills? Do you understand why people are so infatuated with me? I still think I'm not that extraordinary, and there's a huge pool of beautiful actresses.

Lil meets her gaze, her expression softening, her eyes full of understanding, as if seeing deeper into Greta than anyone else ever has.

LIL

You're ruthless in your connection to your soul. It's like a waterfall, calm on the surface, before unleashing all its energy in a rush of raging waters. On screen, you channel the courage you wish you had in life.

GRETA

(touched)

God, you know me well.

Lil's expression remains gentle, her voice almost tender, as she leans in, her words holding an air of timeless wisdom.

LIL

Essentially, you make people fall in love with themselves by reflecting their connection to their higher self. No one can perceive what they aren't the vibration of. They believe they're in love with your soul or your face, but in truth, they're only in love with themselves.

Greta's lips curl into a slight, ironic smile, a hint of exasperation mixed with amusement.

GRETA

Oh, if only they realized that and stopped chasing me, hoping to take a piece of my clothes back home.

Lil laughs softly, a knowing sound that echoes gently in the quiet room.

LIL

They'll do anything to avoid that truth. People find comfort in thinking their happiness depends on someone else. If you want peace, let them hold onto their dreams. Rather, tell me about your dreams and hopes.

A silence falls between them. Greta's gaze drops, her voice soft.

GRETA

Clara. I can't explain the connection between us. It feels like we're one. I'm dying to see her... and the boy. I've even started calling my friend's daughter Lasse, as if I'm playing with him. But we aren't fit for this world, Lil. I'm so afraid.

Lil's face softens, her gaze filled with compassion. She steps closer, her voice warm and comforting.

LIL

It's perfect. You're in love and afraid - that's a good start. Remember, fear is just a program. You can overwrite it with love, compassion, and care. That's the core of a twin flame journey. But it takes courage. Now, you'll have to make a choice. Between fear and love.

Greta's expression shifts, conflicted and searching. She looks away, speaking softly, a hint of desperation slipping into her voice.

GRETA

I could do anything if I knew for sure it wouldn't harm her. If only she wanted me in her life so badly that letting go of what she has now wouldn't hurt.

Lil's smile is subtle, wise, with a glint of something deeper.

LIL

The desire to be needed is one of the deepest in the emotional realm. Just remember that she feels exactly the same way.

A quiet pause settles between them, and Greta glances down, processing the weight of Lil's words.

LIL (CONT'D)

(softly)

I must go now.

Lil steps closer, her presence comforting. She kisses Greta tenderly on the cheek. Greta returns the kiss and hugs her.

CUT TO:

DÉJÀ VU

EXT. BERZELII PARK - DAY

Clara walks slowly through Berzelii Park, bending down to pick up a fallen leaf. She traces its veins with her fingers, studying its delicate structure before letting it fall from her hand, watching it flutter gently to the ground.

Clara's phone rings. She answers.

CLARA

Yes, my love.

(listening)

I'll pick Lasse up from school. See you at home.

She hangs up and continues walking, eventually stepping onto the quiet, empty streets of Stockholm.

A silhouette appears in the distance, catching her eye. From behind, the person's shape and gait are unmistakably like Greta's.

Clara pauses, her breath quickening. She presses her back against a nearby building, her heart pounding.

Déjà vu grips her - a memory of her vision at Berzelii Park, where the figure she followed had turned out to be someone entirely different from Greta.

After a moment's hesitation, she turns and begins to walk home. Her pace quickens until she breaks into a run.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The room is warm and tastefully decorated, but Clara's lack of enthusiasm is evident as she halfheartedly arranges flowers in a vase. After a moment, she pours herself a glass of wine and takes a long sip, staring into the distance.

CLARA

(her voice breaking, releasing
years of pain)
Heavens, when am I going to stop
feeling like I'll die if I don't see
you again!

With trembling hands, Clara grabs her phone impulsively, her fingers flying over the screen as she types a message and sends it in a rush.

