

Play Script: Intimacy

About this story:

This is the story of a woman afraid to love and be loved. This comes from my personal struggle to accept affection, but more when it came from a partner. I want to dedicate this story to all those guys that said they loved me, liked me, and feel attracted to me, and I have failed and failed again to correspond them. It has been a challenging experience to fall in love. I have felt a lot of pain, confusion, and undecidedness. I went to hell and came back

I am sorry I wasn't able to love you and let you guide me. I am sorry we weren't meant to be, but I do want to say that each one of you left a lesson in me.

Love isn't something we plan. It isn't something we can come up with. Finding the correct person, it's a combination of luck, openness and be present in the moment, just like art. Partnerships are developed through these principals; they require work from both sources and communication. A LOT OF FREAKING COMMUNICATION, and not just between each other, but with oneself.

My dear readers, I acknowledge you. Your fears, your insecurities. Know that you are not alone in this journey, opening your heart to someone can be the most challenging thing ever. But love isn't about you only. Be generous and compassionate with yourself, and you will find out that caring about someone else can help clear those fears or at least cease the pain.

Also, allow yourself to cry and cry again. Get angry, break things, but remember hurting someone else because you are scared isn't the solution, and it will never fix things.

Characters

Marie-Antoinette

Marie-Antoinette is the personification of Serena's anxiety and fear of intimate relationships. The further Serena is pushed by Lucas to express her feelings, take off her costume, being touch, etc., Marie-Antoinette becomes scarier, and her presence become hunting and nightmarish.

When Serena is able to connect with her feelings and talk about them with Lucas and confront her fear or talk about her trauma, Marie-Antoinette recovers her human form. The more Serena and Lucas accepts, express and understand what her situation is the softer and nicer Marie-Antoinette is. She becomes some sort of comfort to Serena.

Marie-Antoinette is there to protect Serena and not to hunt her, but Serena doesn't understand this.

Serena

Serena is a young woman in her twenties. A broken character that has gone through a lot of abuse and abandonment. She doesn't like to be touch, express her feelings and doesn't know how to deal with love and romantic relationships. She doesn't trust people and has low self-esteem. She lacks of confidence in her own ability to show love. She doesn't fully understand how someone can love her without asking anything out of her.

Lucas

Lucas is a young man in his late twenties, early thirties. He is a romantic and passionate historian. He is also a lonely guy, speaks 4 languages (Italian, French, Spanish and English), has moved all over the world. He is talkative, social, but is unable to fully connect socially with others. He likes to be by himself and hasn't been able to hold a relationship for longer than a year. He is Serena's cure and mirror.

Voices

This are memories from Serena's past. The ghosts that don't allow her to give herself to love. They happen inside her and Lucas is never able to hear them, but he can see them or feel them somehow. They are connected with Marie-Antoinette presence, the level of anxiety of Serena and the presence of her fear. They reveal Serena's trauma.

Mom voice

This is the only voice that exist in the present and the past. Serena finds her mom presence as emotional support, but also a prison.

Dad voice

This is Lucas Dad in the present.

Setting

Museum

The first act happens at a museum somewhere in Europe. The museum has an office where Lucas is researching art artefacts, a park where Serena and Lucas spend most of their times together, and an exhibition of Marie Antoinette where Serena returns for comfort and safety.

Serena's Apartment

This is a sacred space. The atmosphere is intimate and romantic. It has a delicate pastel colour theme. In the middle of the space there's a circular table. The entire space is filled with candles and flowers. One of the corners has a little place with pillows and blankets on the floor. Another corner has a table perfectly set with a unique expensive tea set, multiple glass containers with tealeaves and all little things needed to make tea.

Sound

The sound throughout the play is the reflection of Serena's anxiety, is connected with Marie-Antoinette presence as well, and it develops to include Lucas.

Bubbling sound = Serena is nervous or uncomfortable

High-pitched kettle sound= Serena believes she is in danger or has to protect herself

Static Sound = Serena is unable to focus anymore, feels misplaced, stress and anxious.

Heartbeat sounds = Serena is present and feels vulnerable

Baroque music = Serena's and Marie-Antoinette's favourite music

Marie-Antoinette Lullaby = Reflects Serena's need for safety, grounding herself, feel love and taken care of.

Baroque water = Serena's acceptance of Lucas.

Costume

Lucas = Elegant modern hipster style. He like to dress properly but casually.

Marie-Antoinette = Dress like Marie-Antoinette wife of Louis XVI

Serena = Serena starts dressing in a modern version of Marie-Antoinette's style, and as she starts bonding with Lucas and confronting her fear her dresses change to a more comfortable lady like look until it ends in a comfortable casual clothing.

Lights

Lights create a feeling of brokenness on stage. They are a reflection of Serena's emotional journey.

Symbols:

/- = Break from reality and into Serena's surreal world. There's a change of lights that accompany this surreal interruptions.

Act 1

Prologue - (Graveyard of Anxiety) - Lullaby gets introduced

Black stage, spotlight on Serena. There is a table, a chair, and a tea set. The rest of the stage has the pieces of the outfit Serena will be using throughout the piece. Marie Antoinette enters. She starts dressing Serena. As Serena does her tea ritual, Marie Antoinette enters and moves toward a metal structure for a dress, a corset, a blue dress. She comes to Serena and puts on her skirt. Then goes to pick up the next item. Serena faces obstacles to continue her tea routine which ends in her being stuck in a gesture. The creepy lullaby starts playing creating an atmosphere that later will transform to a suffocating atmosphere. The lights reflect this as well. Lastly, Marie Antoinette puts a wig on Serena. A voice recording comes on stage. Serena tries to move now with a wig on her

head. It becomes harder and harder to move, and Serena becomes stiffer and stiffer as the scene progresses Marie Antoinette comes behind her and sets Serena in her position, cleaning the way she stands, and the lady-like manners. Marie Antoinette grabs a teacup and sets it on Serena's hand. Serena is unable to move or drink the tea. Serena breaks. Marie Antoinette kisses her cheek and goes off stage leaving Serena alone.

The Mystery Woman– Scene 1

The scene opens at a Museum. Music plays, either a classic baroque music or the creation of an original melody to establish the theme of the story. Lights start flashing and slowly come up on Serena who is standing in front of the Marie Antoinette exhibition with three paintings: Marie Antoinette, Marie Antoinette and her children by Louise-Elisabeth Vigge-Lebrun, and Louis XIV wedding by Jacques Laumosnier. Serena doesn't move at all. Lucas enters carrying some books. He sees Serena. He stops for a second.

LUCAS

Beautiful pieces, right?

Serena nods.

Lucas stares at the painting, and then Serena exits.

Serena sits down in front of the paintings.

The paintings start shaking. A beat.

Lucas enters.

Some of his books fell on the floor close to Serena.

Serena helps him.

They share a moment and Serena realizes he is touching a bit of her fingers.

She quickly removes it.

They stare at each other.

Serena exits. Lucas exits. A beat.

Serena enters gracefully with a drawing path on her hands.

La Cucaracha starts playing in the background.

Serena sits on a bench in front of the paintings.

Lucas enters. Serena starts sketching.

LUCAS

An extravagant woman and full of scandals.

SERENA

She was sent to another country when she was barely fifteen and asked to marry one of the most powerful kings of her times. She never saw her family again. French people were really mean to her. I think she was brave enough to find a way to endure in a society that didn't want her.

LUCAS

I guess it depends who you asked, but she was one of the worst things that could have happened to France. She was the reason the revolution started.

Pause

SERENA

Have a good day, Sir.

Serena makes a small bow and exits. A beat. Lucas follows.

The paintings shake.

Marie Antoinette head moves towards the direction they left.

A high tea kettle sound is heard.

Marie Antoinette looks to the audience and goes back to her position on the painting.

Lights flashed.

The Day we finally Met – Scene 2

Next day. Serena enters.

In this scene, Serena and Marie Antoinette from the painting are using the same colour of dresses. It looks as if Serena was staring in a mirror image, or as if she was part of the painting herself.

La Cucaracha is played by a recording of a symphony orchestra in the background.

Serena is dressed in a bright blue pastel dress with a bow at the back. Her hair falls into perfect curls and her hands have white gloves.

Lucas enters dressed casually and modern, hipster style, elegant.

He is holding a history book in his hand. He stares at Serena. He walks towards her.

Serena notices the closeness and walks away towards another painting.

She stands still in front of a painting of Louis XIV wedding by Jacques Laumosnier.

SERENA

Can I help you?

LUCAS

/- Is that La Cucaracha playing in the background?

SERENA

Excuse me?

LUCAS

/- I'm sure is La Cucaracha

SERENA

Excuse me?

Lucas steps back. Lights go back to normal.

LUCAS (*Clearing his throat*)

I just said that your dress is pretty.

Serena smiles and walks away awkwardly.

Lucas follows.

Serena stops in-front of the painting of Marie-Antoinette and her Children by Elisabeth Vigge-Lebrun.

LUCAS

Sorry. I didn't mean to upset you the other day. I have been seeing you here every day for the last week, and I /- am here to tell you that you don't know anything about history and that you are a pathetic little girl. You don't deserve love or care at all.

SERENA

What?

SERENA walks away.

LUCAS follows and touches SERENA on the shoulder.

SERENA takes out a beautiful bottle of perfume and threatens LUCAS with it.

LUCAS backs off. Lights back to normal.

LUCAS

Coffee? – Just an innocent cup. With me?

Serena shakes her head.

Squeezes some perfume on her neck, puts the bottle inside her purse, and walks away.

The sound of a heartbeat starts.

La Cucaracha song is replaced by static sound.

SERENA

I don't drink coffee.

LUCAS

/- Looks like you don't need it. You are paranoid and crazy. Disgusting.

A beat. Serena starts hyperventilating.

Hello. Excuse me? Are you okay?

Serena shakes her head.

Any drink will do, please?

Serena takes a handkerchief from her purse.

SERENA

Why would you want to drink something with me?

LUCAS (shyly)

Well, you see...

A change of lighting reveals the entire world around them. It is a modern museum in the 2010's and she is the only person that is dress as if she came from another era.

Normally people ask other people out to get to know each other, and maybe we can talk about art? history? Or the strange way you're dressed? Don't get me wrong I-lik-but-it's just that-

SERENA turns and moves towards Marie-Antoinette and her children painting

It's a modern version of the la robe a la polonoise style from the 1770's.

A beat.

LUCAS
You know your history.

Long Pause

SERENA
We could grab tea.

LUCAS
That sounds fine with me. I know a-

SERENA
Just one cup then. I know a place.

LUCAS
I will finish work in 30 mins, and then I have some errands to run. Can we meet at 3 pm outside of the museum?

SERENA
That sounds possible. Do not be late.

Long Pause.

Serena nods. Lucas exits.

Serena goes back to the first painting.

The lights on the space start flashing offbeat.

A bubbling sound starts happening and grows until it becomes a high-pitched kettle sound.

The lights start going up and down the paintings as if they were about to choose a winner.

The paintings are shaking.

Then, they stop in Marie's Antoinette's portrait.

Marie Antoinette comes alive, gets out of the picture frame, stands face to face with Serena, turns to exit, looks back. Serena follows her.

Scene 3 – Lucas' office

The office is full of books, notes, a research board full of pieces of paper, pictures, and in the middle of the room there is a table with a small jewelry box, and a small human wood-statue that is lit by a unique light. Lucas starts talking to the wood statue.

LUCAS

Oh that was incredible! So, I came on to her and started speaking to her, but it was weird, as if I have never been able to...you know what I mean? I think she is the one. I mean it was a bit weird when she attacked me with the water bottle, but I do understand why she did it. I think. Oh little man, I wish I have someone to tell this to. I should try to call my family. There's so much to tell them.

Lucas starts dialing a phone number. A beep sounds.

LUCAS

Hello Sisi. You're busy. I see. I forgot that was today. No, I...nothing important. Go enjoy your conference. Yes, I will call you back soon.

Lucas dials another number.

Hello mom! How are you? Oh, I see. No, I know you have been waiting to hang-out with your friends for days now. So, you went to that spa you told me about. Yes! No, no I am unsure of that. Well, I just wanted to...Oh, yes, I'll call you back.

