

MIDNIGHT BURGER AND THE AMELIA PROJECT

Somnium

By

Joe Fisher

Øystein Ulsberg Brager

and

Philip Thorne

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Midnight Burger and The Amelia Project

Somnium.

WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF PICCADILLY CIRCUS. MIDDAY.

WOMAN

(American accent.)

Excuse me, would you mind taking a picture of my family?

KOZLOWSKI

I would be happy to.

WOMAN

Here you go.

KOZLOWSKI

Excellent. Hello there, young man.

WOMAN

This is little Henry.

KOZLOWSKI

He has a marvelously developed cranium.

WOMAN

... Thank you?

KOZLOWSKI

All together now. Say cheese.

THE PHONE SNAPS A PICTURE.

WOMAN

Thank you.

KOZLOWSKI

Does it look alright?

WOMAN

It's wonderful, thank you. It's our first time in London.

KOZLOWSKI

Lovely.

WOMAN

Do you live here?

KOZLOWSKI

At times.

WOMAN

I didn't think anyone who lived here came to this part of town, it's such a tourist trap.

KOZLOWSKI

I do not often find myself here, but today... something in the air.

WOMAN

Alright, well, thank you again.

KOZLOWSKI

Have a wonderful day.

THE FAMILY WALKS AWAY.

KOZLOWSKI (cont'd)

... something in the air.

THE WIND BEGINS TO RUSH AROUND HIM. LOOSE PAPERS ARE BLOWN DOWN THE STREET. THERE IS SUDDENLY A DEAFENING CRACK IN THE AIR FOLLOWED BY CHAOS: PEOPLE SCREAMING, CARS SWERVING AND CRASHING, ALARMS GOING OFF IN BUILDINGS.

KOZLOWSKI (cont'd)

... something in the air.

WE MOVE TO THE AMELIA PROJECT OFFICE. ALVINA AND THE INTERVIEWER ARE IN THE OFFICE. A PHONE IS RINGING. ALVINA PICKS UP THE PHONE.

ALVINA

Hello?... What?

THE INTERVIEWER

Who is it?

ALVINA

Koslowski.

THE INTERVIEWER

On the telephone?

ALVINA

Yes. What are you talking about?

THE INTERVIEWER

Speakerphone, please.

WE HEAR A BEEP. KOZLOWSKI COMES THROUGH THE SPEAKER.

ALVINA

Can you say that again?

KOZLOWSKI

Perhaps you should turn on your television?

THE INTERVIEWER

Television?

ALVINA

What channel?

KOZLOWSKI

Oh, I believe any of them will do.

THE INTERVIEWER

What in the world are you talking about?

ALVINA TURNS ON THE TELEVISION. THEY WATCH FOR A MOMENT.  
(NOTE: WE NEED TO RECORD SOME TEXT FROM A NEWS ANCHOR.)

KOZLOWSKI

It was the strangest thing. I awoke this morning and felt compelled to come to Piccadilly Circus. "Something in the air," I said to myself. Lo and behold...

ALVINA

What on earth is it?

THE INTERVIEWER

Is this some sort of pop-up shop? Some sort of promotion for some sort of wretched product?

KOZLOWSKI

Oh no, I do not believe so. Keep watching, I am sure they will play the CCTV footage at any moment.

ALVINA

It's in the middle of the street.

THE INTERVIEWER

You simply felt there was something in the air?

KOZLOWSKI

There is a feeling one gets when a disturbance in the weather approaches. It was not unlike that.

ALVINA

Here's the CCTV...

THEY WATCH FOR A MOMENT.

ALVINA (cont'd)

... What the...?

THE INTERVIEWER

Well, tweeze my brows and call me Delilah.

ALVINA

It appeared out of nowhere.

THE INTERVIEWER

Impossible.

KOZLOWSKI

I strongly suggest that the two of you join me as soon as you can. It has become a very interesting day at Piccadilly Circus.

ALVINA

Is there anyone inside?

KOZLOWSKI

Logic would dictate.

ALVINA

How can you possibly invoke logic?

KOZLOWSKI

The authorities will approach at any moment. I suggest you make your way.

THE INTERVIEWER

Why are we coming there?

ALVINA

Kozlowski, I don't like this, I think you should come back to the office.

THE INTERVIEWER

I agree. I've no idea what's just occurred but it certainly doesn't concern us.

KOZLOWSKI

My friends, an American Diner has just magically materialized in the middle of Piccadilly Circus. Who else on the planet could this concern other than us?

OPENING MUSIC EVENTUALLY TRANSITIONS INTO...

SONG: "MAGIC EYES" BY THE ORIOLE ORCHESTRA.

INSIDE THE DINER WE HEAR CHAOS OUTSIDE.

CASPAR

Subtle. Reaaaally subtle.

GLORIA

Where is this, London?