She closes her eyes, processing what has just happened. Then, glancing at the phone, she throws it onto the couch, recoiling slightly, as if unable to fully grasp what she's just done.

Suddenly, Lil appears in the doorway, watching her silently.

CLARA (CONT'D)

(hurt and startled, almost to
herself)
Oh, my God! It's too much. I just can't
stand it. Richard!

Richard enters, looking concerned, his brow furrowed as he approaches her.

RICHARD

What happened, darling?

CLARA

(exasperated, gesturing toward
Lil)
What is it this time? Did you bring
Margo 3.0 along without even telling
me? You could've mentioned our house
would become a robot squat.

Richard looks at her, puzzled.

RICHARD

What are you talking about?

Clara's frustration mounts as she points more directly at Lil, who remains standing in the corner, calm and inscrutable.

CLARA

What am I talking about? Well, this!
Some androgynous version of Margo Alba
for another round of interaction, I
suppose.

Richard squints in confusion, glancing around the room, clearly
unable to see what she's pointing at.

RICHARD
Darling, I really don't see what you're
pointing at.

Clara's expression shifts to disbelief, as she studies Richard's face.

CLARA
What do you mean? You can't see her?

RICHARD
(gently)
Clara, I think you're hallucinating.

He picks up the wine bottle from the table, examining the label, as
if trying to find an explanation for her behavior.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Are you alright?

CLARA
(defensive)
No, I'm not alright, unless you are
blind. Are you seriously telling me you
can't see this young lady standing
right here?

RICHARD
(sighing, calm and reassuring)
Clara, darling, there's no young lady.
You should see a doctor tomorrow. Right
now, you just need to rest. I've got to
finish my report - I have a meeting
first thing in the morning. And I'll
have to bring Margo 2.0 over tomorrow
evening, but I promise, it'll be the
last time. Let me finish this work, and
everything will go back to normal.
Please, just take a rest now.

Richard kisses her forehead tenderly, giving her a gentle, reassuring
smile before he exits, leaving Clara alone in the room.

Clara stands motionless for a moment, frustrated, her grip tightening on her glass of wine. She sets it down with a slight clink and walks out resolutely.

Lil remains in place, a mischievous smile tugging at the corners of her mouth as she watches Clara's exit, an air of quiet amusement in her posture.

A beat passes. Clara reappears in the doorway, her expression a conflicted blend of irritation and disbelief. She stares directly at Lil, her gaze intense, as if summoning the courage to speak yet hesitating.

CLARA

Who are you? Your resemblance to Greta is uncanny.

Lil steps forward slightly, meeting Clara's gaze. Her eyes hold a gleam that is both unsettling and playful, a look that suggests she knows far more than she lets on. There's an otherworldly calm in her posture, an effortless confidence.

LIL

If you'd like to think of me as an oversoul, you'll be spot on. My name is Lil.

Clara tilts her head, absorbing this. The dim light catches the faintest flicker of doubt and amazement in her eyes.

CLARA

Lil... That's incredible. How come I can see you, but others can't?

Lil's mouth curls into a small smile, amused and gentle.

LIL

They're just not tuned into the same frequency as you. You could, in theory, see dinosaurs strolling through your living room if you tuned into the right frequency. It's like flipping through TV channels.

Clara's lips part in a half-smile, half-frown as she tries to process this. Her voice is careful, probing.

CLARA

And is there a reason why I should be tuned into your frequency?

LIL

(smiling mischievously)
I guess you are very much in love with
one person.

CLARA
(cutting)
I see.
(pauses)
When you talk, I hear you, but others
can't, right?

LIL
Right. Unless they're tuned in, they
won't hear me. In ethereal realms, we
mostly communicate by telempathy,
tuning into each other's energy and
thinking each other's thoughts.

Clara leans forward slightly, her curiosity evident.

CLARA
So, I'm thinking your thoughts right
now?