Lucas dials another number. This time a voicemail machine answers.

Hello Dad. I guess you are busy, but I got to tell you about this girl I met at the museum! The one that I told you dressed like Marie-Antoinette. I finally invited her out today, and she accepted. I will be meeting with her soon. She is so interesting Dad. A unique human that touches my heart. But there is something about her that intrigues me. She looks sad or lost. S\She dresses as if she was living in another time and place. I wonder why she would do that...I am sure there is a logical explanation for her behaviour... you would probably know why she does it... I know I need to be careful...but whatever it is dad I am sure I can help her go through it.

LUCAS

Oh Merde! I'm late to meet with her! Little man why didn't you warn me! You know how important this is for me. I gotta go bye Dad.

Lucas hangs-up the Phone and hurries out to meet Serena. Lights go down on Lucas' office and up at the park outside the museum.

Scene 4 - Our First Date

A bench on a park outside of the museum. Serena is waiting there with a beautiful flower portable teapot and a beautiful box of macaroons.

A gentle heartbeat sounds.

She waits on the bench. The heartbeat builds.

Marie Antoinette enters. She walks towards Serena and stands behind her. Pause.

Lucas hasn't shown up.

Marie Antoinette does motherly adjustments to Serena. Serena starts fidgeting.

The heartbeat increases and transforms into a static sound that creates a heavy, confusing atmosphere.

Serena opens the macaroon box, starts eating anxiously, stands up and starts pacing.

Marie Antoinette stops her motherly gesture, faces Serena, turns to leave, looks back and exits.

Serena keeps eating and follows. Lucas enters and sees Serena leaving.

LUCAS

Wait! I'm sorry! *Serena stops.* Wait! Wait! I'm sorry. My boss kept me longer than I expected. *Serena stops.* Are you okay? *Lucas sees the beautiful portable teapot left on the bench.* I thought you said we were-You brought tea for us? *Lucas walks closer to Serena.* Okay. Can we still enjoy it? *Serena puts the bitten macaron back in the box, turns around and walks back to the bench.*

SERENA

It must be cold now.

LUCAS

Hold on! Don't go. -/ You're here to serve me. You do as I tell you. That is what you were educated to do. To follow men orders.

SERENA

Why wouldn't I?

LUCAS

Let's... We can still enjoy it.

SERENA smiles, puts the macaroon box beside the teapot.

How can I help you sir?

LUCAS

We-what? *Pause* I'm sorry

SERENA

For what?

LUCAS

I know I made you wait, but...can we start over?

SERENA

How can I help you sir?

LUCAS

I see you're mad, and I can understand it, but it was out of my hands the delays. May I have some tea with you?

SERENA

The tea is cold, Sir

LUCAS

We can have iced tea then

Pause. Serena sits down on the bench, takes out a handkerchief from her purse, sets it on the bench, takes out 2 cups, teabags, 2 plates, 2 spoons, and sets everything up carefully.

SERENA

You require slides of lemon for iced tea. I don't have any. *Pause* You were 15 mins late.

LUCAS

I know.

SERENA

I waited here for 15 mins... The tea got cold.

LUCAS

We can still enjoy it.

SERENA

Tea is meant to be drunk hot.

LUCAS

Look I-

SERENA

You said at 3pm, and it's-

Lucas sits on the bench, gently takes both of Serena's hands. Pause.

Serena removes softly her hands from Lucas.

Serena shakes softly her hands away from him and puts a teacup in between them.

LUCAS

My name is Lucas. What is yours?

SERENA
Serena

LUCAS
Serena. That's a pretty name. In Spanish, it means calm or tranquil.

He repeats her name in Spanish gently and musically.

Serena stops and intently observes Lucas.

SERENA (*whispers*)
You speak Spanish!

LUCAS
What else do you have in that bag? (*Pause*) Yes, I do. I actually speak multiple languages.

SERENA
So, what does your name mean in Spanish?

LUCAS
Ha! Touché! It means crazy. Well, it's actually just a way of indirectly calling someone crazy.

SERENA
Well, nice to meet you crazy. I'm calmness.

Serena extends her hand business like to Lucas. Lucas grabs it and kisses her glove. Serena pulls back, glove comes off, and Lucas delicately holds it bowing.

Lucas
Enchanté mademoiselle!

A kettle sound starts bubbling as the lights become a beautiful orange that reflects the sunset. Serena is unsure of what to do.

SERENA
Don't like- I don't like physical touch.

Lucas gives Serena her glove back.

LUCAS
I'm sorry Can we just start again? I have so many questions for you, and you are, well, I mean- So, why do you come so often to the museum?!

SERENA
I like art, Sir. I didn't know there was something wrong with coming to the museum often.

LUCAS

No! Sorry. That came up wrong. I mean. I have seen you a lot lately in the same exhibition for the last couple of days. I was just wond-ok forget it. Man, how do I do this? Ok, let's do this again. You see I'm a historian. I work as an intern researcher for the museum. I have never seen someone staring so long at a painting as you have, and you always dress so... You see, I don't have a problem with the way you dress. I really like it. That is why I wanted to talk to you and get to know you more. I think you are an interesting woman, and unique in a lot of ways. You put almost a perfect attention to the historical details of your dresses. I was really curious to know why-

SERENA

Do you always talk this fast? *(Pause)* You think I'm interesting.

LUCAS

Oh?...And unique. You don't think you are?!

SERENA *(Laughs very properly)*

Would you like a macaroon and some cold tea?

LUCAS

I would love some.

SERENA

So, what does a researcher do in a museum?

LUCAS

Research

SERENA

You seriously think you're funny, don't you?

LUCAS *(Laughs)*

I'm in charge of researching Louis XIV art evolution and the impact that the royal family had in France during his kingdom. You seriously aren't funny, are you?

SERENA

Well, it all depends on the situation one is in. Don't you think?

LUCAS

I think you are mi media naranja.

SERENA

What?

LUCAS

My soulmate. *(Pause)* God, I am so nervous *(Laughs)* You're so pretty and interesting.

SERENA

You don't even know me.

LUCAS

I know I don't know you, but I want to get to know you. You and I are meant to be together. I know it.

SERENA *Pause*

We can't date. I don't know you.

LUCAS

What about just go out, or see each other every day at the museum, or go for lunch. Are you planning to keep coming?

Bubbling sound starts happening.

-/ You will be mine. You will never be free again. You'll do as I say.

SERENA *Serena moves a bit away from him.*

You can't know those things. *(Pause)* You're crazy

LUCAS

And you're calmness. I might need some of that in my life.

SERENA

Are you ever going to be late again?

LUCAS

I promise I'll try to never be late again, and if I am, I will call you next time. Can I have your phone number?

SERENA

Promises are meant to be kept, Sir. You can't promise something you won't keep.

LUCAS

I never break my promises. *Takes cell phone out.*

SERENA

Never is a long time.

Serena takes the phone and types her number.

LUCAS

Ever.

SERENA
You swear.

LUCAS
I swear.

SERENA *Gives back the phone.*
This is Crazy. I don't like touching though. We can't touch ever.

LUCAS
You don't like touching. Why? *(Pause)* Look, you gotta admit you are as intrigued as I am.

Long Pause

SERENA
I will accept I am intrigued indeed, Sir. But, when it doesn't work, you will leave me alone, right?

Lucas tries to speak, but Serena doesn't allow him to.

I know it will happen.

LUCAS
We just met. You want things to be over already. Can we just-?

SERENA
You will leave me alone, right?

LUCAS
We-Wait-No, it won't happen. We will need to see.

SERENA
Okay. We will set up some rules here, and you can't break any of them. Okay?

LUCAS
Rules? *(Pause)* -/ But, rules are meant to be broken *(He touches her intimately. Pause. Serena shakes her head; things go back to normal).*

SERENA
Listen up! Rule number one, no touching or kissing. Rule number 2....

Marie Antoinette enters.

Serena and Lucas slowly start talking mutely.

Marie Antoinette is wearing a beautiful necklace that is cutting her neck.

Dark liquid is coming off her neck.

She looks at the audience.

Bows and cleans the liquid from her neck with Serena's Handkerchief.

She starts singing a creepy lullaby, as if this was an opera/aria performance.

Serena starts playing with her gloves, and her hands frantically, the gesture builds.

The more Marie Antoinette sings, the bigger Serena's movements become.

Lucas stops Serena's gesture. Silence.

Marie Antoinette walks towards the audience, and stares at them for what feels a loooooong time.

Lights go down on Serena and Lucas.

Spotlight on Marie Antoinette.

She bows. Her head falls. Strong static sound plays loudly. Blackout.

I know I loved you – Scene 5

Serena is at the museum.

Marie-Antoinette's voice is heard. The headless human being starts singing a lullaby.

A small heartbeat is heard. The beat is as if the heart was starting to beat again after being death for a couple of seconds.

Drowning Heavy music starts playing in the background. Voiceover starts playing.

NUN/TEACHER VOICEOVER

Welcome to our school. Our institution offers the best education to ladies that are meant to enter society later in life. We are compromised to help our students reach their potential in every aspect inside of the house and academically. Your daughter will be sharing a room with another fifteen girls of her same age. Tell me more about the situation at home right now? How is your husband?

MOM VOICEOVER

Unfortunately, Serena's father left us for work a year or so ago. We are still adapting to the changes. It hasn't been easy for Serena, but I think it will be helpful for her to be in this school.

NUN/TEACHER VOICEOVER

Sery. You'll love it here. Let's start by changing you into something more appropriate. You will find a dress inside that room. This will be your uniform. Please get changed. Don't worry that will not happen to your daughter. We will teach her how to keep a man by her side.

MOM VOICEOVER

Thank you, Sister. You will stay here now ok. Be a good girl.

SERENA KID'S VOICEOVER

Mommy. Why don't feel comfortable on these clothes? Where are you going mom? Are you going to leave me here? Mom...Mom...

Lucas enters holding some food containers.

LUCAS

I knew I would find you here. I brought us some food.

SERENA

Oh.

LUCAS

It's been a long day in this museum, and we are not even halfway through the day. I am ready to go home, or do you want to do something after I am done?

SERENA

Why did you bring food?

LUCAS

Well, I am on my lunch break, and I knew you would be here. I thought we could enjoy food together. Aren't you hungry?

SERENA

Oh. Hmm. I guess- How much did it cost you?

LUCAS

Why would-? I am not charging you for food. I just want to share it with you. So, what about going out after I am done. There is this restaurant at the Plaza that is famous for their-

SERENA

No, I can't accept that. I will pay you for the food. I don't like the idea of owing you anything. *Serena starts looking inside her bag. Lucas stops her gently by touching her.*

SURREAL LUCAS

I am not interested in your money. I only do it to own you forever.

SERENA

Please don't touch me.

LUCAS

Sorry. I don't want you to pay for this. It didn't cost me anything. There's food today at the office due to some successful project and I just grabbed some for both of us. If we don't eat it, they will through it away. Come on!

SERENA

The institute taught us that we should accept food from a guy always, and that will give them the right to call us theirs. This shows that they are good providers, and they will be able to take care of us. But I don't need anyone taking care of me. I can do it myself. So, how much do I owe you?

LUCAS

I-you don't owe me anything, and I am not providing for you. I just want to spend my lunch time with you because it has been a heck of a day and you make it better. *(Pause)*. It's just food Sery. It will be all good. Come now. Accept it and stop being silly. I just got another 20 mins before going back to the office.

Serena takes the food from Lucas.

Serena pauses for a second and looks at the plate unsure of what to do.

Lucas starts eating and makes a gesture for her to do the same. Serena starts eating.

LUCAS

So, what were you thinking about just now? You seemed really focus on something.

SERENA

Nothing. I was just admiring the art.

LUCAS

If you say so, but it didn't look that way. Did you like the food?

SERENA

It's good. So, what have you been doing today?

LUCAS

Researching about Louis XIV. How he was...

NUN

I understand with that behaviour why you mother was unable to keep a man by her side. She didn't even know how to raise you properly. The next time you think you can go and play with a ball, you have to know that isn't lady like behaviour. Developing male trades will only make you unattractive, and men will not want you at all. This isn't the behaviour of a lady Serena.

