

THE HOURS

Clarissa & Louis

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

CLARISSA is in the throes of preparing for the party. LOUIS KNOCKS on the door.

CLARISSA

Yes?

LOUIS

Clarissa? It's Louis. Louis Waters.

CLARISSA

Louis? Oh my God! You're early.

LOUIS

Do you mind? Is it alright?

He enters.

CLARISSA

Oh, why should I mind? I'm delighted!

LOUIS

Well, now! I feel like I'm interrupting.

CLARISSA

Oh, why? No!

LOUIS

I know the ceremony isn't until 5, but I flew in this morning.

CLARISSA

Oh! Well, Richard's going to be thrilled. He'll be thrilled to see you!

LOUIS

You think so?

CLARISSA

Of course. What are we doing? We should go in...

LOUIS

Are you alright?

CLARISSA

Yes. It's nothing. It's just the party.

LOUIS
Oh, right. Oh, wow, it's looking beautiful!

CLARISSA
Thanks.

LOUIS
Are you still with...?

CLARISSA
Yes, I am! Still with her. Ten years. It's crazy.

LOUIS
Why is it crazy?

CLARISSA
No reason... Would you like something to drink?

LOUIS
Some water.

CLARISSA
OK.

LOUIS
And you're still an editor?

CLARISSA
Oh, sure.

LOUIS
For the same publisher?

CLARISSA
Mhmm. How's San Francisco?

LOUIS
Oh, it's one of those cities people tell you to like.

CLARISSA
Richard said he thought you were happy out there.

LOUIS
Oh, great. So now the illness makes him psychic.

CLARISSA
You have to prepare yourself, Louis. He is very changed...

LOUIS
I read the book.

CLARISSA
Oh God.

LOUIS
Exactly! I thought you were meant
to do more than just change
people's names.

CLARISSA
Well...

LOUIS
Isn't it meant to be fiction? He
even had you living on 10th street.

CLARISSA
It isn't me.

LOUIS
Isn't it?

CLARISSA
You know how Richard is... it's a
fantasy.

LOUIS
A whole chapter on should she buy
some nail polish? And then guess
what? After 50 pages she doesn't.
The whole thing seems to go on for
eternity. Nothing happens and then,
wham! For no reason, she kills
herself.

CLARISSA
His mother kills herself.

LOUIS
Yeah, sure, his mother, but still
for no reason.

CLARISSA
Well, I think...

LOUIS
Out of the blue!

CLARISSA
I know the book is tough, but I
liked it. I know. Only one thing
upset me.

LOUIS
What's that? What upset you?

CLARISSA
Well, that there wasn't more about you.

LOUIS
That's kind. I went back to Wellfleet.

CLARISSA
You did?

LOUIS
One day. I didn't tell you?

CLARISSA
No, but, then, I never see you.

LOUIS
You remember the house... it's still there.

CLARISSA
I think you're courageous.

LOUIS
Courageous? Why?

CLARISSA
To dare go visit. What I mean is, to face the fact that we have lost those feelings forever.

She gets emotional.

LOUIS
Clarissa?

CLARISSA
Umm... I don't know what's happening. I'm sorry. I seem to be in some strange sort of mood. I'm sorry, it's very rude of me. I seem to be unravelling.

LOUIS
I shouldn't have come.

CLARISSA

No, it's not you, it's not you!
It's more like having a
presentiment, do you know what I'm
saying? Oh, God, it's probably just
nerves about the party. You know,
bad hostess.

LOUIS

Clarissa, what's happening?

CLARISSA

Jesus!

LOUIS

What is it?

CLARISSA

(crying)
Oh God. Oh!

LOUIS

Do you want me to go?

CLARISSA

No, don't go! Don't go. Explain to
me why this is happening.

He moves toward her.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Don't! Don't touch me. Jesus, it's
better if you don't. It's just too
much. You fly in from San
Francisco, and I've been nursing
Richard for years! And all the time
I held myself together, no problem.

LOUIS

I know.

CLARISSA

One morning in Wellfleet... you
were there, we were all there, I'd
been sleeping with him, and I was
out on the back porch. And he came
out behind me and put his hand on
my shoulder. "Good morning, Mrs.
Dalloway." From then on, I've been
stuck.

LOUIS

Stuck?

CLARISSA

Yeah. Yeah. With the name, I mean. And now you walk in. To see you walk in -- because I never see you -- look at you! Anyway, it doesn't matter. It was you he stayed with. It was you he lived with. I had one summer.

LOUIS

The day I left him, I got on a train and made my way across Europe. I felt free for the first time in years.

CLARISSA

So, tell me about San Francisco.

LOUIS

What's to tell? I still teach drama to idiots. Mostly.

CLARISSA

They can't all be idiots.

LOUIS

No, no. In fact I shouldn't tell you this... I've fallen in love.

CLARISSA

Really?

LOUIS

Yes. With a student.

CLARISSA

With a student?

LOUIS

Exactly. I know. You think, "Am I still up for this? All this intensity, all those arguments, doors being slammed?" But, you know, what it's like. Are you feeling better?

CLARISSA

A little. Thank you.

LOUIS

Do you think I'm ridiculous?

CLARISSA

Ridiculous? Fortunate, too.