

# **CHASING TIME**

Written by  
Susan Lee Hahn

(847)224-5356

Susanleehahn@mac.com  
susanleehahn.com

Copyright (c) 2017 All Rights Reserved

**Chasing Time**  
**Written by Susan Lee Hahn**

FADE IN:

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - EARLY MORNING

Establishing: The rolling hills of Tuscany hold a cluster of timeless villas in the curves of the voluptuous landscape.

Outside one of the villas, a large fire flames up under a black caldron, igniting a silvery liquid in a cast iron pot. The sun rouses the morning sky as a woman takes a drop of the metallic substance and injects into the core of an apple.

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - CONTINUOUS

The woman moves quickly toward the stables in her Renaissance garb as the morning sun now spills out over the Tuscan hills.

INT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - STABLES - CONTINUOUS

A black STALLION slumps in its stall as SOFIA MERLINI (35), an Italian beauty with soft features, intelligent eyes, and relentless determination approaches the horse with the apple. BRUNO MEDICI (40+) a swarthy man with an earthly sensuality watches with wonder as the horse devours the apple.

The Stallion jolts up, breaks out of his stall and escapes out of the stables and into the soft morning sunlight. Sofia and Bruno each jump on their own horse and chase him.

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - COUNTRYSIDE - CONTINUOUS

The Stallion speeds across the sensuous hills with such intensity, as if driven by madness or joy - or both. The horse finally slows down near a distant, clear water spring. They approach him cautiously as he gulps in water.

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - SPRING - CONTINUOUS

Sofia dismounts and moves to him. She dips her shawl in the fresh water and cools down the Stallion's steamy body. The Stallion finally calms down. Sofia and Bruno exchange a look.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - PAINTING GARDEN - DAY

Sofia paints a blurry image of the stallion as the other artists arrive. SANDRO BOTTICELLI (35) apricot-colored hair, sultry lips, and melancholy hazel eyes greets his students.

Sofia stops painting, disrobes, and strikes a pose. The same pose as one of the women in Botticelli's, *The Birth of Venus*. The wind blows and lifts her hair into it's timeless stance.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - PRESENT DAY

Botticelli's the **Birth of Venus** flashes on the screen in a classroom as if the model had just slid into the pose.

ISABELLA BUONAVITA (35+) stands at the front, surrounded by a classroom of students, perched at their easels. She's a mixture of an erudite Italian and a street-smart Chicagoan.

ISABELLA

Venus on the Half-shell, also known as *The Birth of Venus*, by Botticelli. Here he takes Humanism up a notch because she's naked, the first time a woman's body was celebrated so unabashedly.

She flips to another image, *SPRING*, also by Botticelli. She rotates between the two paintings, the face of Venus is the same woman as the pregnant Goddess in this painting.

ISABELLA

La Primavera or *Spring*, notice that now Venus is knocked up. Good for her! All that nakedness. There are so many things we can say about these paintings - Iconic. Erotic. Timeless. Priceless. Spiritual.

She flips back to *Venus on the Half-Shell*.

ISABELLA

Let's talk about the wind. Anyone?

STUDENT #1

The wind comes from the Blue guy.

ISABELLA

Zephyr. Other forces at work here?

The room is quiet. The students look at each other.

STUDENT #2

The flowers?

ISABELLA

The flowers fall to earth, pulled by gravity. What does that mean?

The students don't answer quickly enough for her.

ISABELLA

The physical world like our earthly bodies or these flowers are captive to certain laws of nature - gravity, life, death, etc. The wind exists higher up, more within the spiritual world.

Renaissance art isn't just about Jesus and his Mamma anymore. The word, Renaissance literally means re-birth in Italian because it's the *re-birth* of ancient Greek ideals, mythology, and allegorical stories. It's the birth of *Humanism* and so many other influences that impact our world to this day.

There are always forces at work that we cannot grasp. As artists, it's our job to reveal the intangible: Light. Air. Energy. Emotions. Subtle. Powerful. Sublime. This is your final exam. Challenge yourselves!

Isabella motions to two models in diaphanous clothing who stands between two powerful blowers. She points them in different directions so the models' hair and clothes will flow in opposite directions.

STUDENT #1

How long do we have?

ISABELLA

Good question! No one knows.

STUDENT #1

How long for each sketch?

ISABELLA

You won't know how long you have for each sketch because this is a test, and it's also life!

STUDENT #2

So it could be a minute or twenty minutes or anything in between?

ISABELLA

That's right.

STUDENT #2

Can you give us an order?

ISABELLA

NO! I don't know how long you have for each sketch. It's random.

STUDENT #3

Can you give us a hint?

ISABELLA

Yes! Make ever second count!

The students grumble with nervousness and excitement.

ISABELLA

No whining! You are artists! You will never have enough time to finish your work no matter how long you live. You are all chasing time - all the time. That's life. Now GO!

She turns on the blowers. The models' clothes and hair become airborne. The students quickly clip their sketch paper to the side of their easels. The artistic energy is exciting.

A SERIES OF SHOTS as the students sketch quickly, their images emerge with varying degrees of talent.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - OPEN DINING PATIO - NIGHT

The colony of artists dine at a long table, overflowing with laughter, food, wine, candlelight, and conversation. Bruno Medici stands up and toasts to LORENZO de MEDICI (40), a homely man with an Etruscan nose and a commanding presence.

BRUNO

It is my great honor to introduce my cousin and our benefactor of this *Paradiso*, Lorenzo De Medici.

Lorenzo stands up, emotions brim from his watery eyes.

LORENZO

Grazie Mille. When the Pazzi family conspired to destroy the Medici family and killed my dear brother, Giuliano - *may God Rest His Soul* - I lost more than my brother that night. I almost all of my hope in humanity. ***They came to murder us in the house of God, right there, in the Duomo, ten thousand people praying and they stab my brother nineteen times.***

I really don't know how or why I survived. I ask myself every day, *How could I repay the grace of God for sparing my life? How can I honor my dear brother, Giuliano's life?* When my cousin, Bruno de Medici took charge of the Medici Colony tucked away in Tuscany, he brought back to life the work that matters most to humanity: art, science, and literature. I lived, so I could support those who help to evolve humanity and to heal our souls.

Bruno raises his wine glass. The others do the same.

BRUNO

To Lorenzo de Medici, ***Il Magnifico!***

LORENZO

Tonight we toast you: artists, writers, scientists, dreamers, Salute!

They drink.

The evening finally winds down. Bruno exchanges a look with Sofia. He plucks an apple from a bowl of fruit, tosses it, crunches into it, and walks toward his private villa at the top of the hill. A flock of peacocks scatter in his wake.

EXT. BRUNO'S HILLTOP VILLA - NIGHT

Soon after, Sofia climbs the steps to his villa. A full moon hangs low in the sky like a spotlight.

INT. BRUNO'S HILLTOP VILLA - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside, rooms of candles glow so brightly, as if the place is on fire. Sofia follows a row of lighted candles to Bruno's bedroom where he waits naked for her.

She slips out of her clothes and into his arms. He kisses her with so much passion that it takes her breath away. They make love with a virility and a sensuality that almost transcends the physical world, like the stallion's run. Their lovemaking finally wanes, and Sofia figures it out.

SOFIA

You took it! The potion!

Bruno answers her with a passionate kiss.

BRUNO

Sofia, you are the light of my soul.

SOFIA

How much did you take?

BRUNO

Just enough.

SOFIA

Bruno! It could've killed you.

BRUNO

It didn't kill me. It made me feel more alive than I've ever felt before!

SOFIA

What does it feel like?

BRUNO

It feels like being young and hopeful and filled with passion. The taste of Life is so delicious and every breath brings ecstasy. It's magic, this elixir. I feel reborn into a new version of myself. There are no words to describe this bliss.

SOFIA

It's dangerous and I don't want to lose you.

BRUNO  
 You won't lose me, Sofia. *We will  
 be together forever.*

He kisses her tenderly and looks deeply into her eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 -COUNTRYSIDE - EARLY MORNING

Sofia walks quickly across the soft hills toward the stables.

INT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - STABLES - CONTINUOUS

Sofia enters and feeds the decrepid Stallion another *alchemy  
 infused apple*. The STABLE MASTER approaches her.

STABLE MASTER  
 What do you feed him every morning?

SOFIA  
 It's just an apple.

STABLE MASTER  
 A poison apple!

SOFIA  
 You see how he runs, so virile.

STABLE MASTER  
 He runs, yes. Virile, no!

SOFIA  
 What do you mean?

STABLE MASTER  
 I put him with all the mares for  
 two months, not one baby.

CUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - ITALY, 1480- MORNING

Bruno is delighted to see her, but Sofia is horribly upset.

BRUNO  
 Sofia?

SOFIA  
 Our stallion!



BRUNO  
He's magnificent.

SOFIA  
He cannot sire any of the mares.

Bruno understands that the potion has made him infertile.

BRUNO  
But you can still have a baby. You haven't taken it yet!

SOFIA  
Stop taking it, Bruno!

Bruno looks terrified. He's addicted.

SOFIA  
You can't stop, can you?

BRUNO  
You don't need me to have a baby.

SOFIA  
But I want you to be the father.

BRUNO  
I will be the father, in spirit.

SOFIA  
Who then?

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ARTISTS' GARDEN - DAY

Sofia sits quietly as she watches Botticelli paint. He looks at her as if to ask what's wrong. She gives him a shrug. The others notice their unspoken communication. Botticelli seems embarrassed. He mutters something about Bruno.

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Bruno and Botticelli traverse the hills on a long walk. Their silhouettes imply a debate as Botticelli resists and Bruno dominates. Botticelli's posture changes when he acquiesces.

INT. SOFIA'S ART STUDIO/HOME - ITALY, 1480 - NIGHT

Sofia has turned her villa into a creative haven. In one corner she has an art studio, another corner has mathematical equations and diagrams, and another corner is her sleeping area that's decorated with tapestries and fabrics. Sandro enters looking shy and sheepish. He hands her some flowers. She pours him some wine and serves him some dinner.

A SERIES OF SHOTS as she seduces him, softly, kindly, and gets him to make love to her, serving as their sperm donor.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1480 - ARTISTS' GARDEN - DAY

Botticelli finishes painting Sofia as the 'blossoming' figure in La Primavera. By now, she is nearly nine-months pregnant.

BOTTICELLI

Sofia, you are beautiful, the  
mother of the earth and Springtime.

He shows her the painting. They're alone in the garden and she places his hand on her belly. He withdraws his hand.

SOFIA

Thank you, Sandro. It means the  
world to me and Bruno.

BOTTICELLI

I leave for Rome in the morning.

SOFIA

Rome? I thought you'd be here for  
the birth of the baby.

BOTTICELLI

I have an assignment for the Pope.  
I must go.

Sofia examines him closely and understands his inner torment.

SOFIA

May God and your angels watch over  
you, Sandro Botticelli.

She kisses him on both cheeks. He's very emotional.

BOTTICELLI

There are angels everywhere, Sofia  
especially in the eyes of a woman.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - PRESENT DAY

Isabella repositions the blowers, which are like opposing forces that battle for control of the air. Isabella walks around, her hair and clothes rise up with the wind. *The Birth of Venus* on the screen hovers behind her. She goes to an easel and whips up a sketch. Her passion to create is unstoppable. Her sketch is spectacular.

As the class ends, PROFESSOR PLENZA (55) a small, eccentric Italian man with a kind smile appears at the doorway.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

Your students love you and you  
always make them better artists  
because you challenge them.

ISABELLA

Thank you Professor Plenza! I mean,  
*Dean Plenza*.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

It seems like just yesterday when  
we were my student in this very  
class. You were my most talented  
student, ever. My how time flies!

He regards her sketches and is visibly moved. She offers one to him. He takes it, studies it. It's brilliant.

ISABELLA

My parting gift to you!

PROFESSOR PLENZA

Where am I going?

ISABELLA

Not you.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

(Smiles knowingly)

Isabella, I met with the committee  
regarding your tenure. They're  
prepared to offer you...

ISABELLA

You'd think that I'd want to know,  
but please, for the love of God, *do*  
*not tell me.*

PROFESSOR PLENZA

Why?

ISABELLA

Because I'm leaving! Today is my  
last day.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

You got into that summer program in  
Florence! I hoped my glowing  
recommendation helped.

ISABELLA

I did get in, but that's not why  
I'm leaving.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

Why? It's only a summer program.

ISABELLA

Because life is too short and I  
can't squander any more of my time  
here, though I do love teaching. I  
need to take a run at being a great  
artist. I'm not growing here. I'm  
not challenging myself. I'm not  
coming back. Please tell the tenure  
committee for me and thank them for  
whatever they would have offered  
me.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

We'll miss you. I'll miss you.

ISABELLA

Thanks. I'll miss you too.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

I want you to know how sorry about  
your mother.

ISABELLA

Thank you for the flowers.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

I know it was a long and  
debilitating illness. She was so  
lucky to have you as her daughter.

ISABELLA

Thank you for your condolences.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

I hope you don't mind me asking,  
but I've read a little about the  
disease that she died from-

ISABELLA

Huntington's Disease.

PROFESSOR PLENZA

It's genetic, right? Do you have...

ISABELLA

I don't know! I don't want to know.  
I just know that if I don't do  
something different, something  
bigger, something that scares the  
life out of me, then I will die or  
a part of me will die.

He puts his hands on her shoulders, looks at her with tears  
in his eyes, then brings her in for a big hug.

CUT TO:

EXT. ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO - DAY

Isabella descends the front steps of the Art Institute, past  
the flanking stone lions and the garbage can drummers. She  
looks back, then at her last sketch. The wind whips it out of  
her hands and launches it into the sky, just out of reach.

EXT. THREE-FLAT APARTMENT - DUSK

Isabella arrives home to an old, worn-out brownstone.

INT. THREE-FLAT APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

She takes some mail out of the box: Isabella and Francesca  
Buonavita. She glances at the fistful of hospital bills and  
puts them back in the box and climbs up to the top floor.

INT. ISABELLA'S CHICAGO APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Her one-room, attic apartment has slanted ceilings and a view  
of the EL tracks. She sits down on a window seat that looks  
west and pours two glasses of wine, placing one next to an  
urn with her mother's ashes that sits on the window sill.

She clinks glasses as the sun sets, then drinks them both. The noisy EL train clanks by the window, then the rattling continues after the train is out of sight.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE- DAY

The rattling sound overlaps an Italian train as it speeds across the Tuscan countryside. Isabella sketches the landscape, like lovers lounging amidst the sensuous hills.

EXT. TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE- CONTINUOUS

A train slows down as it approaches the station in Florence.

INT. TRAIN- CONTINUOUS

Isabella checks inside her one suitcase and secures the urn, nestled amongst her clothes. She descends the train.

EXT. TRAIN STATION/FLORENCE, ITALY - DAY

Isabella steps onto the platform and walks between slices of sunlight and shadows as she makes her way to the street.

EXT. SANTA MARIA NOVELLA - DAY

Isabella crosses the piazza as church bells chime her arrival. She stops and takes it all in. At last, *Italy*.

EXT. FLORENCE - NEARBY SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Isabella searches on a side street and finds an old, fortress-like building. The sculpted doorknocker stares back with a terrified face. She searches, then buzzes *La Signora Merlini*.

The enormous door opens without a sound, as if magically. Isabella looks up, the sky shifts, she enters the fortress.

INT. LA CASA MERLINI - GROUND FLOOR/STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Isabella looks up from the center of the staircase that squares off the building with six flights of stairs.

A door opens on the top floor as sunlight streams down from the skylight in the center. A voice calls to her from above.