CASPAR

Yeah.

ZEBULON

It's not often we set down in our location so awkwardly, is it dear?

EFFIE

I can't recall any time we've set down right in the middle of the road, that's just plain bad manners.

AVA

It's okay, it's not like the traffic in London can get any worse.

LEIF WALKS THROUGH THE BACK DOOR.

LEIF

What the hell was that?

GLORIA

We're in the middle of the road.

LEIF

London, right?

GLORIA

Yeah.

LEIF

This is... conspicuous.

GLORIA

Nothing we can do about it now.

CASPAR

You know, now that I think about it, how come this doesn't happen more often? We never appear in the middle of the road like this, how come we don't show up in really awkward places more often? Ooh. Do you think we've ever killed a wicked witch?

AVA

Technically we just did that.

GLORIA

Are we going to be surrounded by a bunch of Billies with bobby-clubs now?

CASPAR

I think it's Bobbys with Billie-Clubs.

LEIF

Oh, I think we'll get the armed response team for this one.

CASPAR

Wouldn't it be funny if we just got a ticket?

AVA

"Listen you lot, no parking your cafe in the middle of Piccadilly. Move along then."

EFFIE

No chance of us doing any sight-seeing today is there?

ZEBULON

I'm afraid we're standing out like wings on a Holstein, dear.

LEIF

Why would the diner set us down here?

AVA

Hmm. Why would you?

LEIF

Why would I?

AVA

Yeah, let's assume it's not random.

LEIF

Okay... Okay, I'm the diner.

AVA

You're the diner.

LEIF

I set myself down in a very busy and noisy area of a major city. I make a big mess. People freak out. Police probably on their way...

EFFIE

You're trying to get someone's attention.

AVA

Right.

ZEBULON

But the attention of whom?

LEIF

Right. Popping up in a location like this. It's like shooting a flare.

AVA

Kind of hard to keep calm and carry on past this one.

GLORIA

I guess we just wait and see.

EFFIE

I'm thinking we won't need to wait long, Gloria.

CASPAR

Is someone parking in our parking lot?

LEIF

I mean, it's free parking in the middle of the city, someone's going to go for it.

AVA

It's a cab.

CASPAR

What do they call a cab in London?

AVA

They call it a cab.

ZEBULON

Seems to be a woman and her butler, and a very tall man.

THE INTERVIEWER

(Outside.)

Thank you, my good man!

THE CAB DRIVES AWAY.

GLORIA

Okay. That didn't take long. Here we go...

DOOR CHIME.

GLORIA (cont'd)

Hello there. Welcome to Midnight Burger.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Afternoon.

GLORIA

What can we get you today?



ALVINA

I'm sorry, you just appeared in the middle of Piccadilly Circus and you're just going to take our order?

GLORIA

Probably the best place to start, right?

KOZLOWSKI

Fascinating.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Hot cocoa, please.

CASPAR

What?

THE INTERVIEWER

Hot. Cocoa.

CASPAR

Do we even have any?

GLORIA

I can do that. How about everyone else?

ALVINA

... A cup of tea?

KOZLOWSKI

Do you have "Curly Fries?"

GLORIA

No.

KOZLOWSKI

Shame. Black coffee then.

THE INTERVIEWER

...

CASPAR

...

ALVINA

...

AVA

Are you guys the secret service?

THE INTERVIEWER

We are not.

AVA  
The Avengers? The British ones? Do you have a sword cane.

THE INTERVIEWER  
I do not.

AVA  
...

THE INTERVIEWER  
...

KOZLOWSKI  
...

THE INTERVIEWER  
Will someone begin talking please?

LEIF  
I can sense your confusion.

THE INTERVIEWER  
Oh, can you?

LEIF  
It's called a diner. You don't really have them here. It's a roadside restaurant.

ALVINA  
I don't think that's anywhere close to the source of our confusion.

THE INTERVIEWER  
Oh, for heaven's sake will someone please explain the pure madness that is unfolding in Piccadilly Circus today?!

GLORIA  
Midnight Burger. It's a time-traveling, dimension-spanning diner. We show up somewhere new every day.

THE INTERVIEWER  
... That's preposterous.

GLORIA  
Yes.

THE INTERVIEWER  
... Where were you yesterday?

GLORIA  
Some planet. We never got the name.

THE INTERVIEWER

What were you doing there?

GLORIA

A wedding.

THE INTERVIEWER

Ah. Well, how nice that you also offer catering.  
Who was the officiant, was it your mechanic?

GLORIA

Our radio.

THE INTERVIEWER

I beg your pardon?

ZEBULON

Afternoon, all. I'm Zebulon Mucklewain here with  
my wife, Effie.

EFFIE

Hi, y'all.

ZEBULON

It was a lovely service yesterday, was it not,  
dear?