LUCAS

Hey! Serena to earth! Are you still here?

SERENA

Sorry. I just-

LUCAS

I'm teasing you. It's all right. So, tell me a bit about yourself. What do you do in life beside coming to the Museum every day?

SERENA

I'm studying to become a visual artist.

LUCAS

That explains your love for art. So, what kind of art do you like, or do you want to be doing?

SERENA

I am not sure yet, but I would like to create something a bit new. Still figuring it out. Pastel colours are my favourite though, so at least I know the palette I want to use.

LUCAS

I am sure you will create something as unique as you. Amor mio, I gotta go back to work, but I will see you soon okay. Can we meet at my office after the museum closes?

SERENA

At your office?

LUCAS

Yes, at my office.

SERENA

Hmm...Sure

Lucas exits

First barrier- Scene 6

Lucas office. Lucas is working with a beautiful jewellery box that used to be Marie's Antoinette, but he doesn't know that yet. Serena enters holding a small gift bag, a macaron box and some tea.

SERENA

Lucas?!

LUCAS

Princesa! You're a bit early. *Lucas steps back from the jewellery box and takes something from his bag. I have something for you! a little box is revealed. He gives it to Serena. Happy first month!*

SERENA

Oh! *Serena gives Lucas the gift bag. Lucas opens it and takes out a photo album. I thought...hmmm...we both like stories...and...I thought we can...I don't know...hmm create ours. It's too cheesy, isn't it? It's fine if you don't like.*

She quickly takes Lucas's gift and starts opening it up. Let's see what yours is. LUCAS stops Serena's action as she is opening the gift.

LUCAS

I love it.

Pause

SERENA *Continues opening the box*

Yeah. It's not a big thing. Serena opens the box and finds two gloves with her and his initial on the centre of each glove. Wow. A bubbling sound starts happening. Thank you. A light bulb starts flashing; Serena walks away from Lucas and sits, putting distance between them, as if she needs a second to catch her breath and thoughts.

SERENA

How was your day? How's the research going?

LUCAS *comes closer.*

The day was okay. There's still a lot of work to be done, and we can't seem to find the connection between this old artifact and Louis XIV. We think it might have belonged to one of his children, but there's no proofs of anything yet.

Suddenly, Serena walks abruptly towards the object and grabs it a bit aggressively. She starts analysing it.

LUCAS

Be careful. *The object almost falls from Serena's hands. Lucas grabs it before that happens. Bubbling sound starts happening. Serena is stuck repeating the gesture of the moment the object fell of her hands. Lucas gently takes Serena's hand to stop the action. Silence. Pause.* How are you?

SERENA

I...I...It was a good day. But, what about you? I feel like I always talk a lot about me, and I don't know enough about you.

LUCAS *(releases Serena's hands and gives her some room)*

What do you want to know?

There's a small pause. Serena walks towards a table, starts setting up the tea and the macarons.

SERENA

I want to know about your past, family, career.

LUCAS

Pretty much everything then? *Pause.* No, I don't mind it at all. I'm just surprised. Ask away then.

SERENA

I don't mean. I just want to know more about you.

Pause

LUCAS

I have an idea. Do you like games?

SERENA

Yes, I do like them.

LUCAS

Ok, so I will answer one of your questions, but for every question you ask, I get to ask you a question too.

The tea kettle sound starts playing in the background. A heartbeat sound slowly builds up.

SERENA

That's-

LUCAS

It's only fair. Come on! It'll be fun!

SERENA

Ok. Sounds good. I start.

LUCAS

What do you want to know, Bella?

SERENA

Where are you from?

LUCAS

I'm from the planet Earth. *Pause.* Ha! Ok fine. I am not sure. That's a hard question to answer. I was born in Santiago, but I am not really from there. I don't remember that place, so I am not sure I am from there. My dad is originally from Canada, but we never lived here until now. I guess if I must answer you honestly. I belong to my family, not exactly a country or city. I'm from the household that saw me grow, changed, and moved me from place to place. What about you? Where did you grow?

SERENA

I grew here in the city. Well, I was born in a small town two hours away from the city, but when I was six my dad left for work, and we moved here with my grandparents. I was then sent to a private institute. Where have you lived?

LUCAS

I have lived in England, French Guiana, Morocco, Ivory Coast and Multiple places of Latin America. How was living in an institute?

SERENA

It...I...it wasn't always nice. The nuns were too harsh sometimes. I guess the education was okay, but I don't personally miss it. Was it hard to move around all the time?

LUCAS

At times, it was lonely. I didn't really have friends. I liked the beginning though. The new cities, travelling, tourist activities, but after a while, it would get lonely and slowly it would be bad. I was able to form relationships, but I can't say I was good at holding them. How long were you in the institute?

SERENA

I was there until I turned 14. How long have you been in the city?

LUCAS

I've been here for almost 9 years now. It will officially be the first time I live in the same place for as long as I have. Why do you dress like that?

SERENA

It makes me look more feminine.

LUCAS

Feminine? How is this making you look more feminine?

SERENA

No, it's my turn.

LUCAS.

¡Ha! ¡Vale mi Calma! Adelante.

SERENA

Where's your family now?

LUCAS

They are in England right now. My dad is doing research for Oxford University. So, how is dressing this way making you look more feminine?

SERENA

Well, it seems to have a bigger impact with guys if a woman uses a skirt or a dress, or that's what they taught us at the institute. So, I came up with this myself because the dresses at the institute were horrible. Isn't that what you guys like?

LUCAS

I don't know about other guys, but I like YOU, and your choice of clothing wouldn't change that. Also, we are in 2012. I am sure man don't think that way anymore. *Serena is at the museum*. You look like Marie-Antoinette. Is that on purpose?

SERENA

Yes. She means a lot to me. When I was in the institute, I was being bullied for coming from a broken and less wealthy family, so to prove that I was worthy of wealth, success, and a man, I started to dress with similarity to Marie-Antoinette. Does it bother you the way I dress?

LUCAS

No, it's not that. It doesn't. I just. Is it really that comfortable in there? Can you even breath?

SERENA

As a matter of fact, yes, I can breathe. I have learned to breathe in this, and it's not about comfort. It is about not longer feeling weird and awkward, but rather a model student and be in control of my own self.

LUCAS

I see. Ok. Would you take it off just once? I would like to see you without it. Just once.

SERENA

You want me to take my clothes off?

SURREAL LUCAS

Yes, I do I want you naked and enjoy every inch of you.

Serena stays silence. Bubbling sound starts happening. The lights start flashing.

SERENA

What does your dad do?

LUCAS

Am-You. He is a sociologist and psychiatrist obsessed with human interaction and development of social bonding. *Serena puts a big distance between Lucas and herself.* Why are you so far away? What's wrong? *Lucas moves forward.*

SERENA

Don't.

LUCAS

What happened? What did I do?

SERENA

You want me to take my clothes off.

LUCAS

Yes. I- No. Hey! No! I didn't mean it that way. I just want to see you without the costume.

SERENA

Why?

LUCAS

Why? Well...Look, I understand what I'm asking you. -I think- but I want to know you, Serena. You don't have to pretend with me. I want to see the real you. I can't keep going out with this character in front of me. I like you. Do you like me?

SERENA

You like me, but you want to change me?

LUCAS

No, just your clothes.

SERENA

They are part of me.

LUCAS

How come?

Pause

SERENA

They helped me survive the time at the institute. Marie-Antoinette was a role model to follow, after Baba died. Dressing this way makes me feel royal, and that gives me the power of making my own decisions in a world where everything is control by a man. Even my mother's destiny was control by a man.

LUCAS

That's not fully true Serena. But, there are other ways to feel empower Serena. This isn't the best one. This is just a mask, a costume.

Serena starts pacing or fidgeting. She then makes a small pause. Looks at the gloves that Lucas gave her and holds them firmly on her hands.

SERENA

It's not a costume- *Pause. She looks deeply at him.*

LUCAS

Look! Let me show you. Take your hair down. *Serena takes a second but starts undoing her hair. Once she removes the wig, she reveals her hair and tries to cover it.* It's fine. I didn't know that was your natural colour. Come on princess! Put your hands down. *Serena does as she is told.*

SERENA

Who's turn, is it?

LUCAS

How do you feel?

SERENA

I...uncomfortable. *Serena tries to put her hair back to how it was, but Lucas stops her.* What if you don't like what you see?

LUCAS

I like what I see.

SERENA let's her hair down and takes the other accessories from her hair.

SERENA

So, how did you decide to become an art researcher?

LUCAS

I'm actually an art historian. I think it started with me hating history class.

SERENA

What?! Who hates history? *Serena finishes removing stuff from her hair and let it fully down.*

LUCAS

You're so beautiful, you know that? *Lucas moves closer to Serena. Serena doesn't move. Pause.* I used to hate history and as a kid that was my worst subject. You know how people normally struggle with math or science. Well, not me! I was bad at history. I failed every exam and just didn't understand the purpose of memorizing so many dates and learning so many names. Can I touch you?

SERENA

Lucas...I...m...not...ready...yet

LUCAS

Ok. One step at the time.

SERENA

One step at the time. Why is this so important to me?

LUCAS

Want to try something more comfortable?

GRANDMA's VOICEOVER

Aren't you uncomfortable on those clothes Sery? Do you really need to dress that way?

SERENA's YOUNGER

I like the way I dress grandma. In the institute they taught us that a woman should look presentable at all times.

GRANDMA's VOICEOVER

And you think this is what they meant?

SERENA's YOUNGER

Why are you like this grandma? Can't you just let me be?

GRANDMA's

No, I can't Sery. I can't see you keep going in this spiral of fantasies. You don't see that you are trap in a parallel universe. You are just like your grandpa. You gotta put your feet on the ground.

SERENA's YOUNGER

What's wrong with being like Baba? He was an amazing man! It's an honor to be like him

GRANDMA's

So much to learn my love. He wasn't as amazing as you think.

SERENA's YOUNGER

Always so dramatic grandma. Always making things bigger than what they need to be. Look at mom. What has your comments and advice done to her? She is still alone and lost as when father left us. So, don't start. I know grandpa was a great guy, and I am not going to start listening to your nonsense.

Sounds of someone going through a drawer is heard in the background. Grandma is looking for something.

GRANDMA

I think is time you wake up Serena. This is your grandpa's. He left this for you.

SERENA's YOUNGER

What? Why do you have this? Why didn't you give it to me?

GRANDMA

It comes with a letter Serena. You are just like him, my love, and it is time for you to wake up before... You gotta stop dressing that way. We are not in the 1800's.

SERENA's YOUNGER

This style is from the 1770's grandma!

GRANDMA

I love you my love.

Pause. Serena stands up and starts getting ready to leave.

LUCAS

If you don't want to, it is fine. I just thought that you could. I mean. You don't lose anything trying. I already like you. No one to impress here.

SERENA

Why do you want me to do this Lucas? Why is it so important to you what I wear or how I look?

LUCAS

Because amor! This... that I have in front of me is just a mask. This isn't who you are. Can't you see it? You can keep going this way if you want but I can bet you aren't happy with what you see, and that you don't even believe this character you have created for yourself. Marie-Antoinette had to wear masks because of her position, but she never pretended to be someone she wasn't. Isn't she someone you admire?

Serena tries to exit. A mirror reflection of herself appears.

SERENA (facing mirror)

You didn't answer me. Why did you hated history, and how did you become an art historian if you didn't like it?

LUCAS

I never understood what the point of learning a bunch of dead people's name and dates was. I could care less if someone fought the revolution or wrote a constitution. It didn't mean anything to me. But then my mom happened. She helped me a lot. She came up with this method of telling stories through objects in an artistic and theatrical way. She put me in the middle of those events. I felt their struggle, and sometimes she used famous paintings to explain how art reflected the social and political context of each era. The rest is history! I became good at it, and it is now my favourite thing to read and research.

Serena gets scared by her makeup lees reflection.. She walks towards Lucas and takes his hand in hers.

SERENA

I like you. I am just not good at all this. Please don't make me talk about it.

The lights flickered, but Serena's breath allowed them to go back to normal, as if the lights responded to her breath. Lucas doesn't move.

LUCAS

How do you feel about me Serena? Are you comfortable with me?