LA SIGNORA (O.S. ITALIAN ACCENT)  
Isabella? Is that you?

ISABELLA  
Signora Merlini?

LA SIGNORA (O.S.)  
Si. Si. Wait. I will help you!

LA SIGNORA MERLINI (60+) is a woman of timeless beauty and enduring energy. She catches a glimpse of Isabella below, dragging her suitcase up the stairs.

As light streams down from above, the women ascend and descend simultaneously, moving in and out of light and shadows. They meet in the middle.

La Signora is overjoyed to see her and hugs her intensely. Isabella hugs her back, tentatively. La Signora is Sofia.

ISABELLA  
I'm Isabella Buonavita.

LA SIGNORA  
Yes. Yes, I know. Welcome!

La Signora helps her with her suitcase. Tears in her eyes.

ISABELLA  
Are you all right, Signora?

LA SIGNORA  
Perfetto! Tutti apposto. I'm fine.  
Never better. Come! Come!

INT. LA CASA MERLINI - CONTINUOUS

The parlor is filled with paintings that look like Botticelli himself could have painted them. Isabella is enraptured.

LA SIGNORA  
Would you like un caffe?

ISABELLA  
Yes. Thank you.

La Signora breezes off to the kitchen, tears in her eyes.

INT. LA CASA DI MERLINI - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

La Signora glances at a recipe on a parchment paper, then tucks it to the back of a drawer. She pinches a couple of odd into the espresso holder. The machine hisses and steams.

INT. LA CASA DI MERLINI - PARLOR/PAINTINGS - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, Isabella studies the paintings, which seem to reverberate like a 'live' photo as she experiences then being painted. Isabella blinks as if she's hallucinating.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. AMOROSA'S STUDIO - RENAISSANCE FLASHBACK - 1497 - DAY

AMOROSA paints with intensity and skill. Her subject is a handsome man who is obviously enamored with her. The reverberations are identical to the ones Isabella just saw. Amorosa stops painting and kisses her subject passionately.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. LA CASA DI MERLINI - PRESENT DAY

La Signora returns with two cups of coffee and some biscotti. Isabella stands in front of portrait of the handsome man.

ISABELLA

These are beautiful. Who painted them?

LA SIGNORA

Various artists. I often host Lo Fredo's art students. He's an old friend. Do you take latte?

ISABELLA

(refers to the portrait)  
Who painted this one?

LA SIGNORA

A very talented woman.

ISABELLA

A woman? Who was it?

LA SIGNORA

Amorosa. You have not heard of her.



ISABELLA

When did she paint this?

LA SIGNORA

A very long ago. Come, let me show  
you to your room.

La Signora puts the coffee and biscotti on the table.  
Isabella can hardly take her eyes off of the paintings.

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

La Signora opens the balcony doors with a view of the city.

LA SIGNORA

You've had a long time getting  
here. Why not rest a little.

Isabella walks out onto the balcony as the sky shifts again.  
Her perceptions seem to have an other-worldly sensation.

ISABELLA

It's so beautiful, like a dream.

LA SIGNORA

Do you dream about Florence?

ISABELLA

For as long as I can remember.

LA SIGNORA

Maybe Florence has been dreaming  
about you too, my dear.

Isabella doesn't understand. La Signora leaves her alone.

Isabella unpacks and places a photo of her mother on the  
night table. She showers, lays down, and falls asleep. Time  
passes and the afternoon sun warms up her room.

The SOUNDS of a street fair waft into her room with the  
breeze. Isabella wakes up, then steps out onto the balcony.  
The street below is startlingly quiet and nearly empty.

The church bells ring. La Signora joins her on the balcony.

LA SIGNORA

Is everything alright?

ISABELLA

I keep having this weird sensation.

LA SIGNORA  
What do you mean?

ISABELLA  
Like a Deja Vu. Probably jet lag.

LA SIGNORA  
Let's get you something to eat. I  
would like to introduce you to our  
beautiful city.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA MERLINI - CONTINUOUS

La Signora walks with a youthful bounce and wears colorful clothes. Isabella dons one of her bright shawls. They look like they're from another era. La Signora loops her arm through Isabella's as if they're old friends.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF SHOTS OF FIRENZE - DAY

La Signora is like the queen of Florence. Everywhere they go, doors open and people greet her with reverence and respect.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - DAY

La Signora sips coffee, while Isabella eats hungrily.

EXT. THE DUOMO - CONTINUOUS

They stop to look at the Ghiberti Doors on the Battistero, then walk up the steps to the Duomo as pigeons disperse.

INT. THE DUOMO - CONTINUOUS

They enter the iconic church at the heart of Florence. La Signora lights a candle. Isabella does the same. They ascend the stairs to the top of the Duomo. La Signora sips coffee from a flask, which seems to work like jet fuel.

ISABELLA  
What is in that coffee?

LA SIGNORA  
Shall I slow down?

EXT. TOP OF THE DUOMO - CONTINUOUS

The city unfolds as the sun sinks lower and the colors sprinkle the sky with magenta, orange, and smoky purple.

LA SIGNORA

The sky, she's showing off for you.

ISABELLA

I think you are too. How did you get up those stairs so quickly?

La Signora smiles and gives her a little hug.

EXT. VIA CORSO - CONTINUOUS

Isabella and La Signora walk briskly up Via Corso toward the Ponte Vecchio, swept up with the vibrating, rush hour crowd.

The energy of the crowd and the overload of artwork at every turn transport Isabella back to another time and place. Her perceptions ricochet between the present day and glimpses of a previous lifetime in Florence during the Renaissance.

EXT. THE LOGGIA/PIAZZA SIGNORIA - CONTINUOUS

They walk across the Piazza Signoria. Several famous replicas line the covered galleria of the Loggia: Perseus, The Rape of the Sabine, The David, etc. Isabella has intermittent glimpses of the Loggia in its present day and in the days of the Renaissance.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE UFFIZI GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

They walk under the archway where artists sketch portraits of tourists as the crowd pulses toward the Ponte Vecchio. CARLO PIACENZA (40), weathered, chain-smoking artist with wolf-like features sketches a tourist's portrait. He spies La Signora. On the alert, he zeros in on Isabella. He leaves his easel abruptly and follows them.

INT. UFFIZI - CONTINUOUS

It's closing time and the crowds pour out of the Uffizi Gallery. La Signora leads Isabella against the flow.

La Signora nods at the guards who open the doors for them. She takes Isabella into a gallery with the famous Botticelli paintings - The La Nascita di Venere (**Birth of Venus**) and La Primavera (**Spring**).

Isabella stops in front of them, mesmerized, overjoyed. La Signora watches Isabella as she looks at the Botticellis.

ISABELLA

These are my favorite paintings.

LA SIGNORA

Now that you live here, you can see them anytime. They're all yours!

La Signora looks up at a camera on the wall, as if speaking to someone else. She straightens her posture, flashes a look.

CUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DUSK

BRUNO MEDICI (70+), a decrepid man with regal and distinctive Italian features watches them with longing in his eyes. On the monitor, La Signora positions them so he can only see the back of Isabella's head. She gives him a purposeful look.

Over his shoulder looms another Botticelli portrait of Sofia. His private room is filled with high-tech monitors and a piece of apparatus that looks like a small dialysis machine.

He hooks up to the machine and a silver liquid shoots into his veins. It's similar to the drops in the horse's apple from the Fourteenth Century alchemy caldron.

The elixir works in seconds as he settles into a trancelike state, a look of ecstasy and Medusa-like terror crosses his face as his body transforms to a younger version of himself.

BRUNO

Sofia my love, we will be together again. I can feel it in my veins.

He laughs to himself and breathes in new life.

CUT TO:

INT. UFFIZI GALLERY - DUSK

La Signora stops in front of Michelangelo's haunting painting of Medusa with snakes for hair and a terrifying expression.

ISABELLA

It's hard to believe Michelangelo painted that. It's so unnerving.

LA SIGNORA

It was meant to be a warning.

La Signora keeps walking. Isabelle stares at the image.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF FLORENCE/SANTO SPIRITO - DUSK/NIGHT

La Signora walks briskly, arm looped through Isabella's. They cross the Ponte Vecchio and traverse the winding streets.

A SERIES OF SHOTS from dusk to night as images from a previous lifetime intermingle with the present. The city is timeless, and also new and beautiful as Isabella traverses two worlds simultaneously.

An old man sweeps the steps of his Apothecary. He nods to La Signora, it's hard to tell if he's past or present - or both!

They arrive back at Casa Merlini. The door opens, magically.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE BAR - ACCADEMIA - DAY

Carlo sits in the coffee bar across the street, watching.

EXT. THE ACCADEMIA - CONTINUOUS

Isabella and La Signora arrive at the workshop and enter a courtyard with easels all facing the center. Isabella has another "Deja Vu" of this place.

LA SIGNORA

Ah. Here he is now.

LO FREDO (80+), a small, ancient-looking man appears. He glides across the courtyard with the energy of a fireball.

LA SIGNORA

Lo Fredo! It's so good to see you.

LO FREDO

La Signora, your beauty grows with each passing year.

The two of them share a look. He kisses her on both cheeks.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bruno watches them from his private, alchemy-tech corner in his bedroom.

LA SIGNORA (ON THE MONITOR)  
 May I present, Isabella Buonavita.  
 Lo Fredo is the most respected art  
 teacher in Italy for all times!

ISABELLA (ON THE MONITOR)  
 It's a pleasure to meet you.

Bruno sees Isabella for the first time and is moved to tears.

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Lo Fredo takes Isabella's hand, kisses it, and then turns it over and looks at the inside of her palm.

ISABELLA  
 It's an honor to be here, Lo Fredo.

LO FREDO  
 The honor is all mine, Tell me, do  
 you have un *Fidanzato*?

Isabella looks at La Signora for a translation.

LA SIGNORA  
 He wants to know if you have a  
 boyfriend.

ISABELLA  
 Aren't you a little old for me? I  
 know we're in Italy, but still...

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bruno laughs and then he zooms in on La Signora. She smiles and gives him an intimate look.

LO FREDO (ON THE MONITOR)  
 I'm so glad he found you.

ISABELLA (ON THE MONITOR)  
 So glad who found me?

Lo Fredo and La Signora exchange a look but don't answer.

LO FREDO (ON THE MONITOR)  
 I'm so glad we found you. My  
 English is not so good. You are so  
 lovely. Come, let's go inside.

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

The other students arrive, about twenty of them of all nationalities. La Signora sips coffee from a silver flask.

LO FREDO  
 Let's welcome our new student,  
 Isabella Buonavita! She's Italian.

ISABELLA  
 Actually, I'm Italian American.

LO FREDO  
 Your soul is Italian, my dear and  
 such a beautiful name - it means  
 GOOD LIFE - What I wish for you.

ISABELLA  
 Thank you.

The others welcome her and put her at ease.

LO FREDO  
 We also have the great fortune to  
 sketch today one of the most  
 beautiful women who ever lived in  
 Firenze. La Signora Merlini!

They look at La Signora, who's taken by surprise. She protests, but ends up at the center of the courtyard, positioned so Bruno can see her through his hidden camera. She gives him a deep look of love, longing, and intimacy.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bruno has such intense longing for her. They stare into one another's eyes across distance and time, forever united.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND PAST...

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - 1480, ITALY - DAY

Sofia stands in the middle of the room, drops her robe and stands naked for him to admire. He takes in her beauty.

She's goddess-like and pregnant. He kisses her body slowly. She brings his face to hers, the most intimate moment is the way they look at one another.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - PRESENT - DAY

Bruno watches her on his monitor as the students sketch her. He has the same look in his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA MERLINI - DAY

They arrive back home. La Signora looks worn out and older.

ISABELLA  
Are you all right?

LA SIGNORA  
I just need a little more coffee.

La Signora looks around, as if suddenly on the alert. The streets and alleys appear empty. They enter the building. La Signora looks out again, as if to let her stalker know that she's aware of his presence. Carlo hides in a doorway.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF FLORENCE/SANTO SPIRITO - DAY

La Signora is alone and winds her way through the back streets of Florence, across the Arno, away from the crowds.

Carlo follows her, but has trouble keeping up. This cat and mouse game builds to a crescendo. La Signora doubles back so she's now following him. He turns. They're face-to-face.

CARLO  
Signora Merlini!

LA SIGNORA  
Why are you following me?

CARLO  
I am Carlo Piacenza, the son of  
Gianni and Maria Piacenza.

LA SIGNORA  
Do I know them?



CARLO

They taught at the Università di Firenze. They were scholars in Renaissance History of the Occult.

LA SIGNORA

An honorable profession.

CARLO

They decoded *The Twelve Keys of Basil Valentine*. He was a Monk who found an immortality elixir in the fourteenth century. My parents discovered the secret and unlocked the key to an immortality potion.

LA SIGNORA

Good for them!

CARLO

Not good for them. They took it.

LA SIGNORA

(looks horrified)  
*They took it?*

CARLO

And died.

LA SIGNORA

I'm so sorry for your loss.

La Signora moves quickly away from him and slips through a narrow passage down an ancient alleyway. She's gone.

EXT. ALCHEMIST'S COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

La Signora slinks through a concealed opening. A spark of light flares up at the end of the shadowed passageway.

EXT. ALCHEMIST'S COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

The ALCHEMIST (80+), a lumbering, swarthy man with piercing eyes greets her with reverence. The surroundings are mystical with strange birds and untamed vines around piles of metals. He hands La Signora several small packages. She pays him, then leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Carlo scans the passengers and finally spies MICHAEL DONATI (40+) with his American stride and Italian good looks. They greet one another like old friends, holding back tears.

CARLO  
You look fat.

MICHAEL  
You look old.

They hug for a long moment, connected in so many ways.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRATTORIA ALONG THE ARNO - DAY

Carlo orders a bottle of wine. They raise their glasses.

MICHAEL  
A tuo padre - to your father.  
Remember when he first taught us  
how to fence? He almost killed me!

CARLO  
Remember when he first taught us  
how to drink?

MICHAEL  
He almost killed me then too.

CARLO  
He loved you!

MICHAEL  
He had the best laugh.

CARLO  
And the best Grappa!

They laugh, clink glasses.

MICHAEL  
(suddenly serious)  
You know it was an accident. You  
father would never harm himself or  
your mother.

Carlo makes a gesture to stop the sentence.

CARLO  
He loved you like a son.

MICHAEL

He told me that I was in line to be  
your best friend, or your brother.

CARLO

Now that's a tough job.

MICHAEL

(raises his glass to toast)  
To Gianni, for teaching us about  
friendship and family.

CARLO

And whiskey!

They drink again.

MICHAEL

And to the beautiful Maria, may we  
always remember her laughter and  
her sparkling eyes, and her gnocchi!

They're both teary-eyed. Carlo throws back another glass.

EXT. CASA MERLINI - DOWN THE STREET - A WHILE LATER

Carlo and Michael hide in the shadows down the street. Carlo  
nods for him to look up as Isabella walks out onto her  
balcony. Michael is a tad drunk, but sobers up quickly.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. RENAISSANCE FLASHBACK - 1497 - CASA MERLINI - DUSK

Michael gets a quick glimpse of her as twenty-year old  
AMOROSA on the same balcony from another lifetime.

EXT. CASA MERLINI - DOWN THE STREET - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Carlo watches him. Michael looks like he's in a trance.

MICHAEL

Who is she?

CARLO

I don't know. She just started at  
Lo Fredo's workshop. She's-

MICHAEL

Beautiful. Have I seen her before  
or have I had too much Grappa?