EFFIE

Twas indeed. There was a bit of a language barrier  
seeing as how they were from another realm  
entirely but there was a universality to our  
intentions that I think really kept the butts in  
the seats.

ALVINA

Who's talking through your radio?

GLORIA

Effie and Zebulon Mucklewain... Y'all I can't give  
you hot chocolate a tea and a coffee while you're  
standing up, this isn't a cocktail party. Have a  
seat.

KOZLOWSKI

This booth here looks lovely.

ALVINA

I think I actually do need to sit down.

GLORIA

Great.

THE INTERVIEWER

You do realize that, regardless of the truth of your story, the authorities will arrive any moment.

GLORIA

Yeah. It never goes well for them when they do that.

ALVINA

So, why would you decide to show up in the middle of the street in broad daylight?

GLORIA

We didn't.

ALVINA

Who did?

GLORIA

We can't really control where we go. There are times when I feel like we can control it a little, and there are times when this place seems to have an agenda of its own, but generally speaking we're not in charge.

KOZLOWSKI

And what agenda do you think it may have in the middle of London?

GLORIA

I'm Gloria, by the way.

KOZLOWSKI

Forgive me, Kozlowski.

ALVINA

Alvina.

THE INTERVIEWER

That is a very important point. What is your agenda?

GLORIA

I don't know. But it does seem like any time someone walks through that door, they do it for a reason. Leif, what was your theory?

LEIF

Well, I was just saying, for the diner to make a big mess like this, maybe it's trying to get someone's attention.

GLORIA

Did we get your attention, guys?

ALVINA

Uh, yeah.

GLORIA

Okay. Well. Welcome to Midnight Burger. I'm Gloria. Over there is Ava, she's a theoretical physicist. That's Leif, he makes things. You met Effie and Zebulon, and that's Caspar.

CASPAR

Hi.

GLORIA

He's old.

CASPAR

It's true.

INTERVIEWER

How old?

CASPAR

173 years. Give or take a month.

THE INTERVIEWER AND KOZLOWSKI CHUCKLE.

CASPAR (cont'd)

They don't believe me.

KOZLOWSKI

We do.

INTERVIEWER

(Chuckling)

Yes, we do!

CASPAR

Then why are you laughing?

INTERVIEWER

(Chuckles)

"Old"!

GLORIA

So, what do we think? Why was the diner trying to get your attention?

THE INTERVIEWER

Hm...

ALVINA

Um...

KOZLOWSKI

I believe I have a few ideas.

THE INTERVIEWER

I believe I... I believe my colleagues and I would like a moment to confer.

GLORIA

Oh, Okay, sure. I'm making albondigas, who wants some?

THE INTERVIEWER

Making what?

GLORIA

Meatball soup.

THE INTERVIEWER

Well, that sounds lovely - !

ALVINA

(cutting him off)

I believe we'll just have our beverages, thank you.

GLORIA

Sure. Just yell at Caspar if you need something.

ALVINA

Thank you.

THE AMELIA PROJECT CREW IS HUDDLED UP BY THEMSELVES.

ALVINA (cont'd)

So... what is your theory, Kozlowski?

THE INTERVIEWER

Yes, you said it had to concern us, but so far I don't see how?

KOZLOWSKI

The details are not clear yet. But I believe that if we tell them who we are and what we do, it might become clear.

ALVINA

Tell them about The Amelia Project? Absolutely no way!

KOZLOWSKI

Why not?

ALVINA

Because what we do is a secret to anyone apart from those who require our services!

KOZLOWSKI

Perhaps they do require our services.

ALVINA

Why would they? They have a - what was it - universe-travelling... time-shifting... greasy spoon -

THE INTERVIEWER

It's a diner.

ALVINA

I know. My point is, they seem to be able to go anywhere at any point. They don't need to fake their deaths and start a new life. They can just go "beam me up, Scotty" and they're out of here.

KOZLOWSKI

Perhaps this is the very predicament they need to escape. Perhaps they are prisoners of a magic restaurant that will never allow them to settle down, never allow them to build friendships, start a family, pursue a career.

THE INTERVIEWER

Maybe they want help rescuing those two trapped in the radio!

ALVINA

What, are you agreeing now? We just put all our cards on the table?

THE INTERVIEWER

I think an unorthodox situation might call for an unorthodox approach. Besides, if they're about to zap out of here to some entirely different planet, I don't see how them knowing about The Amelia Project could really hurt us.

ALVINA

We don't know that story is true!

KOZLOWSKI

Alvina, have you heard of Occam's Razor?

ALVINA

Was it so sharp he cut himself on it?

KOZLOWSKI

Let us put it to a vote.

ALVINA

You're two, I'm one.

THE INTERVIEWER

We should still vote.

ALVINA

Why?

THE INTERVIEWER

I like the excitement!

ALVINA

I wish Amelia was here to just cut through this nonsense...