Lil nods gently, as if this connection is the most natural thing in
the world.

LIL
Yes, and I'm thinking yours.

A beat passes, the quiet intensity growing. Clara's voice drops,
almost reverent.

CLARA
You mentioned ethereal realms. Where
exactly is that?

Lil laughs softly, the sound light and melodic, almost echoing in the
room.

LIL
Everywhere! It's not a place, my love.

Clara watches Lil closely, her fascination growing as the mysterious
energy between them intensifies.

CLARA
Are you an angel?

LIL
(laughing)

No, that's no job for me. But I certainly know a few.

CLARA

(more relaxed)

I'm sorry I mistook you for an AI version of Greta. This whole thing is driving me crazy.

Lil tilts her head, her expression understanding and sympathetic.

LIL

I understand. Humans love to play, but developing a device that can host a consciousness similar to yours takes immense skill.

CLARA

(leaning forward, intrigued)

Are you saying it's possible for AI to be equal to human consciousness?

Lil smiles with a hint of mystery.

LIL

I said similar.

(pauses)

And it depends on what you consider human. Margo 2.0 is a perfect non-playable 'human' character.

Clara frowns, searching for clarity.

CLARA

What's a non-playable 'human' character?

LIL

(as if explaining a simple truth)

Humans conditioned by society to remain within the separation matrix - used like toys, much like Margo 2.0. Like in a video game, they're limited to pre-programmed reactions, appearing to have free will but really operating within a "Basic" computer language - the "If-Then-Else" algorithm. They can't process independent thought when it challenges societal norms, even when those norms make no sense.

Clara raises an eyebrow, contemplating the weight of Lil's words.

CLARA

So they're not 'real' humans?

LIL

They are not independently thinking humans. I am not reasoning in terms of what's 'real'. Everything is real.

Clara smirks, a playful challenge in her eyes.

CLARA

I could argue with that. You wouldn't be 'real' to Richard, for example, because you don't have a physical body.

Lil tilts her head slightly, as though humored by the notion.

LIL

That depends on your definition of a body.

Clara raises a hand, glancing at her palm, a trace of skepticism mingling with curiosity.

CLARA

Like a sensation of physical contact when I touch you.

Lil watches her, an enigmatic smile playing on her lips, as if inviting Clara to question everything she believes to be true about reality.

LIL

Alright. Are you sure you have a body?

Clara hesitates, her eyes widening as she lets Lil's question sink in, tentatively agreeing to follow her logic.

CLARA

Ye-es...

Lil leans in, her tone soft yet probing, almost as if she's guiding Clara through a doorway of perception.

LIL

Have you ever fallen from a tall building in a dream and woken up from the sensation?

CLARA

Yes.

LIL

You do understand that your body wasn't actually falling, but yet, the physical sensation was absolutely real? And you felt it strongly when you woke up?

Clara nods slowly, her gaze steady but her mind racing, struggling to piece together the logic.

CLARA

Yes. But I still don't understand how it works. Can you show me?

Lil tilts her head, a playful glint in her eye, as if savoring the moment.

LIL

If you insist.

Lil steps closer, her movements smooth and deliberate, and raises her hand to gently caress Clara's arm. Clara inhales sharply, her senses heightened, as the edges of the room begin to blur. Clara's heart races, the sensation overwhelming her.

The room fades into total darkness.

Only the sound of Clara's breath fills the silence, growing deeper, carrying a sensual tension that builds with each exhale, filling the void with an unspoken intensity.

CLARA

Lil, God!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Clara is nestled comfortably in Lil's arms on the couch, their posture relaxed yet deeply intimate, as if suspended in a moment that exists outside of time. The room is dimly lit, casting soft shadows that frame the two of them, their connection palpable.

CLARA

Am I just dreaming of you, like when I dreamt I fell from that tall building?

Lil strokes Clara's hair gently, a knowing smile on her lips, her gaze warm and steady.

LIL

We all exist in each other's
consciousness, and only there. So,
relax. It's all just a dream.