Michael gets another glimpse of her as Amorosa, the artist from the Renaissance who looks similar to Isabella.

INT. CASA MERLINI - CONTINUOUS

Isabella stands on the balcony and looks out at the city. She cries softly, then looks down the street in their direction.

EXT. CASA MERLINI - DOWN THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Michael steps out and is about to call out to her when La Signora appears on the balcony with a steaming cup of some brew in her hands, gives it to Isabella. La Signora scans the area, then peers in their direction with a warning look.

MICHAEL

Is that *La Signora*?

CARLO

It is.

MICHAEL

She looks the same as she did when we were kids. How can that be?

CARLO

She was our grandfathers' age.

MICHAEL

It can't be her.

CARLO

It's her. I saw her on the street the other day with Isabella.

MICHAEL

Maybe she's a cousin who looks just like her. How can she still be alive?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ACCADEMIA/ PIAZZA SAN MARCO - DAY

Isabella is early for class and sits on the steps and sketches some gnarly vines growing on a nearby tree.

Michael watches her from across the piazza as he drinks his coffee. The morning sun angles in and eclipses his vision, providing him with another glimpse of renaissance Amorosa.

CUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bruno zaps himself with the elixir, transforms to a younger version, and turns on his monitors and finds Isabella on the steps. He zooms in and watches as she sketches the intertwining vines, which look like two lovers in the throes of passion or two people trying to get free.

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD/PIAZZA SAN MARCO - DAY

Michael approaches her and sits next to her on the steps.

MICHAEL  
(refers to drawing)  
Do you mind?

She shows him her sketch of the vines and the allegorical figures who are intertwining or wrestling.

MICHAEL  
Holding on or letting go?

ISABELLA  
You tell me.

He hands her a business card. She examines it, then him.

MICHAEL  
I feel as if I've seen you before.

ISABELLA  
I just got here a few days ago.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - INTERCUT

Bruno looks startled. He leans in...

BRUNO  
What the hell!

ISABELLA (ON THE MONITOR)  
What brings you to Florence?

MICHAEL (ON THE MONITOR)  
I'm always looking for new artists.

ISABELLA (ON THE MONITOR)  
We're a dime a dozen.

MICHAEL (ON THE MONITOR)  
Or one-in-a-million.

CUT TO:

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD/PIAZZA SAN MARCO - DAY

Michael does his best to flirt with her.

MICHAEL  
When I first saw you, I was sure  
that you were a native Italian, but  
that accent is throwing me off.

ISABELLA  
Chicago. You?

MICHAEL  
I was born here in Florence, but  
moved to New York when I was ten.

ISABELLA  
You were born here?

MICHAEL  
The Donatis are an old Florentine  
family. One of my ancestors, Gemma  
Donati was married to Dante.

ISABELLA  
Impressive.

Michael gets another glimpse of her as Amorosa.

ISABELLA  
What was it like growing up here?

MICHAEL  
Wonderful. Magical.

ISABELLA  
Hide and seek in the Duomo? Kick-  
the-can on the Ponte Vecchio?

MICHAEL  
I fenced a lot.

ISABELLA  
You built fences?

MICHAEL  
 (gestures)  
 Sword-fighting.

The sun shifts. This time she catches a glimpse of him from their other lifetime as ANGELO DONATI with a similar build, Italian features, and the same warm, loving smile.

ISABELLA  
 Did you wear the tights?

MICHAEL  
 Yep. I loved the tights!

ISABELLA  
 I never knew anyone who fenced.

MICHAEL  
 My father was a fencing champion,  
 so was my grandfather, and his  
 father before him. All the Donati  
 men were expert fencers.

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bruno looks stunned. He picks up the phone. *It is him!*

BRUNO  
 Jesus Christ!

CUT TO:

INT. ACCADEMIA/LO FREDO'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Lo Fredo eats breakfast as the phone rings. He answers.

LO FREDO  
 Pronto!

BRUNO (O.S.)  
 You have a visitor.

LO FREDO  
 Who?

BRUNO (O.S.)  
 Angelo Donati.

LO FREDO  
 The juice must be getting to you,  
 Bruno. We haven't seen him since  
 the fifteen hundreds.

BRUNO

You know who I'm talking about.  
That kid from New York who used to  
come here with his grandfather.  
He's outside talking to Isabella.

LO FREDO

That kid? He's harmless!

BRUNO

He's not a kid anymore and he's far  
from harmless. *She's got that look.*

LO FREDO

You're over-reacting, Bruno.

BRUNO

I want her at the Villa tomorrow.

LO FREDO

Tomorrow!

BRUNO

I don't want Isabella in Florence  
with that Donati around.

LO FREDO

He's not the same Donati!

BRUNO

He looks just like him. You'll see.

LO FREDO

You should see how happy La Signora-

BRUNO

Tomorrow, Lo Fredo.

LO FREDO

She's not ready.

BRUNO

She's ready. Ask her to show you  
the sketch of the vines.

LO FREDO

*La Signora is not ready.*

The phone goes dead.

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Lo Fredo opens the gate. Michael follows her in.



LO FREDO  
 (coldly to Michael)  
 May I help you?

MICHAEL  
 Lo Fredo, you don't remember me? I used to come here with my Grandfather when I was a kid. I'm Michael Donati. Donati art gallery.

LO FREDO  
 Who?

MICHAEL  
 My grandfather was Gianni Donati. I used to sneak into your workshop with my friend, Carlo Piacenza to see the nude models.

LO FREDO  
 One of the little perverts! What brings you back to Firenze?

MICHAEL  
 I came to see Carlo. You may not know about his parents who died.

LO FREDO  
 I would invite you in, but not today, I'm afraid.

MICHAEL  
 Why not?

LO FREDO  
 Today I must choose someone for a residence at the Medici Villa.

They both look at Isabella.

ISABELLA  
 I don't know what that is.

LO FREDO  
 In the old days, the Medici family were partons of the arts and sciences. They had a big compound where the best of the best went to become even better.

MICHAEL  
 I've heard rumors that it still exists. *It's real?*

LO FREDO  
It is real and very exclusive.

ISABELLA  
What is it?

LO FREDO  
It's paradise and the chance of a  
lifetime for any artist.

Michael looks at Isabella. For an instant, she looks like both women (Isabella and Amorosa) at the same time.

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

The students arrive and set up their easels. Michael peers through the open door, which Lo Fredo closes and nods.

LO FREDO  
Before we begin, Isabella, please  
show us your sketch of the vines.

ISABELLA  
How do you know about the vines?

Lo Fredo motions impatiently. She hands him the sketch.

LO FREDO  
*Eccoci!* Lovers, embracing. Enemies  
caught in a battle to get free.  
This is art. Life. Death. Love.  
Loss. Betrayal. Reunion. *Brava!*

He shows it to the class. Isabella is self conscious.

LO FREDO  
One of you will be chosen today and  
will leave tomorrow for the Medici  
Villas. If you have not heard of  
the Medici Villa, it is the present  
day version of the Medici artist  
colony, just like from the times of  
the Renaissance that championed the  
likes of Michelangelo, Botticelli,  
Donatello, along with some of the  
great philosophers like Marsillio  
Ficino and the brilliant alchemist,  
the Monk, Basil Valentine who was  
rumored to have discovered the  
twelve keys to immortality.

(MORE)

LO FREDO (cont'd)

Today, I want you to imagine that you are the chosen one, you are already at the Medici Villa and you are creating art worthy of the world's greatest artists. Strive for the very best inside of you, because you only have one chance, one life. Let's begin.

A female model poses as the students sketch her. There's passion in the air as they compete for the one coveted spot.

A SERIES of SHOTS as the students produce remarkable work. They critique it together. Lo Fredo announces his decision.

LO FREDO

You are all extremely talented. Thank you for all your brilliance. Please, everyone help me congratulate Isabella Buonavita!

As the class congratulates her, she looks stunned, overjoyed.

LO FREDO

Domani mattina - tomorrow morning. I'll escort you there myself and will pick you up at La Signora Merlini's home at seven AM sharp.

CUT TO:

EXT. ACCADEMIA COURTYARD/PIAZZA SAN MARCO - DUSK

Michael waits for her across the street in a cafe.

MICHAEL

Isabella!

She sees him as *Angelo Donati* for an instant as he approaches. She hands him her sketch of the vines.

ISABELLA

My gift to you for bringing me such good luck.

MICHAEL

You were chosen for the Villa!?

ISABELLA

I was! I'm so excited and so nervous.

MICHAEL

Of course you were. I was hoping for your sake that you'd get it and for my sake that you wouldn't get it. Selfish, I know.

ISABELLA

Why were you hoping I wouldn't get it?

MICHAEL

Because I want to spend time with you, Isabella.

ISABELLA

You do?

MICHAEL

You're looking at me like I'm trying to pick you up.

ISABELLA

Well...

MICHAEL

I know. It sounds so lame. I can't explain it, but I feel drawn to you, like I've known you before. Or like I *have* to know you now.

ISABELLA

Well, I *have* to pack and tell La Signora that I'm leaving tomorrow.

MICHAEL

Please, have dinner with me tonight.

ISABELLA

Tonight?

MICHAEL

Maybe I'm out of line, but I feel that there's this connection between us. You feel it too, I can tell. It's like this strong pull that I feel in my whole body...

ISABELLA

You have a *strong pull* in your body?

She's coy, glances at his body. He laughs.

MICHAEL  
I didn't mean it like that.

She kisses him. He's stunned, delighted, kisses her back.

ISABELLA  
Pick me up at seven.

She walks away, leaving him aching for more.

MICHAEL  
I will!

ISABELLA  
Don't you want to know where I  
live?

MICHAEL  
I know where you live.

ISABELLA  
You do?

MICHAEL  
You live with La Signora. Everyone  
knows where she lives. She's an  
icon in Florence. Always has been.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. CASA DI MERLINI - GROUND FLOOR - DAY

Isabella stares at the sculpted door knocker, the face of a man who's either in agony or ecstasy. The door opens.

Isabella hears the door unlock on the top floor. She ascends all the way to the top, swirling in and out of light and shadows as the afternoon sun angles through the skylight.

At the top of the stairs, La Signora waits. The look on her face let's Isabella know that she knows.

ISABELLA  
Lo Fredo called you?

LA SIGNORA  
I had hoped it wouldn't be so soon.

ISABELLA  
You knew I was going?

La Signora hugs her. Isabella looks at her suspiciously.

INT. CASA DI MERLINI/ISABELLA'S ROOM

As Isabella packs her suitcase, La Signora sips her special brew of coffee. La Signora refers to the photo of her mother.

LA SIGNORA

She always wanted you to come to Italy, no?

ISABELLA

She always wanted to come to Italy with me, but we never made it here together.

LA SIGNORA

Your mother was Italian, yes?

ISABELLA

Yes.

LA SIGNORA

And tuo padre?

ISABELLA

Non lo so. She never married my father and I never even met him. My grandmother never married my grandfather, either. Most of the women in my family didn't marry. I wonder if it's genetic.

LA SIGNORA

(laughs, amused)  
Who knows!

ISABELLA

Have you ever been married?

LA SIGNORA

No, but I had a daughter once.

ISABELLA

Once?

LA SIGNORA

(vaguely)  
She was young when she...

A look of sadness and longing hangs between them.

ISABELLA

(compassionate)  
I'm so sorry.

LA SIGNORA

We learn to live with things we never could have imagined.

ISABELLA

I lost my mother, and that was heartbreaking. I can't imagine it the other way around.

LA SIGNORA

Let's talk about dinner.

ISABELLA

Well, I promised a friend that I'd have dinner with him tonight. I hope you don't mind.

LA SIGNORA

(quickly recovering)

Of course. I can tell by the way you said, 'friend' that it's someone special. You go. Take this.

La Signora gives her a very colorful shawl. Isabella wraps it around her like a brilliant hug.

EXT. CASA MERLINI - DUSK

Michael waits for her. Isabella emerges wearing La Signora's colorful shawl and has something concealed underneath it. She leads Michael toward the Duomo.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DUOMO - DUSK

Isabella stops Michael at the steps.

ISABELLA

I need to do something before I leave here tomorrow.

MICHAEL

May I come with you?

She nods, takes his hand, and leads him up the steps.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DUOMO - TOP OF THE STRUCTURE - DUSK

She takes out her mother's urn. She looks at him. He hugs her, then kisses the urn, and whispers to it in Italian.

MICHAEL

Grazie mille per questa donna  
magnifica. Promessa di amare tua  
figlia per sempre.

ISABELLA

What did you just say?

MICHAEL

I thanked your mother and promised  
her that I would always...

ISABELLA

How did you know it was my mother?

MICHAEL

Because... I know you, Isabella, in  
my soul - You know me too.

Isabella releases some of her mothers ashes. The wind carries them away.

A SERIES OF SHOTS OF THEIR ONE NIGHT TOGETHER...

EXT. STREETS OF FLORENCE - NIGHT

The city feels alive like only Florence can feel. It's as if they're in a conversation with the streets and the artwork.

- Sculpted faces on old door knockers, gargoyles, and statues seem to smile back at them.

- They stop by a mosaic fountain, the perfectly placed Romanesque columns of a walkway, the reflection of the moon off the Arno, etc.

Their experiences ricochet between the present time with glimpses of their past lives together on these very same streets. Isabella releases some more of her mother's ashes at various places, distinguishing the past from the present.

EXT. TRATTORIA ALONG THE ARNO - NIGHT

Michael takes her to an outdoor Trattoria overlooking the Arno. They order, eat, drink, and sit close to one another.



They walk and talk for hours. Stop for some Gelato. Eat from one another's cone. They have an intimacy that transcends the amount of time that they've spent together in this lifetime.

EXT. SAN MINIATO AL MONTE - NIGHT

They walk to San Miniato Al Monte, a Romanesque church with the white and green marble that shimmers in the moonlight. They both have a strong "other worldly" view of the other.

ISABELLA  
It just happened again.

MICHAEL  
What?

ISABELLA  
This weird Deja Vu. Probably the first signs of my nervous breakdown. *No need to worry.*

MICHAEL  
It must be contagious because I've been getting these visions of you too, but not from today.

ISABELLA  
Really?

MICHAEL  
It's like I knew you before.

ISABELLA  
I keep seeing you as someone else. I don't know who he is.

MICHAEL  
I see you as someone else too.

ISABELLA  
You do?

MICHAEL  
Since the moment I first saw you. Maybe we were lovers in another lifetime, right here in Florence.

ISABELLA  
Best pickup line I've ever heard!

MICHAEL  
I'm serious. I haven't had this sensation since I was kid.

ISABELLA  
So you've been crazy for a while?

MICHAEL  
I have, but this kind of crazy  
feels like we're old friends and  
old lovers.

She kisses him. They each see a glimpse of the "other" merged into the kiss. They look at one another, *it's true*.

EXT/INT. MICHAEL'S HOTEL - NIGHT

They walk back along the Arno until they arrive at his hotel. They enter his room. He turns on music. They dance on the balcony, then move inside to the bed and make love, their bodies intertwining like the vines.

Michael watches her in the moonlight as she falls asleep. Her mother's empty urn is perched on the night table.

ISABELLA  
(softly, barely awake)  
Michael, are you sleeping?

MICHAEL  
Wide awake, dreaming about you.

ISABELLA  
I have to leave at seven. Lo Fredo  
is picking me up at La Signora's.

MICHAEL  
I know.

ISABELLA  
Let's be together in our hearts.

MICHAEL  
We already are.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA MERLINI - EARLY MORNING

Michael and Isabella arrive. La Signora watches from the balcony above. She spies a black limo approaching.

INT. TAXI- EARLY MORNING

She kisses Michael once again.