THE INTERVIEWER

Show of hands. No! Wait! Let's do ballots! I think I have some gum paper in my pocket...

ALVINA SIGHS.

WE ZOOM TO:

THE DINER CREW HUDDLED UP BY THE RADIO.

CASPAR

Okay, what do we think of these weirdos?

GLORIA

Are they weird or are they just European?

LEIF

We magically appeared in the middle of the city and they just walked in the front door, they're definitely weird.

AVA

Also they seem freaked out but not too freaked out, like they've seen some really weird shit.

CASPAR

They're certainly not the worst people to walk through that door, they seem fine.

LEIF

Kind of begs the question who WAS the worst person to walk through the door?

EFFIE

Jane.

CASPAR

Jane.



GLORIA

Jane.

AVA

Jane.

ZEBULON

Most definitely.

LEIF

Sadly, I agree.

EFFIE

They're here for a reason, I'm thinking.

ZEBULON

I agree, dear. Let's not rule out a little divine provenance.

GLORIA

What's the reason, though?

CASPAR

Yeah, why would some lady, her butler, and a seven foot tall... what is he, Swedish?

AVA

I think he's French.

CASPAR

Whatever he is, why would they be here?

EFFIE

Y'all, have we forgotten that there is one problem in particular we have been trying to work out for weeks now, that we have yet to stick a fork in?

GLORIA

Oh right.

CASPAR

Our passenger.

AVA

She has been here for a while now.

LEIF

Not sure how they can help with that, unless they're some kind of secret society that disappears people and provides them with new lives no matter how ridiculous their request may be.

AVA

Yeah, that's unlikely.

THE INTERVIEWER

Ahem. I have conferred with my colleagues and we have decided: cards on the table. We are The Amelia Project. A secret society that disappears people and provides them with new lives no matter how ridiculous their request may be.

GLORIA

...Huh.

LEIF

Huh.

AVA

Huh.

ZEBULON

Well, now.

EFFIE

Once again I am humbly staying silent when divine provenance makes it self known.

CASPAR

I can hear you though.

GLORIA

Well, it's a good thing you're here, then. You have a customer. Let's get you some puffy jackets.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF ICY WINTER WINDS AND WOLVES HOWLING IN THE DISTANCE. SEVERAL FOOTSTEPS APPROACH IN THE SNOW.

THE INTERVIEWER

This... is not a deep freeze.

GLORIA

No, it's not. Take all the time you need.

THE INTERVIEWER

...

ALVINA

...

KOZLOWSKI

...

THE INTERVIEWER

Where are we?

KOZLOWSKI

Another world.

GLORIA

Yes. It's funny, we never named it. We just call it the deep freeze.

KOZLOWSKI

How far does it go?

GLORIA

Ava, did we ever?

AVA

It's about three times the size of Jupiter.

THE INTERVIEWER

My goodness.

KOZLOWSKI

Have you traveled through it extensively?

AVA

No, we pretty much stay in this area. Calculating the curvature of a celestial body using the sun is pretty easy, even Leif can do it.

LEIF

Ha ha.

KOZLOWSKI

I must see more.

GLORIA

Her camp is this way. Follow me.

MOST OF THEM START WALKING. ALVINA STAYS.

CASPAR

Hey there. How are we doing?

ALVINA

...

CASPAR

I'm Caspar.

ALVINA

... Alvina.

CASPAR

Where you from?

ALVINA

Samson.

CASPAR

Cool, cool. Is that a big city or... town or...?

ALVINA

It's a microscopic island off of Bryher.

CASPAR

Which is a big isla-?

ALVINA

Which is an island off of Tresco, which again is an island off of St. Mary.

(beat)

Which is an island off the coast of Cornwall.

CASPAR

Cornwall! I have heard of that. So, you're from... off shore.

ALVINA

I'm from a place that is pretty much as remote as anywhere you can get in Britain. Me and my mum used to joke it was like living on another planet.

CASPAR

... I'm from Ohio, originally. Then California a lot. Sacramento. All up and down the I-5 corridor. Barstow for a while, sadly...

ALVINA

... But now I'm *actually* on another planet... and... yeah...

CASPAR

... Y'know it's funny. Anytime anyone sets foot on another planet for the first time, that's the first thing they say "I'm on another planet." Very simple.

ALVINA

How is this possible?

CASPAR

And then they follow up with "How is this possible?"

ALVINA

I'm serious.

CASPAR

The door to our deep freeze leads to another planet.

ALVINA

Yes, I caught that.

CASPAR

Okay, then you know as much as I do.

ALVINA

You... go about your day knowing there's a gateway to another planet in your deep freeze? How do you get anything done?