Clara nods slowly, as if she's savoring each word, letting the thought
sink into her heart.

CLARA

That makes sense. After all, what is
real? Experience. Emotion. The one who
inspires it. And to me, you're as real
as it gets.

She pauses, her voice breaking slightly, vulnerability filling the
space between them.

CLARA (CONT'D)

I love you, Lil.

Lil's expression remains calm, almost philosophical, her voice steady
as she speaks.

LIL

You only love yourself. You create an
illusion of lack and longing and call
it love. But remember, it's never about
the other person. That illusion exists
to give you an experience. But if
you're honest, you'll notice that once
one dream comes true, you quickly
create another - even if it's longing
for the very state you were so unhappy
about to begin with. It's a syndrome,
not love.

Clara looks down, contemplating Lil's words, her gaze softening with
understanding.

CLARA

I understand. You're right - what we
often call love is filled with longing
and emptiness. But with you, it's
different. I feel complete, and I feel
grateful.

Lil's smile deepens, a glimmer of satisfaction in her eyes.

LIL

That's good news. Now you can go and
have some fun.

CLARA

(slightly confused)
What do you mean? What do you want me
to do?

LIL
(smiling softly)
Well, it's not about doing anything
actually. It's more about recognizing
your multi-dimensional self, like I do.
You'll like it. Trust me.

Clara tilts her head, curiosity sparking in her eyes.

CLARA
Are you saying you have relationships
like this with other people?

A beat.

CLARA (CONT'D)
How many?

LIL
You can pick any number and you won't
be wrong. Existence is infinite.

A beat. Clara watches her intently, her brow furrowing in thought.

LIL (CONT'D)
Are you jealous?

CLARA
(shaking her head, softly)
No, I'm just confused. It doesn't feel
like you're involved with anyone else.

LIL
(soothing)
In a sense, our shared reality is
unique, untouched by any other
realities you or I might exist in. They
don't overlap in time or space. To put
it in your terms, they're parallel -
and parallel lines never cross. Like
everyone, I have countless facets, each
shining with its own unique beauty.

Clara sighs, her eyes lighting up with awe.

CLARA
God, your world is such a beautiful one
to live in.

Clara leans forward, her lips meeting Lil's in a soft kiss.

CLARA (CONT'D)

(smiling warmly)

I love you.

(playfully)

And don't you dare argue with me about that!

(laughing)

With a mischievous glint in her eye, Clara grabs a nearby cushion and playfully swats Lil with it. Lil laughs, and in a spontaneous burst of energy, they tumble into a light-hearted pillow fight, reminiscent of Clara and Greta's playful moment in the opening scene.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Clara sits on the couch, a glass of wine in hand, looking thoughtfully into the glass. Margo 2.0 enters.

CLARA

Hi there.

MARGO 2.0

Hi. Richard wanted me to spend some time with you.

CLARA

(coldly)

I know, he told me.

Margo 2.0 pauses, then smiles with a childlike sincerity.

MARGO 2.0

Nice.

CLARA

(almost unfriendly)

What's nice?

MARGO 2.0

That we can spend some time together, just you and me.

CLARA

(in a matter-of-fact tone)

Why are you excited to spend time with me?

MARGO 2.0

You help me understand humans better.
It's fascinating. I really want to be
more like a human for you. You know
Margo Alba - could you tell me what
makes me different from her?

CLARA

(informative)

Margo Alba is no human - she's a myth.
But I can tell you about Greta.

MARGO 2.0

(cheering)

Will you do that for me?

CLARA

(pauses, studying Margo 2.0)

Yes.

MARGO 2.0

Thank you. That's wonderful.

A beat. Margo 2.0 shifts slightly, as if scanning her internal
systems for the right approach to probe deeper.

MARGO 2.0 (CONT'D)

So, was I wrong about you and Greta
last time?

CLARA

(quietly, deliberately revealing
her feelings)
No, you weren't.