MICHAEL  
I love you, Isabella.

ISABELLA  
I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA DI MERLINI - EARLY MORNING

A big, black limo pulls up behind their taxi. Isabella gets out of the taxi, concealing her mother's urn under the shawl. She goes inside. Michael gets out and sends the taxi away.

He approaches the limo where Lo Fredo sits in the back seat. Knocks on the window. Lo Fredo gets out of the Limo.

LO FREDO  
Signor Donati, we meet again.

MICHAEL  
I'd like to visit Isabella at the villa. How do I arrange-

LO FREDO  
Impossible.

MICHAEL  
How long will she be there?

LO FREDO  
Impossible to say.

MICHAEL  
I can at least speak with her.

LO FREDO  
I'm afraid that's impossible too.  
No cell phones allowed. The artists  
must remain focused.

MICHAEL  
So it's a cult.

Lo Fredo doesn't respond and they wait in awkward silence.

Finally, the two women emerge with Isabella's suitcase. La Signora look like she has been crying. Lo Fredo takes the suitcase and avoids La Signora's gaze.

MICHAEL  
La Signora, I'm Michael Donati, the  
grandson of Cosimo Donati.

LA SIGNORA  
I knew your grandfather well.

MICHAEL  
How do you look the same when he  
has been dead for fifteen years?

LA SIGNORA  
You flatter me!

Lo Fredo opens the door for Isabella. She looks at Michael.

LO FREDO  
Not a moment to waste!

Isabella hugs La Signora one last time.

LA SIGNORA  
(softly)  
Ci Vediamo. We'll be together  
again. Ti Promesso. I promise you.

Michael hugs Isabella one last time.

MICHAEL  
(whispers to her)  
If you need me, I'll be there.

LO FREDO  
Andiamo!

She looks at Michael quizzically. Lo Fredo gives La Signora a  
look as if to say, I'm sorry. Isabella gets in.

The limo pulls away. Michael and La Signora watch it leave.

LA SIGNORA  
Goodbye, Signor Donati.

MICHAEL  
Signora, wait! Please explain to me  
how is it that we both love  
Isabella so much?

INT. THE MEDICI LIMO - CONTINUOUS

The limo weaves its way out of the city. Isabella quickly  
sketches the last few sites of Florence.

A SERIES OF SHOTS as they weave through the countryside...

EXT. MEDICI VILLAS - CONTINUOUS

An enormous gate with the Medici crest on it barricades the road. The gates open. The Villas unfold in front of her.

They pass the garden where the artists work: nude models in various poses amidst spectacular foliage. There's an other-worldly quality, as if the Garden of Eden has been recreated.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MEDICI VILLA - CONTINUOUS

The limo stops at one of the buildings near the top.

LO FREDO

I'll see you at dinner. Enjoy!

ISABELLA

Where are you going?

LO FREDO

I'm going to spend a little time  
with my old friend, Bruno Medici.

The driver gets out and shows Isabella to her room on the top floor of a stone Villa that overlooks the property.

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLAS - DAY

There's a view of the hills and 'old world' charm (no lights). The driver shows her some new clothes, handmade.

DRIVER

These were made especially for you.

ISABELLA

But I just found out yesterday.

Isabella goes to give him a tip. The driver laughs.

DRIVER

We don't use money here or  
electricity.

ISABELLA

What? But my cell phone!

He nods and leaves. She steps out onto her balcony and notices Bruno's villa. He walks toward her building with two peacocks next to him. He waves at her. She waves back.

EXT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - CONTINUOUS

Isabella comes out to meet a vibrant version of Bruno.

BRUNO

Welcome to the Medici Villas,  
*Isabellina*. I'm Bruno Medici.

He kisses her on both cheeks and is very emotional.

ISABELLA

It's an honor to be here.

BRUNO

The honor is all mine.

ISABELLA

(refers to the peacocks)  
They're beautiful.

BRUNO

The Peacock was a symbol of  
immortality in the Renaissance.

ISABELLA

Are they your pets?

BRUNO

Here, we strive for immortality by  
elevating your art to a level of  
true greatness. Michelangelo spent  
time here, so did Botticelli and  
Leonardo and many more artists and  
scientists who changed the world.

ISABELLA

I doubt I could change the world.

BRUNO

We'll see. In the meantime, make  
yourself at home. Relax. Explore.  
*The Medici Villas are all yours.*

Lo Fredo appears and the two men hug. There's a profound  
connection between them, like they're the same breed.

FREDO

Bruno, a word?

BRUNO

If you'll excuse me. I will see you  
at dinner. Enjoy your new home.

He leaves her. She watches the peacocks scurry behind him.

A SERIES OF SHOTS AS SHE EXPLORES THE VILLAS AND GARDENS.

Every corner is infused with Beauty and Inspiration:

-Gardens with nude models posing for sculptors and painters

-Private workshops with skylights and huge interior spaces for welding and woodworking and enormous installations.

-Science buildings with labs and experiments

-A Library with poets and philosophers writing and debating

-She discovers rolling hills of purple lavender and a field of yellow sunflowers. It's all so breathtakingly beautiful.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF FLORENCE - DAY

Michael wanders through the streets, revisiting the places he went to with Isabella the night before. He squints, but cannot catch any glimpses of their past lives together.

EXT. UFFIZI - CONTINUOUS

Michael finds Carlo sketching a portrait. Carlo looks at him with suitcase in hand and heartbreak written on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLO'S APARTMENT - DAY

The two men sit amidst the clutter of his parents' research with charts of the Twelve Keys of Basil Valentine. Carlo takes out a bottle, pours two shots, which they gun back.

CARLO

Either they were geniuses or  
totally crazy.

MICHAEL

(toasting him)  
To totally Crazy. Aren't we  
supposed to drink Grappa *after* a  
meal?

CARLO

Grappa has no rules. She's like  
love, which is why you're so sad?

Michael guns back another drink.

MICHAEL

I fell in love, then she left.

CARLO

Ahh, the age old story. Who did she leave you for?

MICHAEL

Bruno Medici.

Carlo spits out the Grappa, horrified. He stands up.

CARLO

That woman who lives with La Signora! She's gone?

MICHAEL

She was chosen for a residency at the Medici Villas.

CARLO

You can't let her go there!

MICHAEL

She already left.

CARLO

My parents weren't crazy. They were close to proving that Bruno Medici knew the secret alchemy for the immortality potion, the Twelve Keys of Basil Valentine.

MICHAEL

I have no idea what you're talking about.

CARLO

During the Renaissance when the heavens opened up and shared divine energy with us mere mortals, there was a Monk, Basil Valentine who unlocked the alchemy code for preserving our bodies indefinitely. That's what my parents were searching for, and I think that's what they took, which killed them. It wasn't suicide or a drug overdose.

MICHAEL

That's crazy!



CARLO

Michael, Bruno Medici might be Basil Valentine himself. You cannot let her stay there or you will lose her to *forever*.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRUNO'S BALCONY - DAY

Bruno watches Isabella through powerful binoculars from his perch up high as she enters the stables.

INT. MEDICI STABLES/VILLA - CONTINUOUS

Isabella slides opens a huge barn door and discovers the powerful horses. She sketches as sunlight pours in.

EXT. BRUNO'S BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Through the open door, Bruno watches her every move.

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - DUSK

Later, Isabella returns to find a tub filled with hot water, infused with flowers, a new gown, and combs for her hair. She bathes, dresses, and fixes her hair. She looks like she's out of a Renaissance painting by the time she's dressed.

INT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Bruno stands at the head of a long table filled with dozens of people. Lo Fredo and Isabella are on either side of him.

Isabella looks out at the long table filled with artists, scientists, and others whom she saw earlier during the day. The room goes quiet. Bruno raises his glass in a toast.

BRUNO

Many of you know our old friend, Lo Fredo.

LO FREDO

*Old* being the operative word.

BRUNO

Please welcome an exceptional woman and a talented artist who will be joining us here at the Medici Villas. She comes from a long line of great artists and she's a thoroughbred Italian. To Isabella Buonavita!

They raises their glasses, drink. The sumptuous meal begins.

ISABELLA

(to Bruno)

How do you know that I come from a long line of artists?

BRUNO

My dear, it's my job to know you better than you know yourself.

After dinner, Bruno looks her in the eyes. It's not sexual, but still uncomfortably intimate.

BRUNO

I cannot tell you how long I've waited to see you.

ISABELLA

To see me?

BRUNO

Welcome home, Isabella.

He kisses her gently on the forehead like a father would.

CUT TO:

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - DREAM SEQUENCE - NIGHT

Isabella falls asleep in her big, soft bed as the glow of moonlight dances into her room with the billowing curtains.

In her dreams, memories of her past life as Amorosa float up:

- Amorosa as a young child (age 2) is snuggled in bed with her mother, Sofia, as they read from a leather-bound book.

- Amorosa (age 5) runs through the lavender fields and into the young Bruno's arms. He swings her around. It's pure joy.

- Amorosa (age 8) watches the painters and artists. One of them sets her up at her own easel as she paints next to him.

- Amorosa (age 10) sketches a horse, then jumps on for a ride as the horse seems to have an uncanny connection with her.
- Amorosa (age 12) stretches some canvas across a wooden frame in one of the art studios. She's loved by all.
- Amorosa in the kitchen with Bruno as he teaches her how to cook. She tastes the sauce, then feeds him a spoonful.
- Amorosa with Sofia, learning something scientific in a lab.

In each quick scene, she's happy, thriving, and loved by everyone, especially her parents, Sofia and Bruno.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/GARDENS - DAY

The next day, Isabella enters a lush garden. Nude models walk around unabashedly. She sets up an easel and paints.

Nearby, Bruno reads poetry with some of the writers. His voice resonates. Lo Fredo finds her in the garden.

LO FREDO

What do you think of the Villa?

ISABELLA

*This place is magical.*

LO FREDO

Here you will blossom into an even greater artist. I can feel it.

ISABELLA

If I can survive life without my cell phone! I'm in withdrawal.

Bruno appears behind her. Lo Fredo gives him a look.

BRUNO

Isabella, please, come with me.

She's startled, but she follows him. They leave the garden and climb a path that leads to his private villa.

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

She takes in the spectacular view before entering his villa.

INT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

He takes her through the main floor filled with antiques, rich carpets, high ceilings, paintings, and sculptures.

They enter his lavish sitting room. She catches a glimpse through the open doors of his bedroom and interior rooms.

BRUNO

Once you're here a few days, you'll soon understand why cell phones are an unwanted distraction. They take our attention away from the moment, which is where our true power lies. If you want to be an artist, you must live only in the moment.

He hands her an old time house phone.

ISABELLA

I don't have any numbers.  
Everything is in my cell phone.

BRUNO

I'll look up the number for you.

ISABELLA

The Excelsior Hotel in Florence.

Bruno goes to another room and comes back with the number. She has a moment to take in the museum-like surroundings.

He dials the number and hands her back the phone. He leaves her alone and goes to his sitting room, door slightly ajar.

ISABELLA

(into the phone)  
Michael Donati's room, per favore.

WOMAN AT DESK (O.S.)

He checked out this morning.

ISABELLA

Did he leave a forwarding number?

WOMAN AT DESK (O.S.)

No. I'm sorry.

Isabella hangs up the phone, asks Bruno for another number.

ISABELLA

Would you please find the number  
for the CASA Di MERLINI?

BRUNO  
This number I know.

Bruno dials the number for her. She nods. He waits.

LA SIGNORA (O.S.)  
Pronto!

ISABELLA  
La Signora! It's Isabella.

INTERCUT

INTERCUT BETWEEN CASA MERLINI AND BRUNO'S VILLA

INT. CASA MERLINI - DAY

La Signora mixes up her coffee brew. The phone rings.

LA SIGNORA  
Pronto!

ISABELLA (O.S.)  
La Signora! It's me. How are you?

LA SIGNORA  
I am fine, Isabellina. How are you?

ISABELLA (O.S.)  
Great! It's really wonderful here.  
Have you seen my friend Michael?

LA SIGNORA  
No. I'm so sorry, I haven't.

ISABELLA (O.S.)  
He checked out of his hotel.

LA SIGNORA  
I know you were quickly attached to  
him, but love is unknowable.  
Sometimes. Absence does make the  
heart grow fonder. Just focus on  
your art, Isabella. You have  
greatness in you. I miss you!

ISABELLA (O.S.)  
Me too! When will I see you?

LA SIGNORA

I don't know when, but you will see  
me again. I am sure of that.

INT. BRUNO'S ANTERIOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bruno leans toward the phone.

BRUNO

Please send my love to La Signora.  
She's an extraordinary woman.  
Always has been. I've known her for  
ages and ages. She gets more  
beautiful with each passing year.

He says this loud enough to be heard on the other end.

INT. CASA DI MERLINI - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

La Signora spills some coffee on the kitchen counter. She  
moves quickly to catch the thick brown liquid. She's  
flustered, but smiles.

LA SIGNORA

Please send him mine...

INT. BRUNO'S ANTERIOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Her voice registers loud and clear. Isabella hangs up and  
looks at Bruno. His face has changed.

ISABELLA

(to Bruno)

Are you in love with La Signora?

BRUNO

Everyone is in love with her. To  
know her is to love her.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/ARTISTS' GARDEN - DAY

In the center of the garden, three nude figures are a tangle  
of arms and legs and geometric patterns. Painters and  
sculptors work intensely and from various angles. Isabella  
joins in with her sketch pad.

In the background, Lo Fredo and Bruno shake hands and kiss  
one another goodbye. Isabella runs after Lo Fredo.

ISABELLA

Wait!

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isabella chases the black limo. It stops. Lo Fredo gets out.

LO FREDO

I'm not one for goodbyes.

ISABELLA

Please tell La Signora how much I miss her and if you see Michael Donati, please tell him-

LO FREDO

You are an exceptional artist, Isabella. You are here to grow. Always remember that.

He hugs her one last time and gets in. The limo pulls out and leaves behind a cloud of dust from the earthen road.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MEDICI VILLA - DAY/DUSK

Isabella goes to the stables to sketch the horses and meets ANTONIO THE STABLE MASTER (50) an earthy, rugged man.

ANTONIO

Do you ride?

ISABELLA

I never have before.

ANTONIO

Want to learn?

ISABELLA

Sure.

ANTONIO

You and the horse ride as one.

ISABELLA

What do you mean?

ANTONIO

Let him feel your *energia, tua anima*, your spirit. It's a dance.

He saddles two horses and takes her out in the pasture. She's a natural at it and "dances" with the horse expertly.

A quick shot through Bruno's binoculars. *He's watching her.*

CUT TO:

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - DAY

Isabella unpacks her suitcase and finds Michael's business card inside a pocket. CLOSE UP of his cell phone number.

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - DUSK

The peacocks disperse as she approaches. She knocks. The door opens because it's unlocked.

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bruno is in a very aged and decrepid state. Music plays loudly as he hooks himself up to the apparatus that delivers his immortality elixir. He doesn't hear her knock or see her.

Isabella holds Michael's business card, knocks harder, which opens the door to his bedroom. The series of mirrors gives her a clear view of the horrifying transformation process.

She witnesses the decrepid version of Bruno hooked up to the Alchemists' machine as silvery liquid pours into his veins and reverses his aging body into a younger version.

She freaks out, drops the business card, and runs out.

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

The peacocks scatter as she races across the front lawn.

INT. BRUNO'S ANTERIOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bruno sees the Isabella run away from his building. He picks up Michael's business card and realizes what she saw.

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isabella packs her bags, traumatized. There's a soft knock on the door. She jumps. Stops.