CASPAR

Well, let me ask you this: As you go about your daily life in your world, how much do you know about how it works? The streetlights turn on when the sun goes down, how do they know? You assume it's some sort of process involving computers and electricity being rerouted on some sort of timer, but you assume that. You actually have no idea how it works. How do the trains run without crashing into each other? You assume there's a system there, you don't know what it is. If memory serves you have a complicated barrier on the Thames to keep it from flooding the city, it's this massive thing, how does it work? You probably have no idea. We all spend all day in a world we know practically nothing about. Our world is just a little fancier.

ALVINA

I'm sure if I took an afternoon off I could figure out how the Thames Barrier works.

CASPAR

And I'm sure if we took the time we could figure out how the deep freeze works, we've just always got something else going on.

ALVINA

Things like what?

CASPAR

Things like three people walking in the front door calling themselves The Amelia Project... C'mon you can't enjoy it if you're too busy being astounded by it. Come meet the wolves.

ALVINA

Wolves?!

CASPAR

No, they're great, it's fine. C'mon!

AVA WALKS WITH THE INTERVIEWER.

AVA

The Laws of Planetary Motion. 1) Planets orbit the sun in an elliptical orbit. 2) A planet moves faster when it's closer to the sun. 3) Planets that are further away from the sun have longer orbital periods.

THE INTERVIEWER

Why are you saying this to me?

AVA

Those are the Laws of Planetary Motion. Created by who?

THE INTERVIEWER

Johannes Kepler, I believe.

AVA

Great. Yes. He was one of the big ones. Kepler had an idea. He wanted people to get their heads out of the sand and start looking up. He wanted his ideas about heliocentricity and the solar system to be presented to all types of people, people who weren't necessarily astronomers. How do you do that? How do you get people to look up?

THE INTERVIEWER

Pointing?

AVA

You tell them a story. He wrote a fairy tale called "Somnium." A story about a young boy and his mother. The boy's mother was a witch, and she summoned a demon that took her and her son through a magical portal to the moon. While they were there they visited a city on the moon, and observed the solar system spinning the way Kepler theorized it would. It was a simple story, no big deal. But here's the problem: people hate to read and they love to gossip. Some people didn't get the memo that Kepler was writing a fictional story. Suddenly throughout Europe people were saying "Hey, did you hear about Kepler? His mom's a witch and they went to the moon using demon powers."

THE INTERVIEWER

People actually believed that story was real?

AVA

Well, it was 1608, everybody had their heads up their asses. When the news reached the wrong people in Germany, Kepler's mother was arrested for witchcraft.

THE INTERVIEWER

Where are you taking me with this story?

AVA

Kepler schleped his ass across Europe and spent five years defending his mother. That's five years he could've spent studying the universe and he spent it arguing with the German Witch Narcs. So, there we were in Germany. Right time, right place. I convinced everyone to break her out of witch jail.

THE INTERVIEWER

You performed a jail break.

AVA

Yes.

THE INTERVIEWER

In Germany.

AVA

Yes.

THE INTERVIEWER

In the seventeenth century.

AVA

Correct.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Who is waiting for us at the end of this walk?

AVA

Katharina Kepler. Mother of one of the greatest scientists in history and alleged witch.

THE INTERVIEWER

Why have you kept her in this place? Why not the warmth of the cafe?

AVA

She likes it here. She says it reminds her of home.

THE INTERVIEWER

Well... Germany in the seventeenth century? I can see the resemblance. Do you make a habit of abducting people from the space time continuum?

AVA

Actually no. This is rare for us. See, it turns out when a magical disappearing diner breaks you out of prison, it has a tendency to SUPPORT the allegations that you're a witch.

THE INTERVIEWER

Who would've thought?

AVA

Long story short, we saved her but made her a fugitive from her own time. So... she's looking for a new life and according to you three, that's what you're all about.

THE INTERVIEWER

And according to you, you're in a new place and time every day. Certainly she could've stepped off anywhere.

AVA

She's... particular.

THE INTERVIEWER

Particular about what?

AVA

She just keeps saying "Not right."

THE INTERVIEWER

Hardly helpful.

AVA

So, if you three are who you say you are, and you're so good at finding people a new life no matter how ridiculous the request, find her one. Her camp is up ahead.

THE INTERVIEWER

... I make no promises. But I shall meet with her.

AVA

Good luck.

THE INTERVIEWER

Are there any... precautions I should take in this place. Do I need to keep a lookout for the White Witch?

AVA

No, you're safe. And we've already made all of the Narnia jokes.



THE INTERVIEWER

It may be a bit slow going, my German is quite rusty.

AVA

She's picked up english remarkably fast, you'll be fine.

KATHARINA'S CAMP. WE HEAR A CAMPFIRE AND THE SOUND OF THE WOLVES THAT SURROUND HER, PANTING AND PLAYING AND OCCASIONALLY BARKING. THE INTERVIEWER APPROACHES.

THE INTERVIEWER

Guten Abend, Frau Kepler. Darf ich mit ihnen am Feuer sitzen?

