

Alessandro Marin

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People: Alessandro

Narrator (someone *in Venetian mask?*)

Alisa, Eli, Jos, Sandrine, Mariangela, Lucy

Props: cans of food, death-metal t-shirt, boxes, papers, some chairs (for the cars), mobile phone (long hair wig for Alessandro?)

Narrator:

Not so long time ago in a country not so far away, Alessandro, a musical artistic soul from refined VENICE, got his life totally transformed...

Alessandro:

Where am I?

I have felt asleep in my gondola after my long meditation on that beautiful piece of music that I'm working on.

It feels strange. Now I wake up!

There's no sound of music here!

This is remarkable!

He! Senor! Dove e Piazza San Marco?

Someone on the street:

Wat zegt u meneer? Do you speak English?

Alessandro:

Que?

Sorry sir! Where are we?

Someone on the street:

In Amsterdam!

Alessandro:

Mamma mia! What a siesta I made!

Let's stop here and go for a coffee!

He goes to a bar:

Alessandro:

Un caffè per favore!

Marieke (she hears Alessandro):

Ciao! Italiano!? Cosa stai facendo?

Alessandro:

I'm lost!

It's terrible! I'm from Venice! The delightful, enlightening city!

Marieke:

Ho! Poor man! I love Italy! I'd love to go to Venice! I love classic music!

Alessandro:

Si! I love music too! You know I can play music of course! I'm from Venice, the Republic of music! I'm also a master in physics! I love computers, Linux! I enjoy to hear and speak many languages! Veneto, French, English... I heard this strange language they speak here! I'd love to learn it!

Marieke:

Well it's very difficult! Myself I'm learning Italian now. I also love languages! It's so Romantic!

Are you a scientist? I love computers too!

Alessandro:

Si! So you are beautiful and smart! Such an amazing beautiful combination!

Narrator:

So they fall in love for each other's and Alessandro decides to follow his love for science and his love for Marieke to a brutal cold rainy northern Europe. That's a big radical step for a southerner. Luckily Amsterdam is a Venice of North. One of Venices of North, that is, because St. Petersburg is also Venice of North. A Venice with a somewhat rustic touch of Slavic insanity. But there is no madness in Holland. Pragmatism, canals and long legged blond beauties. And of course bitterballen. That's the best mix for cutting edge science there is.

At the VU:

Alessandro:

Hi! I'm Alessandro! Are you Professor Gondolle?

Rienk:

No, my name is Rienk van **GR**ondelle.

Anyway! Welcome to our great group with set of the **art** equipment.

Alessandro:

I love ART! Of all kinds! I'm from Venice the city of ARTS!

Rienk:

Good, good! Here I'm sure you will find the faith of true seeing! You will look at the invisible of nature and discover the beauty of it. Describe the phenomena in your thesis. Write the book to become a **scientist** with a name and collaborate to the world of **knowledge**!

Alessandro:

I'm from Venice the delightful, enlightening city!

Rienk:

I know a lot about light...

Here is Jos, our laser technician. He will show you around and explain you everything you might need to know here. Good luck!

They go to the lab:

Jos:

As you can see we have an arsenal of lasers and equipment! Visible, IR, UV fast, ultrafast, Room temperature, low temperature...

Alessandro looking at the set ups:

It's even more beautiful than Murano glass!

Alessandro in the LAB

Alessandro sits in front of computer screen in the lab. Total mess around him: lots of papers laying around, eppendorfs scattered on the floor, water dripping from pipes ;-), lenses in disarray etc; he moves his head slowly like to the rhythm of music.

Narrator: The biggest challenge of any real scientist is conducting proper experiments

Alessandro throws papers in the air, making more mess

Narrator: and to become one with your set-up

Alessandro pushes over some lenses and drops some tips; he takes out a can of beans from his pocket and places it next to his laptop.

Narrator: and to respect the work your co-workers have put into preparing your samples. Basically respecting your sample.

Alessandro drops eppendorf with his last bit of a super important sample in to the sink.

Narrator: Oops

Alessandro: Jos, Jos?! Could we look inside the sink? Can we open it? Should be easy.

Jos: I am sorry Alessandro but according to the VU health and safety regulation nr 9999sdsr/223/145z we may not perform any plumbing work ourselves. We have to ask Regine to ask the people upstairs to apply to the administrative office in the main building and they will apply to the Ministry of Plumbing on our behalf to send a specialist to come and have look. It may take a while, I am afraid...

Jos looks sadly at Alessandro and when Alessandro turns around he leaves quickly.

Alessandro: Please? It was my last bit of a sample. I haven't got anymore.

What is this imbroglia! And now the cryostat always breaks when I need to use it!

Alessandro opens the door and looks around corridor but Jos has promptly disappeared. Alessandro goes back to the lab and puts on some hard trash metal music.

Alisa & Mariangela are standing in the dark lab near Alessandro (but they cannot see him- maybe we could use a curtain of some sort?). There's some soft humming:

Voice (whispering): Uhooo uhooo uuuuuuuuu

Mariangela: Did you hear it? What's going on?

Voice: Uhooo uhooo uuuuuuuuu uuuuuu uhooo

Alisa: Aren't they renovating something downstairs?

Voice: Uuu hooo hooo uuu hooo hooo

Mariangela: No; they were supposed to renovate but it's being delayed.

Alisa: it's the pipes- I've seen a plumber disassembling the sink in the morning

Voice: Mmmm mmmm uuuuu mmmmm

Mariangela: This sound is not normal!

Alisa: well, maybe it's paranormal? I've heard stories....