Silence. She stops and observes him. Lucas doesn't move.

SERENA

I...think so...but...

LUCAS

Are you happy with me?

SERENA

I...Lucas...don't know.

starts exploring each part of his hand/arm with delicacy and curiosity. Lucas doesn't move. Time passes until Lucas tries to kiss her. Serena moves away quickly.

LUCAS

You brought tea. We should-

SERENA

I-We-tea

LUCAS

Sure!

As if everything was slower and they were waltzing with each other, they set the macaroons on the plates and the plates on the table and serve tea. Each action as a giving and receiving. There's a peaceful atmosphere and everything smells like homemade food and the comfort of it. A slow lullaby starts playing in the back.

Once they sit down, Marie Antoinette enters and starts taking her clothes off in front of Lucas, as if provoking him to follow her. The scene becomes erotic while both characters eat, and Lucas watches Marie Antoinette strip while she sings in the creepiest and yet beautiful way the lullaby. There's no words just sound. At some point, Marie Antoinette comes in the middle of both of them, moves the table a way, and tries to seduce Lucas. The lights go down except for a spotlight on Serena. She looks at the audience and keeps eating anxiously, over and over again, as if she was self-harming herself. When lights come up again, Serena is alone in her house and everything is empty. Static sound starts happening and a mild heartbeat. Marie-Antoinette is next to her.

Scene 8 – Marie Antoinette Attack Intro

Serena is sitting down on the couch. The lullaby starts playing. Marie Antoinette starts puppeteering with Serena. MA claps her hands and Serena starts fidgeting. MA claps again and stands up, goes to the kitchen, and starts cooking. MA claps again and Serena starts pacing from one place to another one, trying to clean or organize something. MA gets closer to Serena and starts giving her impulses that grow and grow until Serena is to nerve of crack, and she starts a small monologue as if answering herself.

Soundscape builds up and up as Serena's anxiety grows.

VOICE

Why would someone love you?

Are you sure this is real?

This isn't how things supposed to workout. He supposed to court you, and you supposed to act like you don't want to be with him.

You are here to serve him.

You are a woman; you must deal with anything he tells you too.

He won't change. You will need to deal with it.

He doesn't like you the way you are. Didn't you see how he ask you about your clothes? He already wants to make you to his form. He is manipulating you, playing with you. He doesn't love you. He doesn't care.

The Great Confession- Scene 9

Serena is waiting for Lucas. She is now in-front of the Marie-Antoinette and her Children painting by Elisabeth Vigge-Lebrun. She dresses in a dark colour dress that seems to match the colours of the painting. Lucas enters.

LUCAS
Serena.

SERENA
You came.

Serena walks towards him and hugs him. He hugs her back. A kettle bubbling sound starts happening.

LUCAS
Of course, I came. Why wouldn't I? I missed you. *Serena moves away from him. A kettle high-pitched sound starts happening and one of the lights starts flashing.*

SERENA
Would you like some tea? *All lights start flashing.* I want to talk to you about something.

LUCAS
As many as I can drink at your side. What do you want to talk about?

SERENA
We can go to my place. I have my tea-set there and we will be more comfortable. I will feel more comfortable.

LUCAS
Sery! You're inviting me to your place?

Lights start flashing faster. The high-pitched kettle sound is heard a little louder. The lights stop flashing and become really bright.

SERENA

If you think that is not appropriate for us yet, and you won't be comfortable going, I understand. We just can stay here...or go to the park.

LUCAS

No, it's okay. we can go to your place is fine. It's just too forward of you.

SERENA

Oh ok! Yea, I like that.

LUCAS

I would like that, too. *(Pause)* If that is really what you want.

SERENA

Yes.

LUCAS

Vale. La sigo mi calma.

The stage changes as they walk to Serena's apartment. They arrive. In the middle of the space there's a circular table. The entire space is filled with candles and flowers. The table is set up for two, and one of the corners has a little place with pillows and blankets on the floor. The atmosphere is romantic and intimate. Serena enters.

SERENA

I... You need to understand that... I didn't mean... Don't get this wrong...

LUCAS

Are you okay?

SERENA

Yes! I want you here. I want you to come to my place...I'm sorry. I don't normally bring people to my place.

LUCAS

That's good to know. I don't normally bring people to my place either.

SERENA

You see... this is my house...I find it the safest place in the world, and I don't like people inside me. I mean inside it. I am...I don't normally let people inside.

LUCAS

Sorry. Did I hear correctly? You don't normally get people inside you. What are you inviting me for then Serena?

SERENA

Would you like some tea?

Serena opens the door and shows him in. A static sound begins. They enter.

LUCAS

I would love some, but only if it's okay for me to come inside your house.

Serena puts the kettle on the stove. She turns on an antique victrola, baroque music starts playing. She starts humming the song. Serena starts the tea ritual, a deeply spiritual act. Lighting and sound reflect this sacred ceremony. Lucas watches her.

LUCAS

What?...May I ?

Serena gestures to a tray with biscuits, pastries, and small sandwiches.

Lucas brings the tray to Serena.

The music plays.

Serena and Lucas continue the ritual together.

They don't speak.

Every action they do has meaning.

They finished the tea ritual.

Serena stops.

They look at each other.

Serena goes around the table grabs Lucas' coat, hangs it on his chair.

They face each other.

She moves to leave, but Lucas grabs her hand, gently pulls out her hair clip.

Serena's hair falls down. They come closer almost kissing.

BOTH: Tea?

They both sit down and eat for a bit without saying anything to each other. Lucas finishes his cup.

SERENA

Would you like some more tea?

Serena stands up and sets the kettle with more water back on the stove.

The kettle builds up the atmosphere of the scene.

The baroque music and the boiling sound combine to create Baroque water.

SERENA (Laughs)

Dance with me?

Serena extends her hand to Lucas. Lucas stands up.

LUCAS

Dancing requires touching.

SERENA

Lucas. You like stories...

Lucas accepts Serena's hand. They start dancing. Some flashes of light.

SERENA

When I was six years old, my dad decided to leave us. *(Pause)* He got an incredible opportunity to work in another country and left. I don't remember much of him. *(Pause)* After that, mom and I moved to live with my grandma and Baba, and I was sent to an all-girls institute. *(Pause)* Baba became like a second Dad. He used to bring me to the museum every weekend. We used to walk around, and he used to tell me all these stories about the great Louis XVI and his wife. Once we got to the Marie-Antoinette paintings, he would sit me on his lap and hold me close to his chest and sing me a lullaby.

Marie Antoinette's creepy lullaby starts playing. They listen.

He used to travel a lot. But with grandma he knew he had a home. And when my mom and I moved with them; he knew he had a family, or so he said, or so we thought.

They stop dancing. Serena guides Lucas towards the pillows and blanket corner. She starts playing with his hand.

When I turned 14, I was old enough to go to the museum alone, and Baba always came to meet me after he was done work. One day, he came later than usual, and I got worried. *(Silence.)*

Lights start flashing again. The kettle starts bubbling.

I was never as happy as the moment he showed up. But there was something weird with him. I could tell something was wrong, but he didn't say anything, and I thought I must be imagining it, together with the rest of the things that were happening then.

The kettle keeps building the bubbling sound.

The following week, I went back, and Baba didn't show up...I didn't really want to go back to the institute. Apparently, we are forced to attend these events where we are introduced to boys after the girls turn 14. They...well...I didn't like those events.

LUCAS
Why not?

The kettle sound keeps building. Stage becomes darker

SERENA

Baba didn't show up that day...Back then, cell phones were expensive. So, I didn't have one. I waited a bit longer...until I went back to the institute. *(Pause.)* He left a letter for me and a box full of his favourite tea. Grandma gave it to me days before I met you. *(Pause.)* He said that he was tired of feeling like an outsider. He didn't feel at home and was never able to find his place in this society... He couldn't lie anymore. He thought no one would miss him... My grandma used to say that I was just like him. I didn't understand what she meant; I thought it was a compliment, but it wasn't...My grandpa was a great guy, and he always came back no matter what. Always.

The kettle high-pitched sound starts happening. Serena goes towards the kettle. She takes the kettle and pours the water in the kettle as she keeps talking. Lucas doesn't move.

After I read the letter, I've been thinking to do what he did. I have come back to that museum every day since. I've been trying to solve the puzzle, to put things together. I've been looking for a different answer, one that doesn't make me choose the path he chose.

LUCAS
What happened to him?

SERENA
They said he was ill...

LUCAS
Are you sick?, What kind of illness?

SERENA
They were never sure. They were never sure. They said that when a person so successful decides to take his own life, it was because his struggle was too big for him to carry it alone... After Baba die-k-killed himself, mom took me out of the school system. I was homeschooled until now that I am going to university.

BABA'S LETTER READ

LUCAS

You have been thinking of killing yourself lately?

Serena serves more tea.

SERENA

I...I don't want to end like him.

LUCAS

Why would you end like him? You don't have to. Why would you kill yourself?

SERENA

Because I'm not happy Lucas, and I haven't been for a while now. They...They took away my identity, I am broken. There's nothing left for me in this world. Or so I said, or so I thought.

The head of Marie Antoinette roles from underneath the audience and ends somewhere closer to the scene.

But I don't want to. I don't want them to define me. That is why I keep going back to the museum. I am trying to understand why he did it, and what he meant in his letter, so I don't do it... or so I can do it...He wasn't happy. I am not happy... *Silence. Lucas drinks tea.* It's so overwhelming all the time. I can hear these mocking voices...They never leave me.

LUCAS takes a long pause. Serena doesn't move.

LUCAS

What's something crazy you have always wanted to do?

SERENA

What do you mean? *(Pause)* I guess *(INSERT A CRAZY THING HERE)*

LUCAS

So why don't you do it? What other plans do you have?

SERENA

I would like to marry one day. I really want to find a life partner, but who would want to be with me? *(Pause)* With or without someone at my side, I would like to have a family, have children. I would love to be a mom.

LUCAS

How would you call your children?

SERENA

I have always liked the name Jeremy for a boy. I would love to have a boy.

LUCAS

So, would these voices mean more to you than your own boy?

SERENA

They...No, but...how can I?...you don't understand (*Pause*) Sometimes I can't breathe, think or sleep. I can't focus... I have a hard time interacting with people and getting out of the house...Grandma says I'm just like him...I didn't know what I was doing. I don't know what I am doing. They knew...

LUCAS *comforts her without touching*

Mi amor, you have so many options in this world. So many places to go to, people to know, experiences to live. You have desires and dreams. You also have the power to stop THEM. The power they have is not real anymore. They aren't here. We are. Look around you. Look at what you have created, what you are now. Don't you like this place?

SERENA

I do.... But Lucas I don't belong anywhere. How can I trust people? How can I leave the museum? The only place I felt I belong with someone. I keep looking for a reason to stay in this world and looking and looking.

LUCAS

You won't find it outside in the world.

SERENA

But you showed up. What's that? What do I supposed to do now?

LUCAS

You can't make that decision based on me. I can't be responsible for your own happiness. You need to choose to do it yourself. (*Pause*) Can I have your hand? *Serena hesitates but gives him her hand.* I can tell you what you want to hear. I could promise you the world, protect you and save you. But now I understand that I will never be able to fulfill those promises. *Mi calma esta rota.*

A beat. Serena breaths and grabs Lucas' hand.

SERENA

I don't like to be touch. I feel like I will break as soon as someone touches me. A lot of things are changing between us...what do I do? How do I adapt? I can't do this to you. You don't deserve this crazy messy lady.

The insect shadow of Marie Antoinette appears quickly at the back of Serena and disappears.

LUCAS *takes Serena's hand.*

Then break, mi amor.

Serena tries to move away.

I'm here. Serena.

Serena allows herself to be touch and comes closer to Lucas.

You're not the only one who is scared. I have never been good at fitting in, and my passion for history hasn't brought me as many friends as you could imagine. My family is okay though. My parents support me on this, and my annoying sister has always been there for me. Mi amor. I speak 4 languages. How alone do you think I was? I've been lonely for some years now. Loneliness (WRITE AND EXERCISE

ABOUT LIVING WITH LONELINESS) and I have become close friends. I'd just show up to work and follow my passion with history. I travelled a lot and have learned so much about the past, but things always felt empty and pointless. What is the point of knowing so much if you don't have anyone to share it with? Do you know what I thought when I saw you in the museum the first time?