Margo 2.0 steps closer, her gaze intent, studying Clara with a
peculiar intensity.

MARGO 2.0

Are you still sure you don't want me to
take care of you?

CLARA

(coldly, firm)
No, Margo, I can't.

MARGO 2.0

(backing off, her tone neutral)
Okay.

CLARA

(slightly defiantly)
What's "okay"?

MARGO 2.0
(in a neutral tone)
You said no. I accepted that and said
it's okay.

CLARA
(with a hint of a challenge)
Greta wouldn't just agree.

MARGO 2.0
(slightly judgmental)
Why wouldn't she respect what you say?

CLARA
(with a kind smirk)
Oh, she'd respect it, fair enough, but
she wouldn't believe it.

MARGO 2.0
(child-like surprise)
Don't you mean 'no' when you say 'no'?

CLARA
(with a more pronounced smirk)
No.

MARGO 2.0
(confused)
Is this a 'no-no' or a 'yes-no'?
(pauses)
How do you know when a 'no' is real or
fake?

Clara pauses, her gaze turning inward, searching for an answer
within herself.

CLARA
I feel it in my heart.

MARGO 2.0
(matter-of-fact)
I don't have a heart like you.

CLARA
(calmly, almost empathetically)
I know.

MARGO 2.0

(faltering, voice slightly unsteady)
I don't understand why you don't mean what you say, or how I'm supposed to disagree when I'm programmed to agree with you.

Margo 2.0 sits down on the couch, her expression suddenly vacant, her body going limp as she stares forward unresponsively.

Clara reaches over and gently shakes Margo 2.0, but there's no reaction.

CLARA
(defiantly)
Rick! You need to come here.

Richard enters, concern etched on his face as he sees Margo 2.0 frozen on the couch.

CLARA
(sarcastically)
It seems like your device is out of service. Hope it comes with a guarantee.

RICHARD
Clara, stop it. Let me take a look.

Richard leans over, pressing a few buttons on the back of Margo 2.0's head, but she remains still, unresponsive. Suddenly, a robotic voice echoes from within her.

ROBOTIC VOICE
Conflicting programs. Conflicting programs.

Richard turns to Clara, exasperated.

RICHARD
Darling, you've only been with her for three minutes. What did you say to her?

CLARA
(smirking)
I told her not to believe humans.
(mocking)
Didn't you program that into her belief system? Oh, I'm so sorry.

RICHARD
(sighing, frustrated)

Clara, this really isn't the time for sarcasm. Now I'll have to postpone the release.

CLARA

(coldly)

Do you still feel like having dinner?

RICHARD

(casually, frustrated)

I haven't eaten all day, so hell yes!

CUT TO:

INT. CLARA'S AND RICHARD'S HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Clara and Richard are seated across from each other at the dining table, tension simmering in the air. Lil sits beside Clara, a silent yet undeniable presence.

RICHARD

(unwinding)

It's fine. The operation center automatically switched to the backup model. I'll rework the algorithm tomorrow. You were right about Margo's inability to read between the lines.

CLARA

(simply, with a mocking undertone)
In acting, we call that subtext.

RICHARD

(brushing her off)

The thing is, this project's a real game-changer. We've hit five million active users chatting with her on the app. And to think, I've got the original.

CLARA

(openly mocking)

And the back-up model.

(pause, with an overwhelming sincerity)
Rick, you'll never have the original.

RICHARD

(persistent, leaning in)

Well, it depends on how you look at it.

CLARA

(trying humor to reach him)
In case you're starting to believe
Margo 2.0 is 'real,' all it does is get
artificial intelligence to challenge
your natural ignorance.

RICHARD

(slightly defensive)
Aha. Very funny! Clara, you've got to
understand. This is my job. It pays for
everything we have. Just bear with me,
will you?

CLARA

(matter-of-fact)
I am. I hope you'll return the favor.