BRUNO (O.S.)  
Isabella, it's Bruno.

ISABELLA  
Go away!

BRUNO (O.S. GENTLY)  
I need to speak with you.

She opens the door. He hands her back the business card.

ISABELLA  
I'm leaving. NOW.

BRUNO  
What you just witnessed.

ISABELLA  
Freaked the hell out of me!

BRUNO  
I'm sure it did.

ISABELLA  
What in God's name was that?

BRUNO  
It's complicated.

Isabella holds her ground, fearless.

ISABELLA  
I don't care. Tell me.

BRUNO  
If I tell you, you must promise  
never to tell anyone - ever.

ISABELLA  
You looked dead.

BRUNO  
What you witnessed was the most  
spectacular scientific miracle  
known to man, but you must never  
speak of it to anyone.

ISABELLA  
Why not?

BRUNO  
Because it could end up in the  
wrong hands.

ISABELLA

What if it's already in the wrong hands?

BRUNO

It's an immortality potion. Imagine if it ends up in the wrong hands, with someone like Hitler or Putin. What if men like them could live indefinitely?

ISABELLA

Is that what you're doing, *living indefinitely*?

BRUNO

*You must not tell anyone.* Promise on the soul of your dead mother.

ISABELLA

How did you know about my mother?

BRUNO

Promise me!

They're in a standoff. She's not backing down.

ISABELLA

Only if you explain to me how you got it and how long you've been taking it.

BRUNO

It was discovered by an extremely brilliant alchemist in the Fourteenth Century who went by the name of Basil Valentine.

ISABELLA

An Alchemist?

BRUNO

Like a chemist or a pharmacist, but with metals.

ISABELLA

And this potion...

BRUNO

We just call it, *The Juice*.

ISABELLA

Who's *we*?

BRUNO

That's not important right now.  
What matters is that you found out  
about it, which ultimately is a  
good thing. I'm just sorry about  
the way that you discovered it.

ISABELLA

You don't expect me to do it!

BRUNO

Oh God, no.

He gives her a look. She's angry and in a defiant stance.

BRUNO

Isabella, do you believe in  
reincarnation?

ISABELLA

I don't know. Maybe.

BRUNO

After all these years of being  
alive, I've seen glimmers of people  
whom I've known previously come  
back to life as new people.

ISABELLA

Exactly how long have you been  
taking *the Juice*?

BRUNO

A long time.

ISABELLA

Round up to the nearest century.

BRUNO

Since the late fourteen hundreds.  
Fourteen eighty to be exact.

ISABELLA

Jesus!

BRUNO

He wouldn't have approved.

ISABELLA

So you were around when...

BRUNO

I knew them all: Michelangelo,  
Botticelli, Leonardo.

(MORE)

BRUNO (cont'd)

People who came here to the Medici villas changed the world in art, science, technology, and medicine.

ISABELLA

What's it like, the *Juice*?

BRUNO

It doesn't matter. What matters is that we continue our work here for the sake of mankind and the planet.

ISABELLA

Art can save the planet?

BRUNO

*Imagination can save the planet.* Right now, our scientists are zeroing in on inexpensive ways to turn ocean water into drinking water. We're close to implementing new technology that will speed up the growth of trees, which just might reverse global warming and provide essential building materials to create homes for our burgeoning populations. Most of the people on this planet don't have a home or clean water to drink.

ISABELLA

What does that have to do with the Medici villas?

BRUNO

We change the world here. We always have. Hopefully, we always will.

Isabella reflects on this for a moment.

ISABELLA

So, you've been alive for centuries. I imagine that you've had hundreds of wives and thousands of offspring, am I right?

BRUNO

I've had many lovers, but only one great love.

ISABELLA

Really? What was her name?

BRUNO

Sofia.

ISABELLA

Any children?

BRUNO

Only one daughter, *Amorosa*.

ISABELLA

Five hundred years, you could have sired a small kingdom by now.

BRUNO

The Juice killed off my ability to procreate. You my dear, are the incarnation of my only daughter.

Bruno has tears in his eyes.

ISABELLA

Me? How do you know?

BRUNO

I know. I'm sure of it.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MEDICI VILLA - DAY

Isabella paints with new fervor. Bruno watches from afar. During the afternoon, she's paints the softer light. The faces resemble a Botticelli painting, angelic and pure.

EXT. THE MEDICI VILLA - DUSK

By evening, when the light is nearly faded, she still works on the painting alone. Bruno appears.

BRUNO

Watching you work today reminded me why I love being alive so much.

ISABELLA

I'm still so freaked out.

BRUNO

Understandable.

ISABELLA

I really want to run away.

BRUNO  
You're free to leave.

ISABELLA  
But I can't leave.

BRUNO  
Why not?

ISABELLA  
Because I love it here. It feels  
more like home than any place I've  
ever been, except maybe Florence.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA DI MERLINI - DUSK

Michael buzzes. Carlo hides in a doorway. The door opens.

INT. CASA DI MERLINI - GROUND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Michael looks up as a door opens on the top floor. He climbs  
the stairs, going in and out of shadows from the light above.

INT. CASA DI MERLINI - PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

She motions for him to sit down. He's nervous.

MICHAEL  
I'm sorry to disturb you.

LA SIGNORA  
Please don't go looking for her,  
Michael. She has important work to  
do at the Medici Villas. *Very*  
*Important.*

MICHAEL  
I'm concerned about her.

LA SIGNORA  
Un Caffè?

MICHAEL  
No, thank you.

LA SIGNORA  
I'm making one for myself.

MICHAEL

Sure. A drop of sugar, please.

La Signora goes into the kitchen. He's drawn to Amorosa's paintings, especially a portrait of one of his ancestors.

He examines it. Mesmerized by its magic. La Signora comes back in as Michael gets a past-life glimpse of Amorosa.

CUT TO:

INT. AMOROSA'S STUDIO/MEDICI VILLAS - ITALY, 1496 - DAY

ANGELO DONATI (Michael in a past life) sits for the portrait. As she paints, there's an undeniable chemistry between them.

INT. LA CASA DI MERLINI - CONTINUOUS

La Signora returns with the coffee.

MICHAEL

Who's this artist?

LA SIGNORA

A student of Botticelli's.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

What's her name?

LA SIGNORA

Amorosa.

MICHAEL

What's her last name?

LA SIGNORA

Just Amorosa.

MICHAEL

Why have I never heard of her? I'm an art dealer and an art historian.

LA SIGNORA

Because a great deal of her work was destroyed in the Bonfire of the Vanities when that heretic, Savonarola tried to destroy the soul of Florence. Even Botticelli burned some of his own paintings.

INTERCUT TO:

EXT. FLORENCE, PIAZZA SAN MARCO - ITALY, 1497

The BONFIRE of the VANITIES is in full frightening force. An enormous fire burns books and paintings. GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA screams like a lunatic with his hawkish nose and dark, Friar's coat. The "objects of sin" go up in smoke.

INT. CASA DI MERLINI - PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Michael looks at her.

MICHAEL

I need to see Isabella again.

LA SIGNORA

You need to leave her alone.

MICHAEL

She's in danger.

LA SIGNORA

She's not in any danger. You just miss her. I miss her too.

MICHAEL

No, really. I have to see her.

LA SIGNORA

I know, but you can't. Not yet.

CUT TO:

INT. CASA DI MERLINI - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Michael bids farewell to La Signora and descends the stairs, moving in and out of darkness and light, as his consciousness moves in and out of glimpses from a past life.

A SERIES OF Quick SHOTS OF AMOROSA and ANGELO'S LOVE AFFAIR

- Amorosa runs out to his carriage before it pulls away. She climbs into the cabin and kisses him passionately.

- Amorosa paints intensely in her studio (the same room as Isabella's with the balcony).

- Angelo lays naked on the bed. She stops painting, disrobes, and makes love to him.

- Amorosa and Angelo out in the country, kissing over lunch and wine at a remote vineyard.



- Amorosa and Angelo meet secretly at San Miniato Al Monte (Romanesque church from Isabella & Michael's first night).
- Amorosa walks through the streets of Florence, hiding her pregnancy under her cloak. She's young, beautiful, and unwed.
- Amorosa enters the Duomo and sees Angelo with his wife and children seated in the center pew. She leaves, distraught.
- Amorosa and Sofia rub an oily tonic on her 'about-to-burst' pregnant belly as she goes into labor.
- Angelo is the only other person in the room with her.
- Amorosa screams as her labor goes into full throttle. La Signora summons a local midwife, but it's too late.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICI STABLES/VILLA - PRESENT DAY

Early morning, Isabella meets Antonio, the Stable Master who has prepared two horses for a ride. She gets on her horse and rides out of the barn. Bruno gets on the second horse.

EXT. PASTURE/MEDICI GROUNDS - DAY

Isabella rides ahead and doesn't look back. It's hard to tell if she's trying to escape him or encouraging him to follow.

EXT. THE FAR EDGES OF THE MEDICI PROPERTY - DAY

They arrive at the same pond where Sofia cooled off the Stallion that first day when they realized that the *Juice* worked. Isabella dismounts and ties her horse to a tree.

BRUNO

You're not trying it, so don't ask.

ISABELLA

I see you've perfected your mind-reading techniques over these several hundred years. Impressive.

BRUNO

Isabella, it's too dangerous.

ISABELLA

And it looks absolutely disgusting.

BRUNO

It is.

ISABELLA

It must feel remarkable to have  
your body resurrected at death.

BRUNO

Forget about it!

ISABELLA

Then describe it to me.

BRUNO

I can't.

ISABELLA

Why not? Is it agony? Ecstasy?

CUT TO:

EXT. TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE- CONTINUOUS

During the same beautiful morning, Carlo and Michael scour  
the small towns and countryside looking for the Medici Villa.

BRUNO (V.O.)

Yes. Both. Imagine a flower as its  
blossoming. The juice shoots  
through my veins the way a wilting  
flower soaks up the water and comes  
back to life, leaning into the sun.

Carlo pulls over and stops to take a pee. They drive on.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

Sounds wonderful.

BRUNO (V.O.)

Except for when you're wilting.  
Then darkness and pain sets in.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

I can handle that, especially if I  
know that it's temporary.

BRUNO

You'll get addicted.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

No I won't. I'm very strong-willed.

BRUNO (V.O.)

Really?

Another stretch of land looks like it could be the Medici Villas. Carlo pulls over. Pees again, shakes his head.

MICHAEL

Why do you keep peeing everywhere?  
Is that your Divining Rod?

CARLO

I'm looking for an invisible,  
electric fence.

They drive fast over the rolling hills.

ISABELLA (V.O. SOFTLY)

Just once. Please.

BRUNO (V.O.)

No. I love you too much. We thought  
we discovered heaven, until we  
understood that it was also hell.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FAR EDGES OF THE MEDICI PROPERTY - DAY

Isabella looks at him. He's misty-eyed.

ISABELLA

Who else takes it?

BRUNO

It doesn't matter.

ISABELLA

Lo Fredo? He looks like he could  
have gone to high school with you.

BRUNO

I'm not telling you and I promised  
that I'd never give it to you.

ISABELLA

Who did you promise?

BRUNO

Sofia.

ISABELLA

Your great love? Amorosa's mother?

BRUNO

Yes.

ISABELLA

You know, I'm not Amorosa. I'm Isabella Buonavita. I'm a completely different person.

BRUNO

Is that so?

ISABELLA

Yes. And you're crazy.

EXT. TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE- LATER - DUSK

Carlo and Michael look weary from a long day of driving. Carlo gets out to pee one more time.

MICHAEL

How do you have any urine left? I truly feel sorry for your kidneys.

Carlo's urine hisses and steams before it hits the ground. Carlo motions for him to pee. His urine sizzles and steams.

MICHAEL

Are we bionic?

CARLO

High-voltage, invisible fence, so the horses don't get out and the intruders don't get in.

They drive around the property and discover a back entrance. They park out of sight, sneak up, and watch with binoculars.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICI VILLA - STABLES - LATER - DUSK

Antonio finishes up for the day and gets in his truck. He leaves out a back gate, then turns on the electric fence. One of the other workers says his name as he's leaving.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE IN THE TUSCAN HILLS - DUSK

They follow him from a distance. He turns down a dirt road. They wait, then drive up. Carlo converses in Italian.

CARLO (IN ITALIAN, SUBTITLES)  
Excuse me, sir. I'm looking for my  
cousin's cousin's cousin- a gentle  
man by the name of Antonio.

ANTONIO (SUBTITLES)  
I'm Antonio.

CARLO (SUBTITLES)  
Antonio who works at the Medici  
Villa?

ANTONIO (SUBTITLES)  
Yes. Which cousin?

CARLO (SUBTITLES)  
Cousin Gianni with the big beard  
and the big heart. He moved to New  
York when he was younger.  
This is his cousin from his wife's  
side, Michelangelo Donati a big art  
dealer. He told us to look you up  
when we were in Italy.

ANTONIO/CARLO (SUBTITLE)  
(They hug)  
Welcome. Cugini!

Antonio's wife comes out. He tells her that he'd like to  
invite them for dinner. She looks suspicious, but Carlo is so  
engaging that they all get taken into his story (supposedly).

INT. ANTONIO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Antonio has two young daughters who giggle and smile at Carlo  
the whole meal. He entertains them and is really sweet.

The girls are shuffled off to bed. Carlo and Antonio go out  
to the porch to smoke. Michael helps his wife clean up.

CARLO (SUBTITLES)  
You work at the villa.

ANTONIO (SUBTITLES)  
It's a good job.

CARLO (SUBTITLES)  
You work with the horses, right?

ANTONIO (SUBTITLES)  
They are beautiful animals.

CARLO (SUBTITLES)  
I would love so much to see them.

ANTONIO (SUBTITLES)  
I'm not allowed to bring visitors.

CARLO (SUBTITLES)  
(takes out a wad of bills)  
What visitors? We're family.

Antonio is suspicious. Carlo turns on the charm.

CARLO (SUBTITLE)  
Where are my manners. Please buy a  
gift for your wife and for your  
daughters. You are one lucky man!

Carlo hands him some big bills. Antonio takes the bribe.

CUT TO:

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - NIGHT

Sketches of horses surround Isabella. She lights several more  
candles so she can see them. She nods off to sleep. The wind  
billows the curtains into the room and they catch on fire.  
She sleeps soundly as the room fills with smoke.

INT. BRUNO'S ANTERIOR ROOM - NIGHT

He has just finished a "zap" of the *Juice* and looks out at  
her room to see the curtains on fire. He races out.

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - NIGHT

Isabella sleeps as the flaming curtains dance around her,  
filling the room with smoke.

INT. DREAM SEQUENCE - CONTINUOUS

*Isabella dreams of fire- she walks through it, fire hovers  
over her head like a halo. She steps naked into the stream,  
fire burns around her in the reflection of the sunset.*

*She sees Bruno surrounded by fire, dancing with a woman. They  
look happy, in love. The fire slowly engulfs them.*

INT. ISABELLA'S ROOM/MEDICI VILLA - CONTINUOUS

Bruno grabs a blanket and rips the flaming curtains off the rod, then throws them outside over the balcony.

The wind catches the curtains and they fly into the dark night like giant flaming birds against an endlessly sky.

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Bruno carries her out of her villa. She's still coughing, but able to walk. He helps her into his villa.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Isabella's face and hair are covered in ashes, though she's unhurt. Bruno wraps her in a big blanket and hugs her.

ISABELLA

What happened?

BRUNO

The curtains caught fire and your room filled with smoke.

He breathes a big sigh of relief and gets her some water.

ISABELLA

I'm fine.