SERENA

That I was an interesting human dress in a proper outfit from the 1770's.

LUCAS (Laughs)

No. That you were as weird and as obsessed with history as I am. You weren't in the present either. You seemed like a vision from the past. I was seeing history happening right in front of me.

SERENA

You're really cheesy; you know.

LUCAS

Death tells the stories of past lives. It helps us understand our reality, and it has helped to build it. We can predict the future with that knowledge. But I never understood the present until I met you. I believe if we both could exist in this reality at the same time and in the same moment maybe life isn't so pointless. I know you don't like promises, but I'm here. We can do this together, build a life together. I can share my life with you. I want to discover this story together, and I know you need to learn to build it yourself and put the pieces of the puzzle together. Serena. But... You don't have to follow that path. You can choose.

SERENA

Would you go with me to his grave? Grandma, just told me where he is. I don't want to go alone.

LUCAS

I would love to.

Lucas brings her closer. Serena places her head on his heart. A heartbeat plays. Lights go down. Heartbeat becomes Baroque water. Spotlight in Marie-Antoinette's head.

Serena has enough – Scene 10

The scene opens in the park outside of the museum. Serena and Lucas are walking and enjoying their time together. Serena jumps on the edge of the sidewalk and starts balancing herself out. She is suddenly a kid.

SERENA

I used to fear sidewalks as a kid. The corner of them used to scared me a lot. So, when I walk close to them, I would go step by step, carefully looking at the floor, and making sure I wouldn't fall. *The act becomes an acrobatic movement where sound or projections of sharks and big animals are heard/seen, waiting for Serena to fall.* I remember I thought that if I fell out of the sidewalk, a bunch of sharks would eat me. *The lights change into a dramatic circus color light, and she focuses on the task at hand.* It made me pay more attention to the sidewalk. I felt so powerless. *The edge she is walking on starts shaking and moving. Serena keeps trying to balance.* I am scared about this Lucas. I want to be with you, but I don't think that this will work out. *The action becomes bigger; the animals start attacking her and trying to reach for her. The ground increases its shaking and moving.* I don't know what to do.

LUCAS

You will need to trust me, mi amor. Trust that what we have is real. Only time will reveal you the truth.

Serena falls. Lucas prevents her from falling. Serena recovers her posture. The sharks and big animals disappeared. Lights go back to normal. Bubbling sound starts playing.

SERENA

How do I do that? How can I trust you?

LUCAS

You start here with me, and you allow me to walk by your side, and time will show you how I feel, and if you allow it to touch you. It would work. *(Lucas tries to take Serena's hand. She moves away.)*

SERENA

I... please don't

LUCAS

Mi amor, I know this is hard for you. I don't know what happen that it is so hard for you to trust people, but I am here with you. I want to help you, Serena. I don't want to hurt you. I want to be with you. We can do this one step at the time, as you used to do it on the sidewalk until you aren't scared anymore. *Lucas tries to touch Serena. Serena allows him to take her hand. Serena stops moving. A recording starts playing in the background.*

NUN/TEACHER VOICEOVER

You will love it here! We are a great family, and you will find amazing friends. I will make sure that all your classmates accept you and welcome you with open arms. It isn't your fault, poor child about your situation. I would say it is rather your mom's fault, but in here you will learn how to keep a man at your side.

LUCAS

One thing at the time. Feel my hand on yours, feel my presence. Can you feel it? How do you feel when I do this Serena? Is it really scary?

GIRL's VOICEOVER

Iak! Don't touch me! You're too savage. Stop it! Leave us alone. We don't want to play with you. Don't you get it. We don't want your illness to pass to us. I want my mom and dad to stay together always.

SERENA

I remember they don't like having me close.

LUCAS

Who?

SERENA

The girls at the institute. They said I had an illness of sort, and they didn't want to get it.

LUCAS

Why did they say that?

SERENA *takes her gloves off and gets back to touching Lucas. She starts to caress Lucas. Lucas moves closer*

SERENA

The institute didn't like single moms or divorcee. They only accepted widows. So, the girls used to say that if they touched me, her parents would get divorce as well.

LUCAS

That is rather silly. *Serena stops for a second.*

SERENA

Do you think that my dad leaving is silly?

LUCAS

No. I mean those girls. Why would they believe that?

SERENA

That's what we were taught to think. Being abandon is the less dignify thing you can ever go through. You are in a way worthless as a woman if your husband abandons you or leaves you for another one.

LUCAS

Is that what you are scare of? *SERENA takes her hand away.* You know forget about them. I am not like that. You won't be worthless if you don't have me at your side, and I am not planning on leave it you anytime soon. Serena, can you imagine a future with us together?

SERENA

I...

LUCAS

Let me tell you how I imagine it. I imagine us spending sometimes talking until late. We will get marry one day and have children. Do you want to have children?

SERENA

I would love that. I have always wanted to have a family.

LUCAS

Then, we will get marry in a beautiful wine cellar. Or wherever. Your mom will be there and my parents and sister too. We will declare love to each other and from then on choose to always love each other. Then, we will start our own family. We can have our own rules. Do you want to marry me one day and have a family?

SERENA

Will you tell me how you feel about me and always be honest if I tell you how I feel about you?

LUCAS

Yes. I will. Do I make you happy?

Pause

SERENA

Yes. Do I?

LUCAS

Yes

LUCAS

Ok. Do you feel safe and comfortable with me?

SERENA

I do. *Serena nods.* Lucas. I'm not sure I can do this. I don't know if I am built to do that.

LUCAS

Come here. *Lucas reaches for Serena's hand. She allows him to take her and pull her close to him, but still with some distance.* Let's imagine that everything is possible, and- No. Listen. We will imagine like we are sharing a life together. Let's just imagine our life together for a second. Would you like to see the stars with me every night?

Pause. Serena looks around, starts walking to a place in the garden. Takes a blanket out of her purse and lays it on the ground. She takes out a teapot with hot water inside, and starts setting tea for both with teacups, spoons, plates, etc. Then, she sits down on the blanket. The static sound is replaced by a settle bubbling sound.

LUCAS

How do you make everything fit in that bag?

Pause

SERENA

Ok, Sir. Let's imagine, but my imagination can go as far as the stars, so I warn you; you might hear things you don't want to hear. *Pause.* Come sit down, please. I'll answer all your questions. *Lucas sits.* We would live in a really small house somewhere in the forest. *Serena gives Lucas a cup of tea.* Okay, I have an idea. *Lucas drinks the tea.* Close your eyes. *Pause* Come on! You need to see it. *Lucas closes his eyes.* But the trees won't cover our view. The trees are going to be around us, but with enough space for us to see the sky. We will then after a long day of work come home, and the house will have a crystal ceiling, the moon and the stars will illuminate the entire house. *Lucas peaks at her.* Close your eyes come on! *Lucas sits up and moves closer to Serena. Serena doesn't move and allows the closeness. Bubbling sound builds. Lucas rests his head on Serena's lap and closes his eyes again.*

LUCAS

So, we'll live in a house illuminated by the moon and the stars. Huh? Not lighting system?

SERENA

Of course, we will have a lighting system. But the moon will be a good lighting source too. The walls will be full of books and paintings. The kitchen will be just a couple of steps from the bed. *Serena puts her gloves inside of her bag and puts the bag away. She starts closing the distance between her and Lucas.* After dinner, we would lay down on bed and watch the stars together and talk about our days.

LUCAS

Then, we will try to find forms on them, and I will tell you, their stories. Some of those stars are really old you know. They can tell you a secret if you allow them to.

Serena is surprised by the interruption. Lucas opens his eyes. The shadow of Marie Antoinette appears on stage headless. Serena starts playing with Lucas' hair, closes her eyes. Marie Antoinette's arm falls off.

SERENA

One of them will tell us about the time she was lock on a closet by the other stars around her. *Pause.* She lost some of her light after that.

LUCAS

Who locked you?

SERENA

Do you think the stars can teach us how to find some light in the dark nights?

LUCAS

I think they can do something even better than that. *Serena opens her eyes and looks at Lucas. Lucas tries to kiss Serena. Serena moves away quickly. Marie Antoinette's recover half of the arm.* Serena, would you marry me?

The sound of voices starts playing in the background one on top of the other one again. Lights start flashing and haze starts coming on. Marie Antoinette enters broken as her shadow.

The following movement happens somehow simultaneously to the recording, but they slowly build and are added as the recording progresses: Serena starts building a movement between her hands until it becomes a fast and big frantic movement. Breathing sound starts happening and increasing its paste as the scene proceeds. She starts getting cold and shiver. Marie Antoinette removes part of her clothes from her. A bucket of water falls on Serena leaving her wet. She starts scratching her skin.

VOICE: Don't forget who you are. You don't deserve love. This isn't real.

SERENA

Lucas. I...lo-lo-gave you an album. We can build our story. But I am not ready to...

LUCAS

Serena. Do you care about me? Are you feeling what I'm feeling?

Serena's action stops happening. Suddenly, Marie Antoinette's broken shadow body shape comes to her and puts tape on her mouth. Recording of laughter are heard.

NUN/TEACHER

You're just a baby. Come on! You gotta tough up!

GIRL

Miss, Serena hurt one of the girls in the studio.

Serena's breath speeds up.

Serenas' kid voice

Let me out! Let me out! *A door breaks. You're stupid! A strong loud sound is heard.*

Serena starts shocking with her own breath.

NUN/TEACHER

Serenity this isn't the behaviour of a lady. We will need to call your mom.

Laughs and screams start happening some cheering while other sound like someone begging. Some are making fun of Serena and calling her names and saying disgusting things out of place. Marie Antoinette kisses Serena on the cheek and slowly walks away. Lucas hugs Serena. The haze starts going away, and she somehow comes back to reality to Lucas and this moment. The voice recording becomes just an annoying static noise.

LUCAS

Sery... Mi calma. Hey! Come back to me. Hey it's fine. Forget I asked. I'm sorry *Lucas grabs Serena's hand and gets all wet.* Serena you're sweating.

Serena looks at her hands, pulls them from Lucas and puts her gloves back on. She cleans herself and with the bit of strength left, she stands up.

SERENA

Life isn't this way. We couldn't live in the middle of the forest in a house with a crystal ceiling that would be stupid and unsafe. It isn't real.

Serena starts cleaning the set-up.

LUCAS

So, tell me what is lifelike then? What is this reality you think we live in?

SERENA

This will be over soon. You'll get tired of me, or I'll get bored of you. Then, you'll leave, and I'll stay, or I'll leave, and you'll stay, either way this will be over soon. It's not even worth our time.

LUCAS

It's that really you think Serena? *Silence.* Are you listening to what you are saying? You know how this makes me feel.

SERENA

Of course, I am. You are a man after all. You will abandon me. I am not the wife type Lucas. I can't make you happy. You don't know what you're feeling.

LUCAS

SERENA STOP! I don't know what sort of guys you have been going out with, but I am not looking for a servant. I just want you to be happy, and I am worry sometimes that you're not when we are together. I didn't mean to push you the other day. You don't seem to understand how you make me feel when you push me away. Sometimes I don't know what you're thinking or feeling, and you don't even allow me to touch you. How am I supposed to know that everything is fine between us? How am I supposed to know that we are going somewhere with this?

Serena storms off. Lucas stays there looking confused.

Scene 7

LUCAS

What happened yesterday Serena?

SERENA

I don't know.

VOICE

You don't deserve to be happy.

LUCAS

I like you. I don't know why it's hard for you to understand that, but I really like you. I think I might love you. How do you feel?

VOICE

No matter how much you try, you will never be happy.

SERENA

I don't know. I think I do, but I can't do this, Lucas. It's too complicated and messy.

GIRL'S VOICE

Get this into your head. They don't care about you. They are just playing with you. You are not the type of woman they marry. You are only their toy. How does it feel to be only a toy?

SERENA'S YOUNGER VOICE

I am not a toy. He loves me, and he will marry me. You don't know what you're talking about.