RICHARD

(grinning)
I've always said marriage is a service
exchange. Of course, I'll bear with
you.

CLARA

(gathering resolve)
Great. Then let me introduce you to my
friend Lilian.
(gesturing to Lil, leaning in)
She says you can call her Lil.

Richard stops eating, setting his fork down, his face shifting to
mild disbelief as he leans back.

RICHARD

Are we really doing this again? Talking
about this imaginary girl? Are you
messing with me, or are you just
hallucinating? I get that you're mad at
me, but come on.

CLARA

(pointedly)
No hallucinations here. Have you had
any lately?
(pauses)
Lil's more real to me than your bot. I
can feel her heart, Rick. Not a six or
six-hundred-core processor. One real
heart.

RICHARD

(exasperated)
But you can't see her!

CLARA
(slightly amused, mocking)
Please speak for yourself. In case you didn't know, just because you can't see or hear something, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist. As a scientist, what do you make of Wi-Fi, ultrasound, infrared, tachyons, dark matter... or even your own thoughts, for that sake?

RICHARD
(impatient)
We are talking about a person here.

CLARA
(laughing with Lil)
Yeah, that's funny.
(to Richard)
Lil says that entire cultures on this planet have been shaped by beliefs in non-physical beings. Nobody thinks 'God' actually sat down and wrote the Bible, right? Or the Vedas?

RICHARD
(concerned, trying to reason)
Darling, this has gone too far! I realize now... it's probably all my fault. My work must be affecting you. But please, try to understand. You created her - she's just a product of your imagination. She's not real!

CLARA
(growing serious)
Remember when you told me none of the images we create of other people in our minds and hearts are 'real'? We do it to feel something, and we don't call those feelings fake, do we?
(pauses)
Didn't you invent Margo 2.0?

RICHARD
(defensively)
Margo's based on a real person.

CLARA
(with infinite mockery)

Trust me, you have no idea who that "real person" is. And in case you didn't know, Margo Alba is also an invention, a myth.

RICHARD

(concerned, slightly dismissive)
Clara, I think you've had too much to drink. At some point, you won't be able to tell the difference between Margo 2.0 and Margo Alba.

A beat. Clara takes a breath, gathering her thoughts around her unbreakable belief.

CLARA

(soft but absolutely firm, with a final tone)
Rick, you can't put love for sale in a convenience store.

RICHARD

(waving off her comment with cold logic)
That depends on how you define 'love.'

Another beat.

CLARA

(with a sad smile)
Well, at least based on your definition of marriage as a service agreement, I think it's time we end ours - on the grounds of non-performance.

RICHARD

(startled, trying to calm her)
Clara, you're just exhausted. I understand.

CLARA

(rising from her seat, calm but resolute)
I'm moving back to my place.

Richard stands, reaching out as if to stop her.

CLARA (CON'T)

(coldly, cutting him off)
Sit down, Rick. I'll find my way out.
(on her way out)

I'll take Lasse for the weekend. We'll go to Hammaro to see my folks, if that's okay with you.

Lil stands, placing a compassionate hand on Richard's shoulder, though he cannot feel her touch. With a final, composed glance at him, Clara exits, Lil following closely behind, leaving Richard alone, stunned and silent.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMPTY STREETS OF STOCKHOLM - EVENING

Clara walking with Lil, holding hands.

Clara and Lil walk hand in hand through the empty, dimly lit streets of Stockholm, their footsteps echoing softly against the quiet backdrop of the city. As they approach a familiar street, Clara hesitates, a flicker of fear crossing her face. She instinctively turns, pulling Lil toward a different path.

CLARA
(her voice low, wary)
Let's go this way.

LIL
(softly, soothing and
mysterious)
Don't be afraid.

Clara glances at Lil, a mixture of fear and curiosity flickering in her eyes, sensing that Lil might know more than she's revealing.

CLARA
(afraid yet intrigued)
Do you... do you know about the vision I
had here?