BRUNO

Isabella, you are more precious to me than life itself. You must be more careful. Promise me...

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY HOTEL - NIGHT

Carlo is an inch from Michael's face, which makes him jump.

MICHAEL

What!

CARLO

I'm going to the Villa.

MICHAEL

I'm coming with you.

CARLO

Too risky. You stay here.

MICHAEL

But I'm his wife's cousin's cousin.

CARLO

Bruno will recognize you from Lo  
Fredo's workshop. Stay. Please.

Michael gets up, but Carlo is already out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/ARTISTS' GARDEN - DAY

Isabella sketches quietly in the garden. A group of poets  
read aloud, harmonized by birds singing. It's a slow day.

The peacocks stroll across the lawn. Bruno watches Isabella  
from his perch up high. She looks fine, albeit subdued.

INT. MEDICI STABLES/VILLA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Carlo shovels the manure in the barn. Antonio keeps a close  
watch on him. He smiles, nods, as if he's loving the work.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/GARDEN - DAY

The artists break for lunch and feast on a large buffet.  
Bruno invites Isabella to accompany him to a remote building.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/SCIENCE ACCADEMIA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The building looks like it has been there for centuries.

INT. MEDICI VILLA/SCIENCE ACCADEMIA - DAY

The rooms are high-tech. He shows her the new alchemy lab  
with its shiny metals and glowing tubes of glowing liquids.

ISABELLA

Is this where you discovered it?

BRUNO

I didn't discover it!

ISABELLA

Who did?



BRUNO

I told you, *Basil Valentine*.

Isabella stares at the magical, metallic liquids.

INT. MEDICI VILLA - GENETICS LAB - DAY - CONTINUOUS

She follows him into a lab where horses are being bred. An elaborate genetic mapping system selects specific sperm and eggs, which are fertilized and re-introduced to the mare.

One of the mares is being led in by Antonio, followed by Carlo who stares at Isabella. Bruno approaches Carlo.

BRUNO

Who do we have here?

ANTONIO

(suddenly nervous)

My cousin, Carlo. I promised to show him where I work. It's okay?

BRUNO

(sardonically to Carlo)

Of course. Welcome, *Carlo*.

ISABELLA

You have a wonderful face. Would you mind if I sketch you?

Carlo looks at Antonio who looks at Bruno. He nods.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/ARTISTS' GARDEN - DAY

Isabella sketches Carlo's chiseled features in the garden. An unspoken rapport develops between them. Bruno stays close by, leaving little room for conversation.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY HOTEL - DAY

Michael sits at a cafe in front of the hotel. Carlo arrives.

MICHAEL

Did you see her?

CARLO

I did.

MICHAEL

How is she?

CARLO

Spectacular. She spent the afternoon sketching me.

MICHAEL

Does she know who you are?

CARLO

No.

MICHAEL

When can I see her?

CARLO

I don't know.

MICHAEL

What! You don't know!

Michael's cell phone rings. It's a blocked number.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S ANTERIOR ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Bruno has a look of glee on his face.

BRUNO

Buona sera, Signor Donati.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Buona sera?

BRUNO

This is Bruno Medici.

EXT. COUNTRY HOTEL - DAY

Michael looks stunned. He mouths the words, BRUNO MEDICI! He holds the phone so Carlo can hear the conversation.

BRUNO (O.S)

I'd like to invite you and your friend, Carlo to dinner at the villa tomorrow night. Six PM sharp. We will be having a celebration, so dress appropriately. Oh, and you can drive in the front gate. No need to shovel shit to get in.

The phone goes dead.

INT. MEDICI DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Isabella enters and sits in the middle of a long table.

BRUNO

(to the artists)

As you know, tomorrow night is  
Raoul's farewell celebration.  
We'll begin the festivities  
promptly at six on the front lawn  
where his sculptures will be  
unveiled. Many other surprises  
await, so don't be late!

The evening's merriment gets underway. When Bruno is distracted, Isabella slips away and crosses the compound to his villa on the hill. She stealthily goes inside.

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She lights a candle and the room comes to life. She examines the contraption that delivers the "Juice." She notices that he has electricity to power his contraption.

INTERCUT TO:

INT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Bruno searches the swirling crowd for Isabella and can't find her. He excuses himself and moves quickly out the door.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bruno runs out and sees the light on in his interior bedroom. He runs as fast as he can up the hill.

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isabella slips her arm into the contraption. She presses a button. A startling noise scares her as the liquid warms up.

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Bruno hears the noise and screams. The peacocks scurry away.

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isabella hooks the strap to her forearm. The needle pricks her skin and slides the apparatus into her vein. She changes her mind, tries to take it off, but she's trapped!

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Bruno is almost there. He's screaming, running. *Terrified.*

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The machine whirs as the warm metallic liquid slithers toward her arm. As it's about to enter her body, the room goes dark.

INT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Bruno flips the circuit breaker on the first floor. The entire building shuts down. He lights a candle, trudges up the steps to his bedroom where Isabella is stuck in the contraption.

INT. BRUNO'S INTERIOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isabella is frozen, tied to the machine. Bruno stands in the darkness. The candlelight distorts his expression. He's furious. She's terrified. He rips the strap off of her arm and the silvery *Juice* slides onto the floor.

BRUNO

It would have killed you instantly.  
It's too strong for you and not  
programmed for your DNA.

He's so winded that he nearly collapses. He has also aged immensely, which she can see in the candlelight.

ISABELLA

I'm so sorry.

She hugs him like a scared child. He holds her.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA - PRESENT DAY

The front grounds are being set up for the celebration. Workers move a large, draped sculpture to the center. Another section is set up for some kind of a sport.

EXT. THE TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Michael and Carlo drive around the outer perimeter of the Medici property. The Tuscan hills seem to go on forever.

CARLO  
We're idiots, waltzing in there.

MICHAEL  
He invited us.

CARLO  
This is insanity! You've never met Bruno Medici.

MICHAEL  
He's just a man, Carlo.

CARLO  
No, he's not.

CUT TO:

INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE STUDIO - DAY

Isabella works on an enormous painting with nine different panels. She sketches with intense concentration.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA - DUSK

Bruno stands in the center of the crowd with RAOUL DI FUEGA, (30) a Latino male who moves with the stealth of a Jaguar.

Raoul unveils several of his enormous outdoor sculptures, which are sensual, abstract figures made of a shiny material (a cross between Henry Moore and Anish Kapoor).

The sculptures have the shine of fiberglass, the durability of bronze, and a glassy patina that changes color with the human touch (thermal dynamically) like a giant mood ring.

BRUNO  
It is my delight to introduce to you one of the most innovative sculptors the world has ever seen. His work is generous, sensual, and literally, embraces you. These pieces are not just larger than life, and they ARE life. Raoul, please tell us all about your work.

RAOUL

They're made from 100% recycled materials and are solar-powered so that they give warmth back to the person who touches it. I wanted to make a sculpture that gave new meaning to the words, *connection and compassion*. I designed them for public spaces, so these sculptures can bring warmth back to humanity.

BRUNO

Please! Feel free to explore these. Raoul Di Fuega will leave the Medici Artists' Colony to share his vision and his genius with the world. Tonight, we celebrate him!

The crowd is enraptured as they touch his sculptures.

RAOUL

Thank you, Bruno. When I was first offered the chance to come to the Medici colony, I was skeptical. I thought, who is this man and why is he giving me such a glorious place to live and the funds to pursue my vision? I wondered, what do I have to do in return? All he asked from me was to give all that I have in my heart and soul and to imagine a better world.

Bruno sees Michael and Carlo enter. He nods.

RAOUL

I spent most of my life living on the streets, trying to stay warm, constantly fighting the hunger and the shame. I always wanted to be a sculptor and used to travel from statue to statue in New York's Central Park, studying the details and the composition. I marked the time of day and the seasons by the way the sun heated up the bronze patina and brought me the only warmth I'd find some days.

(MORE)

RAOUL (cont'd)

Thanks to this generous and magnificent, *angel of a man* - Bruno Medici - I can devote my life to offering warmth and beauty to those who have to make the outside world their home. I am forever in your debt. May God grant you a long and healthy life.

Everyone cheers. Bruno smiles softly. They all explore the sculptures and the interactive qualities of warmth, color.

Isabella reaches out and touches one, first with her hand, then with her cheek. It changes color and warms up.

Bruno places his cheek against the sculpture so he's face to face with her, blocking her view of Michael.

BRUNO

I have a surprise for you.

ISABELLA

Does it top yesterday's surprise?

He moves away to reveal Michael.

MICHAEL

Isabella!

ISABELLA

Michael!

She throws her arms around him and hugs him.

ISABELLA

What are you doing here?

BRUNO

I invited him.

ISABELLA

You did?

BRUNO

(to the crowd)

Ladies and gentlemen. We have a special guest here with us tonight, Michael Donati. Many of you know him as a world class art dealer. What you may not know, is that he is also the only American to ever win the European Fencing Championship. *Five times.*

MICHAEL

I haven't fenced in a long time.

BRUNO

Tonight he is going to grace us with his fencing prowess, which he has elevated to an art form. Yours truly will be his worthy opponent.

MICHAEL

I'm not ready for this.

BRUNO

Please, at the villa, we share our talents, as you can see!

MICHAEL

I cannot fence with you, Bruno.

The crowd cheers. Bruno bows and turns to Michael.

RAOUL

It is my going away celebration and I say, let the fencing begin!

ISABELLA

Bruno, please. He doesn't want to.

BRUNO

All in good fun, my dear.

Isabella and Michael exchange an awkward look as Michael gets swept away and taken to one of the villas to prepare.

Isabella notices Carlo for the first time. She's surprised.

ISABELLA

What are you doing here?

CARLO

I'm with him.

ISABELLA

Really?

CARLO

We're old friends.

ISABELLA

You were spying on me yesterday?

CUT TO:



EXT. MEDICI VILLA/ OPEN FIELD - DAY

Bruno and Michael are dressed for fencing combat. Bruno takes out two antique swords with jewels on them.

ISABELLA  
(to Bruno)  
Please don't do this.

BRUNO  
(to Isabella)  
All in good fun.

Bruno presents the swords to Michael. He chooses one.

BRUNO  
(quietly to Michael)  
We fight to the death.

MICHAEL  
What did you just say?

BRUNO  
You heard me.

Michael and Isabella's eyes meet. He looks back at Bruno. The duel begins. Michael and Bruno are equally matched.

Bruno lets him go on the aggressive to tire himself out. Michael lets Bruno take the lead. Their focus is intense. They fence with grace and power, as they entertain the crowd.

Bruno makes his move. He positions Michael so that the sun disrupts his vision for an instant. Michael falls slightly off balance. Bruno fences aggressively until Michael falls down. The tip of Bruno's blade aims for Michael's throat, but he rolls, swerves, escapes. Their eyes meet.

Isabella screams. Michael catches a glimpse of Isabella (first as her present self, then as Amorosa), which fuels him. He begins again.

Bruno nods and takes his stance. **The two are in real combat.** This next round is fierce as swords collide and the men look as if they're fighting to the death. The crowd is silent.

At various points in the match, they each get the upper hand.

After an exhausting run, Michael stays on the offensive and finally knocks Bruno off balance. Michael is quick to place the tip of his sword at Bruno's neck. Their eyes meet again. Bruno's eyes plead with Michael.

BRUNO  
(softly)  
Come on. Kill me. You can do it.

Michael lowers his sword and waves to the crowd in victory. The spectators applaud and release their collective breath. Bruno shakes Michael's hand, then raises it in victory.

BRUNO  
(quietly)  
Next time. You must do it.

Michael looks at him with disbelief. Bruno bows to the crowd.

Isabella runs over to Michael and into his arms. Bruno picks up Michael's sword, gives him a menacing look.

MICHAEL  
(softly to Isabella)  
You're not safe here. He's insane.

Carlo comes up to them, shaken up.

CARLO  
(to Michael)  
I told you he was *pazzo*.

MICHAEL  
(to Carlo)  
Get the car. We're leaving now.

Bruno comes up to them and ushers them into the dining room.

BRUNO  
You'll sit at the head of the table with me.

ISABELLA  
Bruno, if ever behave so poorly to my friends, you will never see me again. Are we clear?

BRUNO  
(nods to Michael)  
My apologies, Signor Donati.

ISABELLA  
I'll be leaving with them after dinner. You can send a car for me in the morning.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Isabella sits between Bruno and Michael at the head of the table. There's a palpable tension between the two men. The evening is filled with food, wine, and forced gaiety.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Carlo drives off. The Medici Villas disappears behind them.

EXT. TUSCANY - CONTINUOUS

Carlo drives quickly through the countryside.

INT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The celebration continues. Raoul keeps the crowd entertained with dancing. Bruno is quiet. Brooding. He excuses himself.

EXT. TUSCAN HOTEL - NIGHT

Carlo pulls up to their hotel and drops them off.

CARLO

I'll be back tomorrow! I am going  
back to Florence.

INT. TUSCAN HOTEL - NIGHT

They are finally alone in his little room.

MICHAEL

He wanted me to kill him!

ISABELLA

He's a little dramatic.

MICHAEL

He was serious. I could see it in  
his eyes. He's crazy or something  
is truly sinister about him.

ISABELLA

He's harmless.

MICHAEL

He's far from harmless, Isabella.

ISABELLA

He would never hurt you because he knows how much I love you.

MICHAEL

Is he in love with you? The way he looks at you. He's so possessive! He's old enough to be your father.

ISABELLA

Truer words have never been spoken.

MICHAEL

He's obsessed with you, Isabella.

ISABELLA

He does love me, but not the way you do. He thinks he was my father in another lifetime.

MICHAEL

*He's crazy.* I've heard he has power over others. It's like a cult.

ISABELLA

It's not a cult. It's an artists' colony and a really good one.

MICHAEL

You have to leave that place.

ISABELLA

I will, eventually.

MICHAEL

Eventually! When?

ISABELLA

Let's not talk about it. I just want to be with you tonight.

MICHAEL

You have no idea how much I've missed you.

ISABELLA

I have an idea.

He takes her in his arms and kisses. Their lovemaking is wildly passionate and fueled by their desperation and impending separation.

CUT TO:

EXT. TUSCAN HOTEL - DAY

Michael and Isabella sit outside having breakfast when Carlo arrives and plants himself at their table.

CARLO

Ciao!

ISABELLA

How was Florence?

CARLO

Florence is like a good woman, you can climb inside her and -

MICHAEL

That's enough!

CARLO

Did you ask her? *Did he ask you?*

ISABELLA

Ask me what?

The Medici limo pulls into the piazza and stops nearby.

MICHAEL

Not to go back there.

CARLO

To help us.

ISABELLA

Help you with what?

CARLO

To find the alchemy potion. The Twelve Keys of Basil Valentine. I think Bruno has it, or maybe he's Basil Valentine.

ISABELLA

(surprised)

What do you know about that?

CARLO

*What do you know about it?*

ISABELLA

I didn't say I knew anything.

CARLO

I could tell by your face. You know something.

MICHAEL  
(to Carlo)  
Please stop with this craziness.

CARLO  
(to Isabella)  
Bruno Medici, he's Basil Valentine,  
isn't he?

ISABELLA  
I don't know.

CARLO  
But you know who Basil Valentine  
is, don't you?

ISABELLA  
I have to go. We'll talk about it  
later.

She kisses Michael.

MICHAEL  
Isabella, please.

CARLO  
Isabella, wait. My parents were  
Renaissance scholars and unlocked  
the Twelve Keys of Basil Valentine,  
the Alchemists' potion for  
immortality. They believed that  
Basil Valentine lived and worked at  
the Medici Villa in the late  
fourteen hundreds.