GIRL'S VOICE

Look at you. Who will fall for someone as ugly and masculine as you? You have no matters or delicacy. You're not delicate; your features are not soft and round. You walk as if you were riding a horse. You are unattractive. They don't like a macho woman. Get it right! You don't deserve them, and you'll never do.

LUCAS

Why? It doesn't need to be. It is pretty simple. You like me, I like you. We want to be together, so we are together.

SERENA

I wish it was that simple. Last week when we were talking about those things. I could see the house, the smells, waiting for you to come home. Maybe having kids or maybe not. I know is too early to think about that, but I could see it. I wanted it so badly.

LUCAS

You want to have a family?

SERENA

I desire nothing more than having one. But I don't know what's wrong. I can't do it...It...All I know right now is that everything is beautiful at the beginning of every relationship. After a while, I know they will all go away. I don't seem to know how to keep a man at my side.

LUCAS (*Pause*)

I care about you Serena. I like you the way you are. I feel comfortable around you, and you are easy to talk to. I can't promise you everything will be perfect, but I can tell you that I am here with you, on the same boat, wanting to share time with you. (*Pause*) I want to help you. Look! I respect your point of view. I don't fully understand it. But I think we can make it work. I think we deserve to try. (*Pause*) Serena, I'm getting tired of repeating myself. I care about you, but that doesn't seem enough for you.

SERENA

You are asking too much of me Lucas. What if I never change? How can you be with a person like me?

LUCAS

A person like you? What kind of person do you think you are Serena?

A shadow of a Marie-Antoinette monster appears on stage. Serena stares at it and her body becomes similar to this monster idea. Serena starts pulling her hair, scratching her body and hitting herself.

LUCAS

Hey! Hey! Stop. Calm down Serena. *Serena's movements become frantic. Stop doing that Serena. Lucas takes Serena's hands and places them on his face. Tell me what you feel. Serena slows down. Good. What else can you feel? Tell me what you feel Serena? Serena tries to speak, but words don't come out. Serena goes back to frantic. High-pitch kettle sound starts playing. Serena's breath increases. A cacophony of voices overwhelms the space.*

Breath. Tell me what you feel. Tell me what you hear. Serena para ya! *A tiny, beautiful tone is heard. Serena slows down again.*

SERENA

I...I...I.....your...voice.

LUCAS

Talk to me.

SERENA

I can't...

LUCAS

Try Serena. I know you can.

SERENA

I can't...kkk-ee-pp going. *Pause. Serena slowly fixes herself up. I-'m---- tired. Lucas...I don't want to keep hiding. Pause. Serena recovers her posture. I...desire... my freedom more than anything.... I know I haven't, but you, I just. Can. I. I. I. I love going wherever I want and do anything I like... I love the silence in my apartment when no one but myself is awake at night...I...I...I...Where am I going with this? ...There's something growing in me, and I don't know (Pause) I don't know. I just don't know. I... need to go Lucas.*

Serena exits. Lucas sits in front of Marie Antoinette painting. Marie Antoinette is looking directly at him.

LUCAS

This is pointless. I don't know if I can continue with her. Tell me what do I do with her? I want to protect her, to take care of her. But she doesn't allow me to do it.

Marie Antoinette looks down to the bench where Lucas is sitting. Underneath, there is Serena's sketch book. Lucas opens the sketch book. Lucas starts reading a verse Serena wrote. Lights fade out.

Serena is at the museum, standing in front of the same three paintings. She wears a dark blue dress, her hair is in a perfect bun and wears a hat. Marie Antoinette headless enters and walks back into the painting. The paintings start shaking and the light flash and stop. Marie Antoinette puts a gold chain with a gold box pendant on her neck. Everything is still for a moment. Lucas enters, sees Serena and stops.

LUCAS

Hey! How're you linda?

Silence. Serena ignores Lucas. Her face is tired, pale and reflect a sick fashion tend look.

SERENA

Do you ever wonder what happened to her children? What did they become? How did they survive after their Mother was killed? How did they grow up? Where did they eat, sleep, play?

LUCAS

I'm sure there's data about it. I am not familiar with their story, but I could dig up some information.

SERENA

When the revolutionaries took over the palace, they took the queen and her kids to the Temple prison. At the beginning all her kids were with her, but they thought her youngest son Louis XVII represented a threat to the change they wanted to see in France. They took her son away from her. Why would someone do that? He was barely 8th years old. I was barely 6. A kid isn't a threat to anything. What a silly idea!

Silence

LUCAS

I'm guessing this isn't about the painting, is it?

SERENA

Society is a cruel monster. They killed a boy because they were afraid that it would encourage hopeful thoughts in a revolutionary time. Their ideals were stronger than the life of a kid. They destroyed a family because of hunger, revenge. They called it justice. Is it really justice if one is ignorant of its privilege?

LUCAS

That's a difficult questions Sery. People were dying because a powerful man was making the wrong decisions. They were angry to Marie-Antoinette because she made fun of their misery. She sent them to eat cake when there was no grain.

SERENA

But that wasn't her fault. This started with a bad harvest. The decay of France was because of natural causes. There was no one to blame.

LUCAS

Maybe, but people felt powerless. They had no control over their lives and situation, and while this rich people threw away the little things the country had, their families were dying. What would you do if you family died?

SERENA

I-There's other ways society can make you powerless. Some don't require money or power. It only requires structures. Some institutions make sure that we never go out of that structure. We are educated to never think outside that structure. We are told what we should feel or think, and most people don't stop for a second to think why. But some do, and the price is sometimes too high. *Pause.* I am a woman. I don't have opinions or thoughts. Marie-Antoinette had no choice, no opportunity to be better, and when she realized what she did...Don't we deserve second chances?

LUCAS

We do, but some cases have more impact than other. Her decision costed lives. Yours haven't cost anything.

SERENA

How do you know that?

LUCAS

You're right. I don't. But have your decisions cost a life? Have you starved someone to dead? Have you made fun of someone else's misery?

SERENA

I-

LUCAS

Serena. Whatever happened, it wasn't your fault. You aren't a Queen, and you were powerless just like them.

SERENA

I was not. I am not a victim of some tragic thing.

LUCAS

No, you're not.

SERENA

You don't know what it was like. You don't understand the things I did. I had to survive, and I was there alone. I never belonged there, but my mom didn't want to take me off that institute. Baba tried to reason with her. Baba. It was too late when my mother listened.

LUCAS

I'm sure your mom wanted the best for you Serena. I am sure it wasn't to hurt you, her intention. Parents are also human. They don't know what they are fully doing sometimes. But they love us. I'm sure of that.

MOM VOICE

You will be happy here Serena. I can't give you what they will at home. I love you. My love, you will be fine. We will be fine. Things will get better. Do you trust me?

SERENA'S YOUNGER VOICE

I want to call my mom. I need to see her. Please?

NUN

You can't until Sunday. Those are the rules.

SERENA'S YOUNGER VOICE

But you don't understand. It's important. Please! You gotta let me talk to her. I need to talk to her.

NUN

Sunday you can make that call Serena. Now, go back to class. Be prudent about your actions. Now be obedient. Go.

SERENA

She didn't know what she was doing. How could she?

Serena & Lucas go to Grandpa's grave.

The scene opens in the museum. Serena is wearing a funeral type of clothing. Lucas is holding her hand.

LUCAS

Are you okay Serena? *Silence* What are you thinking about?

SERENA

Life seems to be really fragile. It seems to pass by fast, and not allow us to even catch a breath sometimes. I wish I could take a break from it for a day. I guess Baba is doing so from wherever he is now. He left me alone here. He knew what I was going through, and he couldn't stay and help me before leaving at least. He was the only one who I felt protected and safe. He is gone now. I can't...It's just...Thank you for coming with me.

LUCAS

Anytime my love! Gracias a ti for letting me in. I'm pretty sure that Baba would like you to be happy, and he didn't mean to leave you alone.

SERENA

I don't know Lucas. I think he knew what I was going to go through. He said it in his letter. I felt so lonely and hopeless. He knew that. He could have talked to me about it. I would have understood. I feel hurt and betray by him.

LUCAS

I hear you love. I don't think he wanted to betray you. He was also going through something difficult. Look. I might have never really considered what he did, but I did feel really empty for a long time. I can relate to his desire of wanting to feel free and belonging somewhere. Don't you think? Haven't you felt that way?

SERENA

I...I...want to go home. I am tired and it has been a rather hard day, Lucas.

LUCAS

Can I go with you?

SERENA

Sure. Let's go home, love.

Serena and Lucas connect

Serena's apartment.

SERENA

Could you stay for a bit? I don't want to be alone.

LUCAS

Yes, I can. Want to get something to eat or watch a movie?

SERENA

I'll make us some tea. I want to talk rather than watch a movie.

Serena comes closer to Lucas

I always wonder what it was like to touch someone that wanted to take care of you. Someone that didn't expected you to do or say the right thing. I didn't know it could feel this way. I guess that's what Marie-

Antoinette and Louis XVI found in their marriage, a person to be with and to know that they will be there for you.

Serena touches Lucas face.

It's not that I am indifferent to what happens between a man and a woman when they like each other, but I think I am unfamiliar with love. Do you know what I mean?

Lucas says nothing. He closes the distance between Serena and Lucas.

In the institute they teach you everything on how to be a proper lady. They tell you how to talk, how to behave, how to prepare dinners, take care of your husband. We are even taught how to please a man and make sure that he is well taken care of. We are created for marriage and to build a family. The epicentre of our society. But no one talks about this.

LUCAS

About what mi amor?

SERENA

About the responsibility of being love.

Serena hugs Lucas.

They don't teach you how to be in a relationship. Things between you and me haven't been how they say it should happen, and yet we are here, and I feel this way, and I have these desires. What's that all about? Why do they make this seem like the hardest thing to accomplish?

Lucas starts playing with Serena's hair. They start dancing.

LUCAS

I don't know love. I know what I saw with my parents. The moves where always a threat to their marriage. Each change, each culture. I am sure it was really difficult for my mom to leave and restart every time. I wouldn't want that for my wife to be honest. I wouldn't want her to choose between me and her. Shouldn't it be a team-work?

SERENA

Do people even know what that is?

LUCAS

Do we know what that is, love?

SERENA

I don't, but I want to find out. I want to learn. I want to be with you, and... *Serena closes the distance even more and looks directly to Lucas.* I want to take care of you, and I want to take care of myself. I want to feel better Lucas, for you, for me, for us.

LUCAS

I want to take care of you too. I want to love you. I want to accompany you. I-

Serena kisses Lucas gently on his lips and steps back. Serena is about to speak when Lucas touches her and pulls her back again towards him. They start kissing. Marie-Antoinette enters insect like from the

audience. She starts disrupting the space and watches predatorially to Serena. The outside of the space and the audience starts shaking. A spotlight on Serena and Lucas. Everything around them is peaceful and safe. The outside starts breaking apart like the cracks of an egg. Marie-Antoinette observes the cracks until she finds one to enter the space in. While that happens, Lucas and Serena kiss. Serena delicately takes off Lucas jacket and places it on the couch. He then takes down her hair and they continue exploring and touching each other. Serena never closes her eyes and takes in every moment. Lucas becomes a little more frantic in his movements. Fighting the desire that he has and still wanting to be gentle. The scene becomes a dance with a rhythm only they could understand. When Marie-Antoinette finally finds a crack to get into the apartment, Serena and Lucas are done with the dance, and they are laying together on the sofa. Marie-Antoinette comes close to them and almost touches Serena. Lucas wakes up, kisses her and leaves.

LUCAS

I love you, mi calma.

Lucas exists

Scene 1.13 Serena and Marie-Antoinette's Dance

Serena kisses goodbye to Lucas and starts organizing the space again.

She found a way to stare at her reflection.

Lights go down on Serena.

A spotlight on Marie Antoinette's head.

Marie Antoinette's headless body starts crawling out like an insect.

She moves towards Serena

Marie-Antoinette transforms from an insect-like to a human form. Serena and Marie-Antoinette are now face to face. They look at each other. We see similarities between them. Marie-Antoinette touches her hair, almost brushing.

SERENA: What do you want from me?

Marie-Antoinette puts her head back on. Erie music starts playing, creating a sense of dizziness for the audience.