KATHARINA

... Please do not waste my time by fumbling through my language.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Very well.

KATHARINA

You may sit.

THE INTERVIEWER

...

KATHARINA

Sit.

THE INTERVIEWER

I am only now realizing that you are surrounded by wolves.

KATHARINA

You have never seen a wolf?

THE INTERVIEWER

I've seen them.

KATHARINA

They are just dogs.

THE INTERVIEWER

Frau Kepler, if they were just dogs we would call them dogs. We call them something else because they are, in fact, wild animals and not dogs.

JUNGKOOK APPROACHES THE INTERVIEWER.

THE INTERVIEWER (cont'd)

Oh goodness me.

JUNGKOOK BARKS AND HAPPILY PANTS.

KATHARINA

That one is Jungkook. The Spaniard, she has given them very strange names.

THE INTERVIEWER

It's looking at me.

KATHARINA

He wants you to pet him, don't be a bastard.

THE INTERVIEWER

Very well... Hello, Jungkook.

KATHARINA

So, who are you, why have you come?

THE INTERVIEWER

Yes... Frau Kepler I represent an organization known as The Amelia Project.

KATHARINA

And you have come here why?

THE INTERVIEWER

We've been told you are on a search for a new life, and have been a bit vexed in finding one.

KATHARINA

I am particular. What does this have to do with you?

THE INTERVIEWER

My colleagues and I, we specialize in new lives. Our clients will ask us for a new life and we will move heaven and Earth to provide it. We also specialize in faking deaths, but your strange friends here seem to have taken care of that part for you. Whisking you away to the heavens in a... well, not quite a golden chariot, but a... restaurant.

KATHARINA

A new life.

THE INTERVIEWER

Yes.

KATHARINA

We are only given one life.

THE INTERVIEWER

Hm. An interesting thought. One life. I myself feel as though I've had a thousand. Do you not feel the same?

KATHARINA

I was a young girl. Then a bride, then a mother, grandmother.

THE INTERVIEWER

Precisely. Our sigil is the Phoenix. Always rising anew from the ashes.

KATHARINA

... Lutherus Einhorn was his name. The Vogt Of Leonberg. He swore to the people of the city that he would drive out all sorcerers... I was not the only one. There were fifteen of us. Fifteen women. Eight of us were executed in the town square as the people laughed... No new life for them. Why for me?

THE INTERVIEWER

We'll come to call this feeling the "guilt of the survivor". After the initial relief of one's life being spared, a feeling settles about you. "Why me?" "Why was I spared and not the others?"

KATHARINA

Can you tell me why?

THE INTERVIEWER

I cannot. Though it may have had something to do with having one of the most brilliant men in Europe on your defense team. And I am sure he was that brilliant man due in no small part to his mother.

KATHARINA

You know of my son? They all seem to know of my son.

THE INTERVIEWER

Anyone with even a passing understanding of the sky above their heads knows of your son... though perhaps not this particular sky we are currently under.

KATHARINA

It is a beautiful place, yes? Reminds me of Württemberg. The cold. Though in my home the wolves were not so kind.

THE INTERVIEWER

Your new friends have told me that you've seen many different worlds since you left your own. Many places to start over, to rise from the ashes, as it were. They've all been lacking?

KATHARINA

They have.

THE INTERVIEWER

I propose that your displeasure with all these new worlds is due to your guilt. Your guilt in surviving that harrowing experience when others did not.

KATHARINA

I have been alive for seventy five years. No small feat. But I refused to confess and my son refused to give up. So I live. If I am to be reborn, as you say, it must be perfect. It must be the final time, so it must be perfect.

THE INTERVIEWER

I would also argue that insisting on perfection is an excellent way to prevent one from making a decision.

KATHARINA

It is my life, I will make whatever demands of it I wish.

THE INTERVIEWER

Very well... very well... I agree that this place is beautiful...I am unsettled by this place. I have seen a great many things but this... I am out of my element. And I do so love being in my element. Lovely planet, but I sincerely doubt they have anything here remotely like Les Deux Magots. So, in an effort to move this along I will offer you a deal.

KATHARINA

What is this deal?

THE INTERVIEWER

Picture in your mind the perfect place. The place that will be the site of your rebirth. Picture this place, then you will describe it to me, and then, no matter what it takes, I will find it. Even if I have to build this place by hand, brick by brick, I will find it for you.

KATHARINA

Any place at all.

THE INTERVIEWER

Any place you so desire.

KATHARINA

How will you do this?

THE INTERVIEWER

I've no idea. But it shall be done. All you need to do is tell me of the place.

KATHARINA

Very well. I accept your offer.

THE INTERVIEWER

Excellent... Everyone, stop lurking back there, we've work to do, everyone gather round the fire!

GLORIA

Does she know where she wants to go?