ISABELLA  
I'd love to meet your parents  
sometime, right now, I have to go.

CARLO  
You can't. They're dead.

ISABELLA  
I'm so sorry. My mother died  
recently, and I understand how hard  
it is to lose a parent.

CARLO  
Please help me, so my parents'  
lives wouldn't have been in vain.

MICHAEL  
Please don't go back there! Let's  
start our life together, right now.

ISABELLA

(to Carlo)

I don't know what I can do for you.

(gently to Michael)

I love you and I do want to start a life with you, but I can't do it right now. I need one more month.

The driver of the black limo gets out and opens the rear passenger door, beckoning her to get in. She gets up to go.

ISABELLA

(to Carlo)

What would you do if you found it, the potion? Would you take it or would you destroy it?

CARLO

*You found it, didn't you?*

ISABELLA

What would you do?

CARLO

I hope I'd destroy it, but I don't know. I just have to know if they were right.

ISABELLA

Thank you for being honest.

CARLO

What would you do, Isabella?

She looks at him, but doesn't answer.

ISABELLA

(to Michael)

Amore, we will be together again in one's month time. I promise you.

She kisses him one more time and goes to the limo.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA - DAY

Isabella walks boldly into Bruno's building, all riled up.

INT. BRUNO'S SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She storms in, ranting. He's so happy she's back.

ISABELLA  
What the hell were you doing?

BRUNO  
I was having fun.

ISABELLA  
Five hundred years and you still  
haven't perfected the art of lying.

BRUNO  
Sometimes, death can be a gift.

ISABELLA  
Is that why you wanted Michael to  
kill you - *as a parting gift?*

BRUNO  
I knew he couldn't do it.

ISABELLA  
Bruno, you can't ask any of my  
friends to kill you. Understand?

BRUNO  
Yes.

ISABELLA  
You love being alive and you live  
with so much passion. *What the hell  
were you thinking!*

BRUNO  
Isabella, I'm tired and my soul has  
been trapped in this same body for  
centuries. I just want to be free.

ISABELLA  
Excuse me for being blunt, but if  
you really want to die, why don't  
you just kill yourself? No need to  
put that responsibility on someone  
else, someone I love.

BRUNO  
Believe me, I've tried and even  
came close once or twice, but I've  
never been able to do it.

ISABELLA  
You can't hire someone to kill you?



BRUNO

Hiring someone to kill me is the same thing as committing suicide.

They stop talking for a moment. A look of recognition crosses her face. *She understands.*

ISABELLA

(softly)

Bruno, I know you want to die, but I can't do it for you, no matter how much I love you. Do you understand me?

CUT TO:

INT. ACCADEMIA MUSEUM - DUSK

Lo Fredo stands alone in the Academia after hours. He faces the David, glistening in all his glory. His face and the David's face have a remarkable likeness.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHELANGELO'S STUDIO - ITALY, 1501 - DUSK

Lo Fredo reflects back to when he posed for Michelangelo as the David. He stands naked, sling over shoulder, eyes fixed.

MICHELANGELO BUONAROTTI is twenty-six with an overgrown beard, renegade dark curls, and intense eyes. He moves the YOUNG FREDO's body to the exact pose as the iconic David.

Fredo looks to be about twenty with luscious features, full lips, an Etruscan nose, and a stellar physique.

MICHELANGELO

Now, Fredo, *look at Goliath.*

Lo Fredo turns on the intensity in his eyes, which Michelangelo has immortalized in his sculpture.

MICHELANGELO

There are other men in Firenze who have a body worthy of the David, but no one else has that *look.*

A series of shots as Michelangelo sculpts the David from a solid tower of Carrera marble. Young Fredo keeps the look.

They take a break for lunch and chat like old friends.

MICHELANGELO

Tell me, Fredo, who is your Goliath? Who do you stare at? What person or beast gives you that powerful, haunting look?

YOUNG FREDO

My Goliath is not a person.

MICHELANGELO

What could possibly be so *Gigante*?

YOUNG FREDO

Time.

MICHELANGELO

What do you mean, *time*?

YOUNG FREDO

I look at the endless monster of time that stretches out forever in front of me, bigger than I could've ever imagined, all those moments with no end in sight.

MICHELANGELO

Fredo, time is not that big. You will run out of time when you come to the end of your life. Your time here on earth will cease, then you will become another form of *energy*.

YOUNG FREDO

I won't run out of time, Michelangelo. You will, but I won't.

MICHELANGELO

Our time here is quick, like a blink.

YOUNG FREDO

I envy you, Michelangelo. You were smarter than me.

Michelangelo understands what Fredo is saying.

MICHELANGELO

I see. Now I understand. He offered it to me, but I wouldn't take it.

YOUNG FREDO

How did you know not to?

MICHELANGELO

I am an artist. I need to know that I will eventually face my own death. Not knowing when she'll show up gives me the passion to paint and sculpt. I love knowing she's there, somewhere, waiting for me. But where? When? It makes me listen for the ticking of my own life and it sparks something in my soul. Time eludes me, coaxes me to make art. To live. I love chasing time. It makes me feel alive. Time is like a lover whom I will never catch. She pushes me to become who I really am. She makes me imagine who I might become.

YOUNG FREDO

*I'm not chasing time, Michelangelo.*

MICHELANGELO

I thought it was a joke at first.

YOUNG FREDO

It's no joke. Trust me.

The two men are silent, uncomfortable.

MICHELANGELO

Don't blame yourself, Fredo. I was tempted too. I thought about all that time I'd have to sculpt and to paint and to dance, to make love.

YOUNG FREDO

Why didn't you take it?

MICHELANGELO

If I thought my life would go on indefinitely, I would lose all my passion to create.

YOUNG FREDO

We thought we could outsmart death.

MICHELANGELO

The only way that I can outsmart death is to make great art.

Michelangelo can see the misery in Fredo's eyes.

MICHELANGELO

I'm sorry, Fredo. I wish I could help you. Your Goliath is too big for me.

YOUNG FREDO

Thank you for your compassion, Michelangelo.

MICHELANGELO

There are people who can-

YOUNG FREDO

I know. I love the *Juice* as much as I hate it. I can't let go. Not yet.

MICHELANGELO

Perhaps one day.

YOUNG FREDO

I pray that one day will come and I will defeat my Goliath, just like David did.

CUT TO:

EXT. ACCADEMIA MUSEUM - PRESENT DAY - DUSK

Lo Fredo stands outside in his workshop and faces the camera to Bruno's room. He's in a very aged state with no *Juice*.

LO FREDO

Goodbye my friend. May our souls find peace and may we all enjoy a long, beautiful sleep.

He takes out a gun, places it at his temple. Breathes in.

CUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S BUILDING/BALCONY - DUSK

Bruno looks out onto the expansive grounds. The SOUND of the gunshot from his monitor startles him. The peacocks scatter.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF FLORENCE/SANTO SPIRITO - DUSK

La Signora is dressed in vibrant colors as she slips out of the concealed opening from her visit with the alchemist.

She stops, as if she hears the gun shot, then turns around and enters the church to light a candle for her friend.

CUT TO:

INT. CARLO'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Carlo walks into the apartment that's overrun with the piles of his parents' research. In a manic frenzy, he places the charts, numbers, formulas and books in a garbage bag.

He stops in front of his mother's dressing table, surrounded by old family photos. He smells her perfume, kisses a photo.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARLO'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Carlo takes a metal trash can, empties their research into it, pours the Grappa over it, then lights it on fire.

Michael turns the corner to see him standing with the empty bottle of Grappa in hand and his parents' work in flames.

Tears stream down Carlo's cheeks as Michael stands beside him. Sparks and flames release ashes to the sky.

MICHAEL

You had to waste the good Grappa?

Carlo laughs, cries, hugs his friend. With arms around each other's shoulders, they witness the ceremonial bonfire.

CUT TO:

INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE STUDIO - DAY

A SERIES OF SHOTS as she paints nine canvases over the next month in her private studio, one for each muse. Bruno brings her lunches and dinners. She works feverishly.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Isabella takes an early morning horseback ride. She sketches the landscape as she stops at various intervals. She arrives at the natural hot springs in a remote corner of the property and swims naked in the warm, healing water.

INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE STUDIO - DAY

She eats lunch with Bruno and shows him the nine canvases.

BRUNO

What will you do when you leave?

ISABELLA

I'm not sure. All I know is that I have to leave at the end of the month because if I don't, I may never leave here at all.

BRUNO

I understand.

ISABELLA

I'm so grateful for everything. Thank you. I do love it here.

BRUNO

If you want to stay and make a life here, I will leave you the villa.

ISABELLA

How could you leave me the villa? It's not like you're going to die.

BRUNO

Don't rub it in.

ISABELLA

Tell me more about her.

BRUNO

Sofia or Amorosa?

ISABELLA

Both.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/ARTISTS' GARDEN - ITALY, 1497 - DAY

Sofia, Bruno, and Amorosa pose for a Botticelli portrait, the myth about the contest between Athena and Poseidon.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

I want to know everything.

BRUNO (V.O.)

Botticelli left before Amorosa's birth, but he came back. He couldn't stay away for long.

ISABELLA

Were you close to him?

BRUNO

Yes. We were. We loved him. The three of us had our portraits painted by Botticelli. In his usual allegorical style, I was Poseidon, Ruler of the Sea, Sofia was Athena, Goddess of Wisdom, and Amorosa was an olive tree planted between us.

Sofia is Athena, Bruno is Poseidon, and the teenage Amorosa sprouts up between them in the shape of an olive tree.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

Why an olive tree?

BRUNO (V.O.)

It was the gift Athena gave to the king to win the contest, which is why it's called Athens. Athena and Poseidon were eternally separated after that, but olive trees keep reproducing and regenerating.

A Series OF SHOTS as the masterpiece emerges.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

I thought Botticelli left for Rome when Sofia was pregnant.

BRUNO (V.O.)

He came back. *Everyone always comes back to the Medici Villa.*

ISABELLA (V.O.)

Is that so?

BRUNO (V.O.)

Botticelli was close with my cousin, Lorenzo Il Magnifico, whose nemesis, the preacher, Savonarola was gaining power in Florence and was hell bent on destroying so many of our scientific advancements and our progress in the arts.

INTERCUT WITH SCENES OF RENAISSANCE FLORENCE AND SAVONAROLA PREACHING in SAN MARCO, HIS FOLLOWERS PATROLLING THE STREETS

ISABELLA (V.O.)

I read about Savonarola.

BRUNO (V.O.)

It was a dark time for the Medicis. Florence was the only Democratic Republic, way ahead of its time, surrounded by cities run by absolute rulers and Savonarola preached against so many of the basic freedoms we introduced. We were the first humanists and we gave birth to new ideas like feminism and medicine.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

Sex, drugs, and rock and roll?

BRUNO (V.O.)

Until I made the grave error that turned Botticelli into a follower of Savonarola's. Hundreds of years on this planet and I made one catastrophic mistake at the beginning.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICI VILLAS - ALCHEMISTS' WORKSHOP - ITALY, 1496 - DAY

A younger Bruno shows Botticelli the elixir, proves to him how it transforms him from old to young. Offers it to him. Botticelli watches with fascination, then ultimate horror.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

You showed him the juice!

BRUNO (V.O.)

I did.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

Savonarola took the *Juice*?!

BRUNO (V.O.)

Not Savonarola. *Botticelli*. I always felt bad for taking his biological daughter and raising her as my own, so I offered him immortality as a consolation.

ISABELLA

Wait, WHAT? I thought Amorosa was your only daughter.



BRUNO

The juice made me sterile and killed all my sperm. Sofia wanted a baby so badly. Only the three of us knew the truth that Botticelli fathered our child.

ISABELLA (V.O.)

So, if I'm a descendant of Amorosa, you're telling me that I'm really a biological descendant of Botticelli?

BRUNO (V.O.)

He was a great painter and a very self righteous man. He renounced the entire Medici family when he learned about the *Juice* and joined Savonarola's crusade. He nearly destroyed everything we worked for and burned his own work in the Bonfire of the Vanities. The portrait of Athena and Poseidon, some of Amorosa's paintings...

CUT TO:

EXT. FLORENCE, PIAZZA SAN MARCO - ITALY, 1497 - DAY

During the Carnavale celebration (Mardi Gras), Savonarola, the Dominican Friar with the large nose and wicked eyes ignites hysteria as he lights the BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES.

Florentines from all echelons throw clothes, cosmetics, books, and artwork into the massive bonfire. Botticelli brings his masterpiece, the Athena and Poseidon portrait and throws it on the fire.

CUT TO:

INT. ISABELLA'S PRIVATE STUDIO - DAY

Isabella is stunned.

ISABELLA

I'm Botticelli's descendant? Why didn't you tell me this before?

BRUNO

I'm telling you now. We could talk for years and still I wouldn't be able to tell you everything about your lineage. It doesn't matter anyway. The past is over. I don't want to interrupt your work.

ISABELLA

What will **you do** when I leave here?

BRUNO

I don't know. I wish I could just hold Sofia in my arms and dance off into another world with her.

ISABELLA

Sofia?

EXT. CASA DI MERLINI - DAY

La Signora walks briskly down the street. Michael catches up to her.

MICHAEL

La Signora. She's leaving the Medici Villas in ten days.

LA SIGNORA

Is that so?

MICHAEL

She promised me that she would leave in a month. A month will be up in ten days. Please slow down.

LA SIGNORA

She might change her mind.

MICHAEL

I'm going to ask Isabella to marry me and I'd like your blessing.

LA SIGNORA

(stops, looks at him)  
My blessing?

MICHAEL

She has no family and you're like family to her. Please, La Signora, may I have the hand of Isabella Buonavita in marriage.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

I promise to be a loving, faithful,  
and supportive husband and to love  
her with all my heart and soul,  
forever.

La Signora places her hands on his head as her blessing.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICI VILLAS/ISABELLA'S PRIVATE STUDIO - DAY

Sofia's paintings are nearly complete. Each panel depicts one of the nine muses from Greek mythology, which are embodied in tall trees with overlapping branches and intertwining roots.

The figurative trees wrap around each other like lovers, harkening back to the sketch of the vines. Looking closely, the muses have characteristics that resemble the people in her life (Bruno, Michael, Carlo, Lo Fredo, La Signora).

She sets up a series of mirrors and works on a self portrait as part of the painting, depicting herself as an olive tree.

INT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Isabella sits at the head of the table next to Bruno.

BRUNO

We will be having another going  
away celebration tomorrow night for  
Isabella Buonavita.

He raises his glass and they toast to her. She's stunned.

BRUNO

It has been a joy to have you here,  
my dear. A true joy...

ISABELLA

(quietly to Bruno)  
But I still have another week.

BRUNO

Tomorrow night it is.

ISABELLA

But I need more time.

BRUNO

Look how much you've grown as an  
artist in such a short time! To  
Isabella!

They all raise their glasses in a toast.

ISABELLA

(Quietly)

Bruno, I'm not ready.

She's not referring to her work, but to him.

BRUNO

We will never be ready, my dear,  
but when the moment of change is  
upon us, we embrace it.

CUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - ITALY, 1498 - NIGHT

Bruno and Sofia are in bed engaged in a heated discussion.

BRUNO

Sofia, you know I love you more  
than life itself, which is why I  
started taking the elixir - to  
create heaven for us here on earth.

SOFIA

We have not created heaven on earth  
Bruno; we have created hell.

BRUNO

This is not hell. This is paradise.

