THE HOURS

Clarissa & Richard
INT. APARTMENT - DAY

CLARISSA unlocks the door and enters holding a bouquet of flowers.

    RICHARD
Mrs. Dalloway. It's you!

    CLARISSA
Yes. It's me! It's me!

    RICHARD
Come in.

    CLARISSA
Oh, Richard, it's a beautiful morning! How about we let in a little more light?

She draws the curtains, makes her way over to RICHARD, who sits in a dark corner.

    RICHARD
It's still morning?

    CLARISSA
Yes, it is.

    RICHARD
Have I died? Good morning, my dear.

    CLARISSA
Any visitors?

Clarissa sets up the flowers and cleans as they talk.

    RICHARD
Yes.

    CLARISSA
Are they still here?

    RICHARD
No, they've gone.

    CLARISSA
How'd they look?

    RICHARD
Today? Sort of like black fire. Sort of light and dark at the same time. There was one that was an electrified jellyfish. There was singing. May have been Greek.
CLARISSA
So, the ceremony is at 5. Do you remember? And then... the party is right after. They did bring you breakfast, didn't they?

RICHARD
What a question... of course.

CLARISSA
Richard, you did eat it?

RICHARD
Well, can you see it? Is it here? Is there any breakfast lying around?

CLARISSA
No, I don't see it.

RICHARD
Well, then I must have eaten it, mustn't I?

CLARISSA
I suppose.

RICHARD
Does it matter?

CLARISSA
Of course it matters. You know what the doctors say. Have you been skipping pills?

RICHARD
Clarissa, I can't take this.

CLARISSA
Take what?

RICHARD
Trying be proud and brave in front of everybody.

CLARISSA
Oh honey, it's not a performance.

RICHARD
Of course it is! I got the prize for my performance.

CLARISSA
Well, that is nonsense.
RICHARD
I got the prize for having AIDS and going nuts and being brave about it! I actually got the prize for having come through!

CLARISSA
It's not true.

RICHARD
For surviving!

CLARISSA
It's not true!

RICHARD
That's what I got the prize for! Do you think they would have given it to me if I were healthy?!

CLARISSA
Yes, as a matter of fact I do!

RICHARD
Is it here somewhere?

CLARISSA
What?

RICHARD
The prize? I'd like to look at it.

CLARISSA
No, you haven't gotten it yet. It's tonight.

RICHARD
Are you sure? I remember the ceremony perfectly. I seem to have fallen out of time.

CLARISSA
Richard. Richard. It's a party. It's only a party. Populated entirely by people who respect and admire you.

RICHARD
Ha, small party, is it? Select party, is it?

CLARISSA
Your friends.
RICHARD
I thought I lost all my friends. I thought I drove my friends crazy. Oh, Mrs. Dalloway... always giving parties... to cover the silence.

CLARISSA
Richard... you won't need to do anything - all you have to do is appear... sit on the sofa. And I will be there. This is a group of people who wanna tell you your work is going to live.

RICHARD
Oh is it? Is my work going to live? I can't go through it, Clarissa.

CLARISSA
Why do you say that?

RICHARD
I can't!

CLARISSA
Why?

RICHARD
Because I wanted to be a writer, that's all.

CLARISSA
So?

RICHARD
I wanted to write about it all. Everything that happens in a moment. The way the flowers look when you carry them in your arms. This towel - how it smells, how it feels... it's thread. All our feelings, yours and mine. The history of it. Who we once were. Everything in the world. Everything all mixed up. Like it's all mixed up now. And I failed. I failed. No matter what you start with, it ends up being so much less. Sheer fucking pride. And stupidity. We want everything, don't we?

CLARISSA
I suppose we do.
RICHARD
You kissed me on a beach.

CLARISSA
Yeah.

RICHARD
Do you remember? How many years ago.

CLARISSA
Of course I do.

RICHARD
What did you want then? Come closer.

CLARISSA
I'm right here.

RICHARD
Come closer. Would you please? Take my hand. Would you be angry...

CLARISSA
Would I be angry if you didn't show up at the party?

RICHARD
Would you be angry if I died?

CLARISSA
If you died?

RICHARD
Who is this party for?

CLARISSA
What do you mean who's it for? Why are you asking? What are you trying to say?

RICHARD
I am not trying to say anything. I'm saying, I think I'm only staying alive to satisfy you.

CLARISSA
Well, so that is what we do. That is what people do - they stay alive for each other. The doctors told you - you don't need to die. They told you. You can live like this for years.
RICHARD
Well, exactly!

CLARISSA
I don't accept this. I don't accept what you say.

She grabs her things to leave.

RICHARD
Oh, and it's for you to decide, is it? How long have you been doing that? How many years... coming to the apartment... What about your own life? What about Sally? Just wait till I die, and you'll have to think of yourself. How are you going to like that?

CLARISSA
Richard... it would be great if you did come to the party, if you felt well enough to come. Just to let you know that I am making the crab thing, not that I imagine it makes any difference to you.

RICHARD
Of course it makes a difference, I love the crab thing. Clarissa!

CLARISSA
Yes...

She goes to him. They kiss.

CLARISSA (CONT’D)
I'll be back at 3.30 and will help you get dressed. Three thirty.

RICHARD
Wonderful!

She leaves.

RICHARD (CONT’D)
Wonderful.