THE INTERVIEWER

Apparently. She's about to tell us.

CASPAR

This is fun this is like a game show.

ALVINA

This is a lot of wolves, is this okay?

LEIF

They're great, think of them as Disney wolves not fantasy novel wolves.

ALVINA

Did they just kill a deer?

LEIF

Except for that part, except for the deer killing part.

CASPAR

I can't believe we're finally getting some movement on this, she's been in our inbox way too long.

KATHARINA

Keep the talking box away from me.

GLORIA

I will, Katharina. I'm standing all the way back here.

ALVINA

What's that about?

GLORIA

Katharina's not so hot on our magical radio.

KATHARINA

They claim to be followers of Jesus but they are fueled by an evil magic.

EFFIE

We have been nothing but kind to that woman.

ZEBULON

We've tried every record in our collection. I even found some Oom-pah-pah music to remind her of home.

THE INTERVIEWER

Polka music originated in Bohemia and not until the 19th century. You're trying to remind her of home by playing music from another country and also from her relative future. So unless you have any Hans Leo Hassler in your collection... I have very quickly become comfortable with speaking to them like they are people.

GLORIA

Happens fast doesn't it?

THE INTERVIEWER

Where was I?

KATHARINA

The bargain.

THE INTERVIEWER

Ah, yes. The bargain is this: Frau Kepler will name her ideal destination, her new life, and it will then fall to us to find her that place no matter how impossible the request.

ALVINA

No matter how impossible?

THE INTERVIEWER

Correct.

ALVINA

That leaves a lot of room for failure.

THE INTERVIEWER

Indeed it does. But she would have gone on like this forever. The deadlock needed to be broken. We shall break it by doing the impossible as we normally do.

ALVINA

(Not too happy about this.)  
Mhm...

THE INTERVIEWER

So, now that we are all gathered. Frau Kepler,  
where will your new life begin?

KATHARINA

Levania.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Levania? Anyone?

AVA

Shit.

KATHARINA LAUGHS.

THE INTERVIEWER

She's laughing, why is she laughing?

AVA

Here's a description of Levania: The city of  
Levania is a marvel of beauty and harmony. It is  
built on a hillside, and its streets are lined  
with trees and flowers. The buildings are made of  
white marble, and they are all decorated with  
intricate carvings. The city is also home to many  
beautiful gardens, which are filled with exotic  
plants and animals.

THE INTERVIEWER

That hardly seems a challenge.

CASPAR

You just described every affluent suburb in  
America, she basically wants to go to Westchester.

AVA

Yes. Two problems: One, Levania is on the moon.

THE INTERVIEWER

Ah.

AVA

Two: Levania is fictional.

THE INTERVIEWER

Ah ha.

AVA

It's from her son's book, the one that got her  
thrown in witch jail.

(MORE)

AVA (cont'd)

In the book, the boy's mother conjures a demon and the demon takes them up to a magical city on the moon called Levania.

LEIF

So she's just fucking with us now.

THE INTERVIEWER

Indeed she is.

KOZLOWSKI

But a deal is a deal.

THE INTERVIEWER

Indeed it is.

KATHARINA

I will wait here patiently while you find for me Levania.

GLORIA

Okay. I guess this is going to take a while. I'll get some food started. I hope everybody likes venison.

ALVINA

How much time do we have? The London police are going to surround this place any minute now.

GLORIA

We've actually got all the time in the world because the gravitational... what?

LEIF

Gravitational time dilation. Time moves a lot slower down here than it does out there.

ALVINA

How much slower?

GLORIA

Weeks down here is a few minutes up there.

ALVINA

Wow.

KOZLOWSKI

Which would imply that the gravity here is far greater, and yet I feel nothing.

LEIF

I know. Weird right?



GLORIA

So we've got time. Anyone feel like breaking down a deer with me?

KOZLOWSKI

I would be delighted.

GLORIA

Great. Get over here, big guy. Leif, Ava, Caspar, you want to brainstorm some imaginary-city-on-the-moon-solutions?

CASPAR

Okay.

GLORIA

How about some music?

ZEBULON

An excellent idea, Gloria, in keeping with our lunar theme, here's The Benson Orchestra of Chicago with "Moon of my Dreams".

SONG: "MI LUNA FANTASTICA" BY THE BENSON ORCHESTRA OF CHICAGO.

THE INTERVIEWER

Of course it would be on the moon.

AVA

You did kind of set yourself up for failure. You basically asked her to make it impossible.

THE INTERVIEWER

I had to break-

AVA

Break the deadlock, I get it.

THE INTERVIEWER

You'd think that someone who's endured what she has would welcome a fresh start, but she seems quite resistant.

LEIF

So. The moon. I've got some ideas...

GLORIA

You're surprisingly quick breaking down that deer.