SOFIA

It's a perversion of life and I  
don't want Amorosa to take it now  
or ever. I don't even want her to  
know about it!

BRUNO

Is that why you'd never marry me?

SOFIA

I didn't marry you because marriage  
is ownership, you know that.

BRUNO

Amorosa is as much my daughter as  
she is yours.

SOFIA

She's neither of ours. She belongs  
only to herself. We were just the  
vessels, the guardians of her soul.

BRUNO

You were the vessel.

SOFIA

I love you Bruno, enough to jump into this river of forever with you, but I will not rob my daughter of a beautiful life.

BRUNO

*Our daughter*

SOFIA

She deserves the chance to live a happy life. She's pregnant. Angelo Donati wants to marry Amorosa.

BRUNO

He can't marry her! He's already married with kids. The church will never grant him a divorce.

SOFIA

If he can't marry her in the eyes of God, let him marry her in the eyes of man. *In our eyes.*

BRUNO

What's one more bastard child in the Medici family? She deserves more!

SOFIA

You're being selfish.

BRUNO

I want the world for Amorosa.

SOFIA

You can only give her love and freedom. The rest is up to her.

BRUNO

After Amorosa has the baby, I want her to live here and be with us. We can raise our grandchild together.

SOFIA

No! I want us to let her go because I love her that much.

BRUNO

But she'll die one day and it'll break our hearts.

SOFIA

The only thing worse would be if she doesn't die and lives in this endless eternity, this hell with us.

BRUNO

Sofia, this isn't hell.

SOFIA

Bruno, you cling to denial like a drowning man clings to a shark. Our souls are not made to endure an endless life. We were put here to live passionately for a short time. Amorosa deserves the chance to evolve her soul through lifetimes of love and heartbreak. Please. Let her go. Do it for me. It's all I ask of you.

The two of them get really quiet. It finally sinks in.

BRUNO

(serious, heartbroken)

I love you both more than I love life itself. You two must leave immediately because if you stay, there's no way we'll be able to stop her from taking it, will we?

SOFIA

The only other way would be if we destroy the elixir.

BRUNO

I can't, Sofia. Not yet. Someday.

SOFIA

I understand.

BRUNO

I'm sorry, my love. I can't let go. I'm just too deep in it.

SOFIA

I am too, Bruno. The one thing that was supposed to hold us together will now tear us apart. We'll leave after her wedding celebration, before the baby is born.

BRUNO

She loves him?

SOFIA

She does. He loves her. It's a love like ours, that transcends time and place and his marriage.

BRUNO

I will do whatever you say, Sofia.

SOFIA

I don't know how long we'll be physically apart, Bruno. We'll always be together in my heart, but to live so close to you with both of us suffering this same fate.

BRUNO

Promise me that someday, you and I will be together again.

SOFIA

I promise you, but you must promise me that someday, we'll both let go.

BRUNO

I promise you, Sofia. You are the great love of my very long life.

Bruno holds her close to him.

CUT TO:

INT. BRUNO'S SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Isabella enters a candlelit room that's all aglow. Isabella is flushed with emotion as Bruno looks young and vibrant.

BRUNO

Isabella! Please, come in.

ISABELLA

I just wanted to say good night, and to thank you for everything.

BRUNO

Having you here at the villa was one of the great joys of my life.

ISABELLA

What's next?

BRUNO

For you? Life and the dance of discovery.

ISABELLA

And for you?

BRUNO

You love this Donati character? I predict a happy life for you two.

ISABELLA

Will you be all right after I-

BRUNO

We can't see too far in front of us, which makes life so exciting!

ISABELLA

You've changed my life, Bruno.

BRUNO

And you've changed mine, Isabella.

Bruno puts on some music and moves some furniture.

BRUNO

May I have this dance?

ISABELLA

Dance?

BRUNO

When our daughter, Amorosa married Angelo Donati we danced all night. Her first dance was with her new husband. The next dance was with me, her father. It was one of the most beautiful moments of my life.

ISABELLA

Well, I've never been married and I've never even had a father.

BRUNO

Let's imagine that this is your wedding night to the handsome Michael Donati. Time often races out in front of us like a wild horse, but tonight, let's invite time to be a delicate butterfly and alight on our shoulders. *May I have this dance, figlia mia?*

ISABELLA

Thank you for all that you've given me now and from the *beginning*.



BRUNO

Thank you, my love. You're even more beautiful and more awe-inspiring in this incarnation.

They dance. Time passes. The full moon rises.

ISABELLA

I still want to try it.

BRUNO

Of course you do. That's why you need to leave tomorrow. The temptation is too great for both of us, a worn out man like me and a strong-willed woman like you, though I suspect you've already tried a little bit of it.

ISABELLA

What? How? Did you slip some in my coffee?

BRUNO

No, but La Signora may have.

ISABELLA

I was kidding about the coffee. Wait, La Signora?

BRUNO

She mixes it in with her coffee. She never was one for needles.

ISABELLA

She's *your* age?

BRUNO

She's a little younger than me. That's why we started this, so we'd be the same age *eventually*.

ISABELLA

La Signora takes the *Juice*!

BRUNO

We had hoped to live a long life together, but after Amorosa died, it was too painful to be together.

ISABELLA

Wait - *La Signora is Sofia*! Why didn't you tell me this before?

BRUNO  
I'm telling you now.

ISABELLA  
Why aren't you with her?

BRUNO  
I am with her. Our spirits are  
forever intertwined.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA MERLINI - DAY

The black limo pulls up. Isabella gets out. She looks visibly different, transformed. She buzzes her at the intercom.

EXT/INT. CASA MERLINI - DAY

The door buzzes open as if magically. Inside, the skylight ignites the stairs with sunlight. The door upstairs opens. Isabella glides through light and shadows to the top. The two women hug, a very emotional reunion.

LA SIGNORA  
Isabella!

ISABELLA  
La Signora.

LA SIGNORA  
Is everything okay?

ISABELLA  
Everything is fine, *Sofia*.

La Signora looks away. Isabella moves around so that they're face to face again. Isabella hugs her as she cries.

ISABELLA  
Please come to the Villa tonight  
for my going away celebration.

LA SIGNORA  
It has been such a long time.

ISABELLA  
Centuries. I know. He told me  
everything.

LA SIGNORA  
*Everything?*

ISABELLA

I don't know if I'm really her, if I'm the incarnation of Amorosa, but I feel so connected to her and to you.

La Signora nods, agrees. Isabella takes her hand and they start to walk down together.

LA SIGNORA

Isabella.

ISABELLA

Yes?

LA SIGNORA

You were worth the wait.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASA DI MERLINI - CONTINUOUS

Carlo and Michael look at her in awe and wait for instructions.

ISABELLA

I'll ride with La Signora in the limo. You two follow in Carlo's car, is that alright with you?

INT. MEDICI LIMO - DAY

Isabella closes the privacy window. The hills of Tuscany roll by with fiery colors of red and orange.

LA SIGNORA

Life was not meant to be lived this way. We were so young, so arrogant.

ISABELLA

I won't tell anyone.

LA SIGNORA

You can tell them after we're gone, but no one would believe you.

ISABELLA

After you're gone?

La Signora smiles at her with the love of a mother.

LA SIGNORA

Seeing you again brings me back.

ISABELLA

Bruno told me that Amorosa died,  
but he never told me how.

CUT TO:

INT. AMOROSA'S STUDIO - RENAISSANCE - 1497 - NIGHT

Amorosa is in the throes of labor with Sofia as her midwife.  
Angelo holds her, terrified by her cries of agony.

Amorosa pushes as the baby's head crowns. A baby girl is  
born. Sofia holds the baby in her arms, then hands her to  
Angelo as she tries to stop Amorosa's bleeding.

The baby cries until she's placed on Amorosa's chest, rooting  
for her breast. The bleeding doesn't stop.

As the baby suckles her breast, Amorosa bleeds to death.  
Sofia tries everything to keep her alive, but loses her.  
Angelo holds Amorosa as she dies in his arms. The baby cries.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA - DAY

The limo pulls up. Carlo's car pulls up behind them. They all  
get out. La Signora looks elegant and radiant.

Bruno comes down the hill to greet them. He takes La  
Signora's hands in his and gazes into her eyes. He's  
overwhelmed with emotion. She holds herself with grace.

BRUNO

(softly)  
Sofia.

LA SIGNORA

(softly)  
Bruno.

The two of them are lost in each other's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICI VILLA/ARTISTS' GARDEN - DAY

Carlo wanders through the garden, talking to some of the young and beautiful artists. He poses. They fawn over him.

EXT. MEDICI STABLES/VILLA - DAY

Isabella shows Michael the stables. They emerge on horseback.

EXT. PASTURE/MEDICI GROUNDS - DAY

The Tuscan hills are alive with color. She takes them to the remote part of the property with the natural hot springs.

ISABELLA

Follow me.

MICHAEL

Anywhere.

She takes off her clothes and climbs into the hot springs.

ISABELLA

I love it here.

MICHAEL

It's beautiful.

ISABELLA

I don't want to leave here, but I don't want to live without you any longer.

He kisses her and their past and present lives meld into one.

EXT. MEDICI VILLA - DAY

Bruno and La Signora stroll arm in arm through the gardens and the hills and past all the buildings. They walk slowly and savor each moment together. Bruno looks transformed.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICI VILLA/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The celebration is underway and the mood is festive. Isabella's enormous paintings are in the center, covered.

Bruno sits at the head of the head with Sofia next to him. Isabella and Michael are next to them and Carlo is surrounded by women further down. Bruno gets everyone's attention.

BRUNO

I'd like to welcome some very special guests here with us tonight. Some of you may remember, Michael Donati, world renowned art dealer and fencing champion.

Bruno bows slightly to Michael.

BRUNO

I'd also like to welcome Carlo Piacenza, son of the late Renaissance scholars, Giovanni and Maria Pia Piacenza. May they rest in peace. My condolences, Carlo.

CARLO

Thank you.

BRUNO

And I'd like to welcome my very special guest, La Signora Sofia Merlini. She is and has always been the keeper of my heart and soul.

Bruno escorts Isabella to unveil her masterpiece. He raises a glass to her. She very emotional.

ISABELLA

I'd like to thank all of you for welcoming me so completely into your lives, especially Bruno and Sofia. Thank you from the bottom of my soul for being like family to me and to Michael, for being my muse.

They take the drapes off her artwork, revealing nine large panels (ten feet high by four feet wide). Each of the nine panels represents one of the nine muses from mythology.

They stand between earth and sky. Each Muse has tree-like roots that extends beneath the surface, embracing and growing together with the other tree roots on other panels.

At the top of each panel, each Muse has branches that reach far into the clouds, intertwining with the heavens and with the branches of the other Muses.

The faces of the Muses have the delicacy of a Botticelli portrait and the sensual, powerful nude bodies of a Michelangelo painting. They're magnificent.

The crowd is speechless. Michael is in awe. Sofia and Bruno look like proud parents. It's a big moment for Isabella.

A SERIES OF SHOTS as the celebration gets underway. Isabella looks happy, yet also a bit melancholy as her time here is ending. She watches Bruno with Sofia, looks at Michael.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - NIGHT

It's much later and the party is over. Isabella approaches Bruno's villa, which glows from the candle light inside. The two peacocks scatter across the lawn as she approaches.

INT. BRUNO'S SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Bruno and Sophia dance in the center of the sitting room, surrounded by flickering candles. They look into one another's eyes. They're ready.

Isabella knocks, enters. The moment is delicate and powerful.

ISABELLA

I don't want to interrupt.

BRUNO/LA SIGNORA

Isabella.

They each extend an arm and bring her close to them.

ISABELLA

I've come to say goodbye. We're leaving early in the morning.

LA SIGNORA

We have come full circle.

ISABELLA

Is there anyone else who has taken the Juice?

BRUNO

The only ones left that we knew of were us and Lo Fredo. The others escaped ages ago.

ISABELLA  
Even Basil Valentine?

Bruno and La Signora exchange a look.

ISABELLA  
(to Bruno)  
Are you Basil Valentine?

He shakes his head, 'no' and looks at La Signora.

LA SIGNORA  
Amore, *I am Basil Valentine.*

ISABELLA  
You were a monk?

LA SIGNORA  
I am the one who discovered the alchemist potion, the elixir. We made up the story of a Monk named Basil Valentine so no one would ever suspect it was me.

ISABELLA  
(in awe of La Signora)  
You're Basil Valentine?

BRUNO  
I told you, smart and beautiful.

ISABELLA  
What about the alchemy potion?

LA SIGNORA  
The potion and the nightmare ends with us. Tonight. Right now.

BRUNO  
We love you, Isabella.

Isabella's expression changes. *She gets it.*

ISABELLA  
It doesn't have to end...

LA SIGNORA  
Before you go, please, open the window and let in some fresh air.

Isabella goes to the window. Recoils from the smell.

ISABELLA  
What's on these curtains?



LA SIGNORA  
Just open the window, Amore.

ISABELLA  
They're treated with something.

BRUNO  
We just need a little fresh air...

LA SIGNORA  
...From the window.

She watches them as they dance, so in love. Timeless.

ISABELLA  
(tears streaming down)  
But if I open the window...

BRUNO  
A little breeze would do us good.

LA SIGNORA  
So we can breathe and move on.

ISABELLA  
If I open the window, the curtains  
will catch fire...

LA SIGNORA  
Our roots will be forever  
intertwined, like your painting.

BRUNO  
And our branches will interlace  
like arms reaching up to the  
heavens. Your masterpiece is  
magnificent. You are magnificent.

LA SIGNORA  
Just a little air. That's all we  
need.

Bruno looks into Sofia's eyes. The strength of their love  
inspires Isabella. She opens the windows, crying.

The wind blows the curtains toward the flickering candles.  
The curtains ignite as Bruno and Sofia dance, unflinching.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRUNO'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Sofia is halfway across the lawn, when the room becomes engulfed in flames. Even the moon reflects the orange embers of the fire. The peacocks are no where to be seen.

CUT TO:

ONE YEAR LATER...

INT. CASA MERLINI - DAY

Isabella is pregnant, married, and they've moved into La Signora's house, which they're renovating.

Carlo rummages in a kitchen drawer for a wine opener while they go over the plans for the new gallery opening.

MICHAEL

We're hanging all nine panels in one long row against the side wall.

CARLO

What's going on this other wall?

MICHAEL

Ask Isabella, she's the boss.

ISABELLA

A retrospective of some of the artists who studied at the Medici Villa. Did you know that Picasso was there? And Van Gogh!

CARLO

(rummaging in a drawer)  
How can you not have a wine opener? Isn't that against the law in Italy?

ISABELLA

Look in that top drawer.

Carlo pulls out the entire kitchen drawer. A piece of ancient parchment paper falls out with the clanking of the utensils. He finds the wine opener, then they notice the parchment. It's the formula for the *Juice* with alchemist's notations.

MICHAEL

That must be her recipe for coffee.

Isabella and Carlo examine the piece of paper. It's the *Juice*, the immortality elixir.

The baby kicks inside her large, pregnant belly. Carlo clutches the paper. *This is it!* He's clearly tempted to keep it, to make it, and to try it.

Isabella turns on the gas stove, grabs the parchment paper, and ignites it. She drops the flaming paper into the sink.

Michael opens the window as Isabella holds her pregnant belly and soothes the kicking baby inside of her.

Carlo opens the bottle of wine and pours them each a glass`. The parchment paper becomes consumed by fire, then turns to glowing embers, then turns to ash.

They toast as the legacy of Basil Valentine goes up in smoke.

CARLO

To life!

ISABELLA

To love!

FADE OUT.