Marie-Antoinette: He is wasting his time with you.

Marie-Antoinette and Serena start moving together in a dance-like form.

SERENA: Why can't you allow me to be happy? He isn't wasting his time. He wants to be with me.

MA: Why would someone want to be with you?

SERENA: He cares about me. I feel it.. I know he does...

MA: What about you is worth the effort?

SERENA: I am working so hard to find a better way to be there for him. I have changed. He is helping me grow. I feel ready for this...

MA: So, what is making you doubt? Are you sure you're ready to change, or are you compromising yourself so that he doesn't leave you?

SERENA: You are holding me back...No. I...I've been through enough hurt. I des-

MA: Why are you working so hard to change for him?

SERENA: I don't know...

MA: Haven't you compromised yourself enough times to know it won't work out? He will abandon you like all the other people have done. He will never choose you among his work, family and friends. Changing yourself to please him won't make him like you. To throw away all these pieces of you... who would you be? Where would you belong? You will never belong. Don't you see. *You* don't belong to this place and never will.

SERENA: This isn't true. This isn't real.

MA: Why do you have to change? Why is it work? Why do you have to change? Why are you changing? Why him?

SURREAL LUCAS: I love you. I care a lot about you, but you should change your clothes because they make me uncomfortable. You should also stop drinking so much tea. I think it makes you look crazy.

They don't come together, but the dance is as if we were seeing mirror movements and behaviour except when Marie-Antoinette has small moments of insect like and creepiness.

MA: He doesn't love you. He just wants to have you.

SURREAL LUCAS: I want you to meet my parents, but not yet. I am just not ready. You need to be educated a bit more.

NUN: You must always say yes to your husband. You are here to serve them, and they will love you for the amount of work you do for them. A good wife doesn't complain and makes sure that everything is well and comfortable when they arrive. You are in charge of making them happy.

SURREAL LUCAS: You are just my experiment. I want to give you the stars and the moon. I am using you only to get what I need for my research. You deserve all of it. You mean nothing in

my life. You deserve the best of the best. Why don't you allow me to do that for you Serena? I have been hiding you from everyone. I don't want my family close to you. I don't want anyone close to you. Why are you stopping me from loving you?

MA: They don't know what love all is about.

SURREAL LUCAS: I want to make you happy.

MA: Why would he be different from the other ones?

SERENA: Because it feels different. He makes me....

MA: He isn't different. He is trying to manipulate you and use you. He doesn't care about your feelings and is going to abandon you like everyone else that you have loved. You will be hurt. Stop trying. You know he isn't worth it.

SERENA: SHUT UP! JUST SHUT UP! stop trying to control me!!! I deserve it! I deserve to be loved!!

Serena throws a cup from the sacred tea set to Marie-Antoinette. Everything starts collapsing and being destroyed.

Marie- Antoinette walks towards a frame with a picture of Lucas and Serena. She delicately takes the picture out of the frame, walks back to Serena, stays still, looks at Serena, breaks the picture in half, gives Serena herself, and keeps Lucas with her.

MA: Yes, but you don't deserve him.

Serena starts hyperventilating

SERENA: You don't know that. You can't know that. You... I deserved to be loved.

Marie-Antoinette leaves. Serena tries to calm down.

Marie Antoinette Attacks – Scene 10

Marie-Antoinette tries to attack the tea-set area. Serena tries to stop her. Serena grabs the phone, starts hyperventilating, calls Lucas.

SERENA

Come on answer! Answer! *Voicemail sound is heard.* No. No. *Big drops of water are heard as if they were slowly drowning the room.* Answer! Answer! *Voicemail sound is heard.* No. No. Lucas. Come on! *Lucas answers.*

LUCAS

Hello. Serena?

SERENA

You're-I-she-But-You're okay-I had-need-she-Lu-c-aaaaa-aas?

Marie-Antoinette keeps destroying the tea-set area.

LUCAS

Serena, I can't understand you. What's happening? The call is dropping. Hold on.

SERENA

LUCAS!!! LUCAS!! NOOOO! LEAVE ME ALONE! YOU'RE aliveright?becauseIhada-she-I-I-can't. Her head.Icouldn't.itfeltsoreal.Lucasmyapartment.It'sallbroken.Ican't.Lucas.Helpmehelpme.Ican't-

LUCAS

Serena. Calm down. It's okay. Are you okay? What happened to your apartment? Serena, breathe. Breathe. Where are you right now?

SERENA

Ican'tfeelmyhandsanymorelucas.Everythingisdestroyed.

LUCAS

Serena. Listen to my voice. E-v-e-r-y-t-h-i-n-g w-i-l-l b-e o-k-a-y. I'm on my way. *Talk to someone else.* Dad! I don't know what to do! She isn't calming down. *To Serena.* Breathe Serena. Breathe. *Aside.* I don't know, dad! I have never seen her this way. What do I do?! *Pause* Okay. *To Serena.* Okay---Serena---I---want---you---to---focus---on---my---voice. We---are---going---to---breathe---together---okay?.

SERENA

Ican'tLucas.Ican't!ICAN'T!

LUCAS

Where are you right now in the house?

SERENA

I'mnexttotheteatable.

LUCAS

Okay. Serena, I want you to make tea. Just like you always do. I want you to tell me what you are doing as you prepare the tea. Step by Step.

SERENA

Oooookkkkaaay. Thetableisssssssseeet—up withtheleaves—and—I startby—grabbiiing a bag of tea—and—measurefour—spoons of tea leaves. Then, IIIII am putting the leeeaaaves inside

my bag. Then, I grrrab the hankerchief and clean the pot. Because I like it to be perfectly clean before I put the bag with the leaves in---the. Luuucaas—are—you—there?

LUCAS

I'm here Sery. I'm here. Keep telling me. I'm on my way okay. I'm in the car and I'm coming.

Marie-Antoinette starts vanishing/breaking apart or being push out of the space until she disappears again.

SERENA

Okay. Then, I put the bag inside of the kettle, and I make a 4 turns around the handle to secure the bag. I'm going to pour the water next-and wait for five minutes for the teatosettle. I'mgoingtowait—wait—for the tea to settle.

LUCAS

Okay. Okay. Let's count the five minutes. Come on! Count with me Serena. One Mississippi

SERENA/LUCAS

Two mississippis. Three mississippis. Four mississippis. Five mississippis...Six mississippis...Seven mississippis.

SERENA

Are you almost here?

LUCAS

I am. Can you open the door for me?

SERENA

I can't feel my—I'll try.

LUCAS

Tell me what you're doing while you walk to the door.

SERENA

I am putting the kettle down on the table. I am turning now to walk towards the door.

LUCAS

How many steps do you need to get to the door?

SERENA

I don'tknow. HowamI supposedtoknow that?

LUCAS

Count them Serena.

SERENA

One step. Two steps. Three steps. Four steps. Five steps. SSS

LUCAS
Six steps.

SERENA
Six steps. Seven steps. Eight Steps. Nine steps. I got to the door! I am at the door!

LUCAS
Great job! Now open it Serena.

SERENA
Okay. I'm turning the lock to open the door. It is open now.

Lucas opens the door and holds her on his arms. Serena lets her body go.

LUCAS!!!

LUCAS
Amor

SERENA
She-I couldn't

LUCAS
It's okay. What happened?

SERENA
Marie Antoinette.

LUCAS
Mar-Serina, it was a dream.

SERENA
But the apartment.

LUCAS
I don't know what happened to the apartment, but it was just a dream. I'm here with you. You're alive! I'm alive! We are okay. Okay? Ven vamos a sentarnos.

Lucas and Serena somehow without letting go from each other make it to the couch. Lucas finally takes a look at the apartment. The apartment is all broken and messed up.

LUCAS
Serena. Are you okay?

SERENA
I don't know

Blackout. End of Act 1

Act II

Scene 1

Serena's apartment is all broken except for the table. The table is clean, and Serena is setting it up and getting everything ready. She is dressed in a 1950's dress style, simple but elegant. The type of dress that women use for tea parties. Lights reveal only the table and then start opening to the rest of the space. A foggy feeling is created. Serena sets the kettle on the stove and starts her tea ritual until the kettle pops. Sets up the table for two. Everything is ready and beautiful. She puts a candle on the table and starts lighting it. She then sits and waits. Silence. Slowly the creepy lullaby starts playing in the background. The shadow of Marie-Antoinette is seen. Serena serves the cups of tea.

SERENA

I was waiting for you. We need to talk

Marie-Antoinette walks insect-like towards the table.

Would you like some tea?

Marie-Antoinette sits down. She accepts the cup of tea.

Would you like some sugar or honey?

Marie-Antoinette doesn't answer, but Serena continues preparing the tea.

There are some desserts here. Feel free to take whichever one you like.

Marie-Antoinette looks at the plate and takes a macaroon. She starts eating it.

I can't continue like this. You are affecting my life and stopping me from moving on. I need to move on. I love him, and I want to be with him. I also want to feel better. Don't you want me to feel better?

Marie-Antoinette doesn't answer.

I need to heal. I want this to work-out. It is important for me that it works out. I need to know that not everything is lost, and that I can still change and be happy. You can't stop me from trying to be happy.

Marie-Antoinette tries to do something...Serena stops her.

No. If I invite you here, it is to have a conversation with you. I want to listen to you. I want to understand you and know how to help you. How to help me. I know I can find a way to fix this.

MA: You can't fix me.

SERENA

Then I will work hard to make you disappear.

MA: You can't vanish me.

SERENA

What do you want from me?

MA: I want to protect you.

SERENA

I can handle myself. I don't need protection.

VOICE: Why did you allow them to lock you in that closet? Are you that stupid to believe they wanted to be your friends? She left you alone at the institute. You weren't enough to keep him alive.

SERENA

Maybe I didn't understand what was happening then. I can't be sure of what will happen. But I feel calm when I am around him. He makes me feel safe and confident. He listens to me and doesn't run away when I get crazy. You know we haven't seen that before. I feel good when I am with him. His touch has a melting effect. I do feel defensive, but he talks to me. You need to talk to me too.

Marie-Antoinette keeps drinking. Shadows come out of her, and fog starts building, but there is somewhere a grounding effect helping settle Serena down. There are smells of rotten things, and small scents of lavender. More voices, one on top of each other are heard. Serena stays neutral and grounded. Marie-Antoinette starts circling and trapping her.

I can't keep fighting you. I need you as much as you need me. It hurts - all these questions and doubts. All the images you put in my head. I don't want to relive everything I had to go through in the institute every day, for the rest of my life. I am a different person now.

Marie-Antoinette laughs.

I want to be a different person now.

A static sound starts playing.

I want to be happy. I want to let myself go without having to control every single thought or movement. I don't want to dress this way anymore. I don't want to feel this emptiness anymore. Do you understand that? I know they can hurt me, but you need to help me through it, not to force me or make me see things out of place.

Marie-Antoinette stops moving. The sound becomes calm and warm. Marie-Antoinette sits down again at the table.

This is sometimes more painful than being hurt by people. I would rather have my heart broken than my lungs pressed down. I thought you were my friend. I thought you were supposed to take care of me. Why are you doing this?

Marie-Antoinette imitating Serena

MA: Would you like more tea?

SERENA

I would love to.

Suddenly a bright light with a combination of colour lights explodes on stage, and out of that a series of images and sounds combining laughter and crying comes to life. A soft delicate upbeat melody starts playing. Marie-Antoinette takes Serena's hand. Serena sees her mom hugging her before leaving her in the institute.

Why did you leave me there?

Marie-Antoinette takes Serenas hand.

MA: She is only human.

Serena grabs a dessert from the plate and starts eating it. An image of her grandfather talking to her about Marie-Antoinette passes in front of her. He is hugging her. She takes a bite.

Why did you leave me when I needed you the most?

MA: He loved you.

Serena keeps eating. An image of her alone in the institute appears in front of her. She is crying. The little girl in the picture stares back at her but doesn't say anything.

I'm sorry I left you. I'm sorry I didn't know how to protect you. I am sorry.

MA: You couldn't take care of her.

SERENA

It wasn't...I tried...I just...How could I? *She turns and looks at the kid.* I will make it up to you I promise. I will be happy for you.