Mariangela: You don't believe in this rubbish, do you?

Voice: Uuuuuuuuu?

Alisa: well, every lab needs a ghost!

Voice: Uhooo uhooo mmmmm uhooo!

Finally the girls irritated move the curtain and there is Alessandro listening to some softly played music from his laptop

Alessandro and conferences

Narrator: Conferences play an important role in life of every scientist. It's the opportunity to learn a lot, to see a lot, to have some little fun and to bond with your coworkers and colleagues. Which is essential for the future positions and grants and generally pleasant working atmosphere. Also our southern lover followed that well known path and set to visit Scotland which is basically the same as Italy: hilly and beautiful.

Eli, Sandrine, Alisa are preparing to drive to the mountains to do trekking. Backpacks, good shoes, rain proof jackets. Alessandro is in sneakers with a sport jacket.

Alessandro: Are we going to do some hill walking?

Alisa: Do you have something else besides the guide? Some hiking gear? It could get chilly up there.

Alessandro (*puzzled*): No?

Alisa: look, they have lots of sport shops in Glasgow. You could go and check what they have.

Alessandro: Ok, I'll have a look.

Alessandro goes to the shops and after a while comes back with nothing.

Alisa: And? Did you get the stuff?

Alessandro: No, nothing fitted me. But look, I got the guide!

Shows a book enthusiastically.

Narrator: And so they went into the Highlands' mist and mud.

Eli, Sandrine, Alisa and Alessandro are sitting in one car(on chairs); Alessandro in a front seat, keeping his head in his hands and making painful noises.

Alessandro: Ooooo ooooo

Alisa (*who is driving*):What's the matter Ale?

Alessandro: I will die! I will certainly die here.

Alisa: Be strong Alessandro. It's not so long now.

Alessandro: Aaaaah I don't feel well. I do not like travelling by car.

Alisa: We are almost there Ale! Soon we will walk in fresh air.

Alessandro (*looks in much pain*): Ooooo. Good good.

Narrator: And so our brave explorers arrived at the expedition starting point all ready and enthusiastic.

People jump out of cars, get ready and hit the road. After some short time Alessandro loses his cheerful appearance.

Alessandro: Ooooo

Eli: what is the matter Alessandro?

Alessandro: it's tiring it's high and the air is too fresh.

Eli: well, that's the beauty of hiking!

Alessandro: and it's starting to rain!

Eli: yes! Put on your raincoat!

Alessandro: raincoat? What raincoat? I don't have any raincoat! My shoes are wet!

Eli: Why Ale! Where are your hiking shoes?

Alessandro: what hiking shoes? Do you need special shoes? A special jacket? This is stupid. And you go up and then come down? What's the point?! I do not like it. May I have my guide?

Eli hands him his guide; he takes it, go aside takes out a mobile and calls travelling agency:

Alessandro: hello? I would like to book a flight to Italy. Tonight. Yes, thank you!

He leaves his astonished companions.

Alessandro and the food

Narrator: Luckily there are more opportunities to bound with your coworkers than just conferences. After all you cannot go wrong with food. Whatever they say about culinary cultural differences....

Coffee room lunch time. Everybody sits around, eating. Alessandro arrives. From his pocket he takes out a small can of beans. From his other pocket he takes out medium size can of beans. From his bag he takes out big can of beans, small can of tuna, big bag of marshmallows and a lettuce and starts to prepare a salad: he sticks tomato on a fork, pours it with water over the bin; Starts to salt the salad.

Lucy: Nice lunch Alessandro.

Alessandro is salting the salad.

Alessandro: yes, I am trying to eat healthily. And no animals.

He takes out the sausage and place it next to the marshmallows bags. Salts the salad.

Lucy: Oh really? And what is that?

She takes the sausage, looks at it, smells it...

Alessandro: well, it's a vegetarian sausage. It's very good. Almost as good as the real thing! Do you want to try?

Alessandro is salting the salad like there is no tomorrow.

Lucy: Come on Alessandro!!! it looks like a sausage, it smells like a sausage, it even tastes like a sausage! but it's all fake!!! If you want to be a vegetarian be a vegetarian! If you want to eat a sausage eat the real thing!

Alessandro drops the whole salt he has into the salad.

Alessandro and the paranimfen

Narrator: Food and music and science come together on that one special day when PhD student loses that dreadful “student” sobriquet and becomes a full doctor. But before he can enjoy the fame money women and wine that of course become the fate of all PhDs Alessandro must present himself properly at the defense ceremony.

People are standing around (girls boys etc)

Alessandro: Guys guys! I have an offer you cannot refuse! I will grant you the special honour and choose one of you as a paranimf. This is a very responsible function. I expect you to be presentable and noble and well dressed.

People (together): Oh nice Ale! I always wanted to be a paranimf! Pick me Alessandro, pick me!!

Alessandro: Not so fast!! I need to choose the best person for the job. Please stand in line.

Everybody stands in line. Alessandro is walking along the line looking at people from head to toes.

Alessandro: Not so bad not so bad at all.

He looks at Rudi.

Alessandro: You are too tall.

He looks at Eli

Alessandro: You are too short.

He looks at Bart and sighs with approvement:

Alessandro: Very nice. Turn around!

Bart turns around. Alessandro looks at him up and down.

Alessandro: you would look great in a dress, but the hair color... It’s too dark... It won’t be symmetrical... I need another blond! Sandrine! Do you have a nice dress? Would you be my paranimf?

Sandrine: But of course Alessandro!

Narrator: And so after removing that last major obstacle Alessandro went to the defense with two beautiful paranimfs and became the full doctor.

The End!