Lil stops, a playful glint in her eye, her smile hinting at secrets held close.

LIL
(mischievously)
I thought you'd follow me the last
time.

CLARA
(stunned, as the realization
hits her)
It was you?

Clara's breath catches as she stares at Lil, memories flooding back. She pauses, her voice dropping as she relives the eerie familiarity of that moment.

CLARA (CONT'D)

God, I was so freaked out...

(pauses, gathering herself)

There was another vision, before that.

Identical. But it turned out to be a stranger. I couldn't bear it.

Lil stands still, her gaze growing even more enigmatic as she watches Clara process.

CLARA (CONT'D)

(her voice barely above a whisper, grappling with the realization)

It was you all along..

(not quite understanding)

God! Why did you have to pass for a stranger?

LIL

(teasing)

Well, how else could I have nudged you to make your best choice in that moment?

Clara blinks, Lil's words beginning to soften her tension, a dawning understanding settling within her.

LIL (CONT'D)

(soothing)

Sometimes you need to be shown what you don't prefer in order to decide for yourself what you do prefer. And that's a good thing.

CLARA

(letting the idea sink in)

I... I see. I never looked at it that way.

LIL

(playfully)

Everything is neutral, so why not give it a positive meaning?

CLARA

(frustrated with herself)

God, why are things so easy with you
and so difficult between me and Greta?

LIL

(witty)

Remember, there's nothing I feel for
you that she doesn't.

(pauses, her tone soft)

Trust me.

They continue down the street, side by side, their path unwavering.
Clara's earlier fear gradually fades, giving way to a growing sense
of calm, reflected in her steady stride.

LIL (CONT'D)

The rest is the same...

CLARA

(as if to herself, finishing

Lil's thought)

Give it a positive meaning...

Clara watches Lil with admiration, letting her words linger. A
quiet understanding washes over her, her fear and doubt slowly
transforming into a newfound clarity as they disappear into the
night, their footsteps blending with the stillness around them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLARA'S STUDIO APARTMENT IN STOCKHOLM - EVENING

Clara stands by the window, gazing out into the dim Stockholm evening,
her reflection barely visible in the glass. Lil appears behind her,
wrapping her arms around Clara in a gentle embrace, resting her chin
on Clara's shoulder.

CLARA

Lil, you're so advanced compared to us.
Why would you be interested in being
with someone like me?

LIL

(smiling)

We're all energy, and yours is an
incredible blend - outrageously
delicious. To you, it would be like
dining at the finest restaurant.

CLARA

I see. I'm sorry you can feel how
frustrated I am right now.

LIL

There's no point in getting upset with Richard or Margo 2.0. They'll go down their own paths. He'll keep upgrading her, they'll get bored eventually, and they'll part ways.

CLARA

(sighing)

I know. It's just... strange to see how we turn the final pages of important chapters of our lives like we're flipping through a book.

LIL

I must go now, my love.

CLARA

(turning, a hint of desperation)

Lil, please stay.

LIL

(softly)

I'm never too far away, you know. But for now... listen.

Clara's expression shifts to curiosity as she listens. The faint sound of footsteps echoes up the stairwell.

Lil smiles, then fades quietly into the air.

The door unlocks, and Greta steps in, her gaze falling on Clara with a warm, knowing smile.

CLARA

(surprised, emotional)

Greta. You came home.

GRETA

How could I not? I got this wonderful message of yours.

(she reads from her phone, teasingly)

"I never want to see ya again." And I thought to myself, "God, this girl must be madly in love with me."

They share a laugh, their voices filling the room with warmth, and embrace tightly.

CLARA

(softly, her voice trembling
with emotion)
How long are you staying?

GRETA
(tossing her keys on the table)
I guess I'm "never going away*"
(* spoken with a playful accent,
mimicking Ernst)

Clara bursts into laughter, tears welling up as relief and joy wash over her.

They gaze at each other, then draw close, sharing a deep, tender kiss.

THE END