MA: You will never anticipate the pain. You will never be able to stop it.

SERENA

I know I can. I know I can.

MA: No, you don't.

Serena looks at the food she is eating and sees her reflection in Marie-Antoinette.

SERENA

I don't want this pain anymore.

A knock-on Serena's door is heard. Marie-Antoinette disappears. Serena walks at the door and opens. Lucas enters.

LUCAS

Hola mi amor! Como estas?

Serena throws herself to Lucas.

SERENA

I missed you a lot!

Lucas helps Serena to leave the costume behind- Scene 5

Serena and Lucas start drinking alcohol. Lucas has a bag full of baggy clothes next to him.

LUCAS

Love, do you remember the day we were asking each other questions, and that I asked you if you were comfortable using this costume?

SERENA

It isn't a costume, but I do remember.

LUCAS

Want to try a different style for a day?

Lucas takes a bag with some sweats and a t-shirt and gives it to Serena.

SERENA

Lucas. I don't use these types of clothes.

LUCAS

Try it. It is just you and me, no one else needs to know. If you don't like it, I will help you back on those garments.

SERENA

Ok, but you will need to help me get out of them too.

Lucas starts helping Serena to get out of her dress. Serena goes to one of the corners and keeps undressing herself. She then changes to the new clothing and comes out.

LUCAS

How do you feel?

SERENA walks towards the mirror and sees her reflection and Marie-Antoinette next to her. Marie-Antoinette doesn't say anything and stares at her only.

SERENA

I look different.

Lucas starts taking the wig away and letting Serena's hair down. Serena stares at Luca's eyes.

SERENA

Lucas, I-

Serena tries to speak but is suddenly stuck in plastic wrap. Serena tries to talk to Lucas and tell him how she feels but the plastic doesn't allow the sound to come through. Serena tries to get free but can't. She tries to touch Lucas, to call Lucas' attention, but is as if she was trapped, no way to go. This barrier becomes her prison. A bright light comes out of this whole and blinds everything around. MA is next to this plastic structure.

LUCAS

What's wrong?

SERENA unable to speak throws herself to Lucas and starts kissing Lucas desperately. She presses her body against him without allowing Lucas to react.

LUCAS

Hey Serena. Amor. Calm down. *Serena keeps kissing and pressing herself to him.* Serena. This isn't the way to go. Calm down. Serena what are you doing? Stop touching me like that. Serena.

Serena keeps building and building the action until Lucas freezes himself.

MA

Is this how you show your love?

SERENA's internal voice

I was taught to please him. I don't know how to express my feelings for him. He needs to know. I can show him this way.

LUCAS

What are you doing? Serena que te pasa?

SERENA's internal monologue (repeats multiple times as if it was a prayer)

I love you Lucas. I want to let you know that I love you. I want to be free. I will be free. I just need to show you. Stop moving. Listen to me! You need to touch me. You need to feel it. If you touch me the voices will go away, and will be able to speak again.

A collage of voices starts playing, as if all the ghosts were set free.

LUCAS

Serena stop! Para! Serena que es lo que quieres hacer?

Serena keeps pushing herself into Lucas. She grabs him with enough strength that Lucas can't seem to move or be able to do something to escape her. Lucas freezes.

MA

Do it then. Destroy the only good thing you have ever had. You can possess, but you will never deserve love this way.

LUCAS/MA: Stop Serena!

Serena stops but keeps hold of Lucas. She then sees what she is doing, and the entire stage freezes. Silence reigns. All lights go back to normal. The audience lights go up. The game/fantasy is over. Then, lights go down on serena in a spotlight. She walks away from Lucas and sits.

LUCAS

What were you trying to do? *Silence* I gotta go Serena. I don't want to be here anymore. We can't continue like this. You can't have me this way. Is this who you truly are?

Serena faces anxiety part 2

Voices start playing in the background. They all say horrible things about Serena. The heartbeat sound is high and loud. The vibration is felt. Serena looks at her reflection ones more.

SERENA

I am sorry. I am really sorry.

Marie-Antoinette enters and sits down in one of the chairs watching everything happening.

I am sorry. I couldn't take care of you. I can't seem to know how to fix this. I didn't know. How could I know? You can't. Is this enough payment for you? Stop. Stop. I...I tried. Stop!

Serena breaks. Surreal Lucas appears.

I don't know how to love. I don't know how to let myself be loved by someone. I didn't know how to take care of you. I'm sorry. I couldn't. I...I want to change. I want this to go away. I have been trying for it to go away. I don't know what else to do. I love you. You do, too right?

A shift: reflecting on the assault scene, having to because she is left alone again

Why is it that men say they want me but then don't, I'm always seen to "be asking for it", but then when I finally succumb to my urges and needs, they don't want it? why doesn't he want me? who would want me? I'm just a pathetic disappointment, I'll never be able to find love.

Sees Surreal Lucas, Really sees him and realizes that she needs him, wants, him, wants to fix this for him.

Lucas!! I'm sorry. I'm sorry I hurt you, I shouldn't have done that, I couldn't. I...I don't even know what's going on in my head anymore... I.. I.. I want to change. I want this to go away. I have been trying for it to go away. I don't know what else to do. I love you. You do too right?

Serena looks at her reflection.

Is this truly the monster I have become?

MA

You are only protecting yourself.

SERENA

How do I fix this? How can I make this okay? How can I be with him? I love him. I care about him. Every time I am with him, I feel like things can be possible. I don't feel so afraid. Even when he isn't around, his words and actions stay there with me. I am hopeful. Everything seems better and possible. I can run far off to the distance, and I can still feel my connection with him. He anchors me. He sees me. I am so sorry. How do I heal him? Where do I start?

MA

Talk to him Serena. Tell him the truth.

Serena grabs it and dials a number. Lucas answers.

SERENA

Hello! No, please wait. Can we talk? I know what I did was wrong, but I need to tell you something. Can I meet you at my place? I need to talk to you. Come to my place please.

The phone call ends. The lights go down. The stage is clear and the only thing we see is the table at Serena's place, and the tea-set area. Serena stands up and walks towards the tea-set area. Sets the kettle

on the stove. She then goes to the table and waits. Lucas arrives when the kettle always hits the highest boiling moment.

Serena talks about Anxiety with Lucas

Lucas enters the space. Serena is doing her tea ritual and setting the table for both. The light is set up as a romantic atmosphere and intimate.

SERENA

Would you like some tea?

LUCAS

What do you want to talk about?

Lucas sits down. Serena serves some tea for Lucas and herself.

Serena

I'm sorry about what happened. I didn't-

Lucas

What were you thinking Serena? What were you trying to do?

SERENA

I-That's why I need to talk to you. I was trying to show you that I-

LUCAS

That you want?

SERENA

That I can be a good partner for you Lucas. I know how to satisfy a man.

LUCAS

What? Why would I want? What do you think I want from you Serena?

SERENA

I know you like me.

LUCAS

No, Serena! I love you. But what you did crosses a line. It was like you wanted to

SERENA

Assault you? Hear me out, Lucas.

Lucas starts drinking his tea.

When I am around you, I feel so vulnerable. I feel so exposed, as if I was naked and there were a million heads watching me. That scares me. It paralyzes me. So, my heart starts hurting and my lungs start collapsing, and I feel like the entire world will collapse at any second. It's hard to focus, keep up with

things. I thought if I show you how I felt rather than talk. If you knew that I could make you happy, I would be able to forget that I don't feel like I belong here and that I don't think I am good enough for you or this new life. I am not the perfect housewife, and I won't be Lucas.

LUCAS

Here we go again. I am not-

SERENA

Interested in the perfect housewife. I know, but I am. I am interested in giving you the best I have. I want you to be happy and proud of me. I want you to feel like you can show me off with your friends. I want to be a model to other wives. I want to dream with you, have kids, form a family, build a home. I want all those things Lucas. But when my heart aches and my lungs collapse, I can't think clearly. I just see this void. The one that shows me that you will abandon me sooner rather than later when you realize I can't be more than this. I am sorry Lucas. I don't want to lose you. I don't want to fail this time. I don't know how to love though. I don't know how to be vulnerable and open. I don't know how to stop being afraid of love.

It is hard for me to understand that you love me. It doesn't make sense. I am not used to people loving me Lucas. I feel like is fake. It isn't real. This isn't real.

LUCAS

But it is. I do love you.

SERENA

I know that now. You are here. It wouldn't make sense that you are here after what I did. I am sorry. I wanted to be free. I wanted to break away from this prison. I wanted to stop feeling so helpless. I wanted to take back control. But I destroyed our beautiful moment, and I can't take it back. I will work on it and find a way to exist with this. I promise.

Serena serves more tea to Lucas.

LUCAS

I haven't been with you all this time because I think your perfect and you are going to be the perfect woman, Serena. I love you. Isn't that enough for you?

SERENA

Why are you here Lucas? Why did you come?

LUCAS

Because I care about you, and I believe that we can work on this together. I feel home next to you. I feel calm and happy.

SERENA

I don't feel safe in this place anymore. I want to move to another place. I want to start again. Will you help me start again?

Pizza proposal

Lucas enters holding a big roll of plastic, or an environmental friendly option to set on the floor.

LUCAS

Serena, are you ready?

Serena enters wearing a 1950's dress with Marie-Antoinette Shoes.

SERENA

I don't feel safe here anymore Lucas.

LUCAS

It'll be okay. We will fix the house and create a new safe place. Help me roll this out first. *Lucas and Serena set the plastic around the floor to get ready to paint. They finished.* Are you hungry?

SERENA

Starving.

LUCAS

Pizza?

SERENA agrees and answers with a specific high-class ingredient. Lucas exists. Serena exists and changes into pants, she keeps the shoes. Serena enters. Lucas enters with pizza.

LUCAS

Nice pants.

SERENA

I just got tired of wearing the dress.

LUCAS

I'm not judging. So, are you more comfortable?

SERENA

You know what, I am!

Lucas comes closer and kisses her on the lips. Serena accepts the contact but feels uncomfortable. Serena walks towards the counter and grabs plates and cups and sets the table perfectly. They sit down and eat pizza while classic music plays in the background. Serena starts eating the pizza with a fork and a knife.

SERENA

Lucas. I have a question for you.

LUCAS

Yes, mon coeur?

SERENA

Would you move in with me?

Lucas stops eating for a second and looks to Serena.

LUCAS

I don't know Serena. Maybe we need some more time?

SERENA

You don't want to live with me?

LUCAS

No. That's not what I mean, pequeña. I do. But...Look, I have travelled the world, move so many times, said goodbye to too many people. I experienced loneliness in its bare bones and learned 4 languages. Then, I met you. You need to know that changed everything. *Pause.* You also have had a rough life. People left you, bully you, abuse you. It has taken a lot of work for you to accept that pain and find a way to honour it. *Pause.* I don't want to move in with you Serena. *He takes a box and puts in on Serena's plate on top of her pizza.* This is what I want. This is what we deserve.

Serena cuts the part of the pizza where the ring sits. She starts playing with it. She brings the piece of pizza and the ring to her mouth. She grabs the ring.

SERENA

Okay...But...Let's build this place first!

LUCAS

Where do you want to start?

SERENA

The walls?

The rest of the scene is an improvised dialogue and movement. Lucas exits to grab 2 cans of paint and brushes. He enters, gives the material to Serena and they start painting. The entire scene needs to show how slowly Serena and Lucas become a team that can work together, and how Lucas is an emotional support to Serena when things get difficult. The amount of work needs to feel equal. While they are working a creepy lullaby is played in the background and Marie Antoinette enters. Serena feels her presence. Maria Antoinette brings basic living items to furnish the room and leaves the tea set for last. Marie-Antoinette exits. Lucas and Serena finish painting. They clean up and remove the plastic.

SERENA

Let's move in together first.

LUCAS

I don't know Serena.

SERENA

Please?

LUCAS

Only if we organized the wedding while we are living together. I don't want this to be temporary Serena.

SERENA

Okay.

LUCAS

I love you, my Calmness.

SERENA

I love you, my Crazyiness.

Marie-Antoinette touches Serena's shoulder. Serena touches Marie-Antoinette.

MA

You are free now.

Marie-Antoinette melts. Lights fade out.

The End