KOZLOWSKI

Thank you. It has been quite a long time since I have broken down an *animal*. But there are so many similarities across the natural world.

GLORIA

Uh...

ALVINA

Koslowski is... Sometimes when people need a new life they need a new... face. Among other things.

GLORIA

Oh, that's... weird.

KOZLOWSKI

Thank you.

ALVINA

How can you call anything weird while you're in this place?

GLORIA

I know what you mean.

ALVINA

So you really just... show up wherever?

GLORIA

Pretty much.

ALVINA

What's your favorite place you've been?

GLORIA

Ooh. It's hard to pick. There was this really great guy on a derelict space ship one time.

ALVINA

Oh.

GLORIA

I guess that's the thing. It's the people, not the places for me. The places are beautiful but the people, they're from lightyears away and they might as well be from my old neighborhood. Universe after universe of people just trying to get through the day and maybe needing some help to do it.

ALVINA

If it's all so amazing, why hasn't she found a place to be?

GLORIA

Well... you're not getting old right now.

ALVINA

What do you mean?

GLORIA

It's a shifting point of null entropy. Or something. When you're here, time doesn't pass. According to Ava, when Kepler finally got his mom freed from prison, she died soon after returning home. As soon as she picks a place, she won't be there for long... She's picking a place to die. That's a hard spot to find.

ALVINA

You don't age?

GLORIA

No.

ALVINA

So, how old are you?

GLORIA

None of us have been here that long, I'm not from the 1800s or something. But Caspar, Caspar's been here a long time.

ALVINA

Are you all looking for a place to be?

GLORIA

We were. We found it.

CASPAR

There's a city on the moon?

LEIF

Oh yeah. I mean, there was in my timeline, I'm assuming there's one in this one.

THE INTERVIEWER

Certainly it would've been seen by now.

LEIF

It's on the dark side of the moon.

CASPAR

Oh, so we can't see it because it's always dark there.

LEIF

Caspar, no.

THE INTERVIEWER

We've seen the dark side of the moon.

CASPAR

We haven't seen the dark side of the moon, it's always dark there.

LEIF

It's not.

AVA

Is he doing his dark side of the moon thing again?

LEIF

Yes.

AVA

I love it.

CASPAR

It's called the dark side of the moon.

THE INTERVIEWER

We've seen pictures of the dark side of the moon.

CASPAR

They must be pretty dark pictures.

LEIF

It's cloaked, hiding things from Earth is pretty easy.

CASPAR

Yeah, easy because it's in complete darkness all the time.

LEIF

Caspar.

AVA

No, keep going, he literally can't get it.

CASPAR

What's there to get? It's the dark side of the moon, it's always dark there.

LEIF

No, it's not.

CASPAR

Yes, it is.

AVA

It's like giving a calculator to a gibbon.

LEIF

I'm moving on. There's a city on the dark side of the moon. More like a small town.

THE INTERVIEWER

What goes on there?

LEIF

It started as a relay station for something called Earth Portal, but, y'know, the people who worked there had to live somewhere, then someone decides to open a General Store, then a bar. It's not a bad place.

THE INTERVIEWER

And she could live there?

LEIF

Theoretically.

CASPAR

She's not going to be depressed living in all that darkness?

LEIF

Do I have to literally show you a picture?

AVA

No, don't ruin it, his stupidity is too beautiful.

CASPAR

What are you talking about?

LEIF

If you can get her to agree that this is as close to... what is it?

AVA

Levania.

LEIF

...As close to Levania as we can get, then we just need to find a way to get her to the moon.

THE INTERVIEWER

Oh, is that all?

LEIF

I mean, it's right there.

THE INTERVIEWER

It's four hundred-thousand kilometers away.

LEIF

And we've never been closer to finding this lady a home. Let's do this. Sell it to her.

THE INTERVIEWER

Sell her the moon?

CASPAR

Everybody's got to live somewhere.

THE INTERVIEWER

Alvina?

ALVINA

What?

THE INTERVIEWER

A word.

CASPAR

Who's the one in charge here? I'm getting mixed signals.

THE INTERVIEWER

It would depend entirely on the person being asked.

ALVINA

What is it?

THE INTERVIEWER

We must arrange a trip to the far side of the moon.

CASPAR

Where it's dark.

THE INTERVIEWER

...Where it is dark.

ALVINA

The moon?

THE INTERVIEWER

The moon.

ALVINA

We're building a rocket ship now?

THE INTERVIEWER

Ideally we would simply use someone else's.

ALVINA

"Simply?"

THE INTERVIEWER

Who do we have in French Guiana?

ALVINA

I don't know. I can make some calls.

THE INTERVIEWER

Excellent.

ALVINA

I'm guessing my mobile service isn't great here on another planet.

LEIF

If you stand by the door it should be fine.

ALVINA

What does French Guiana have to do with anything?

LEIF

It's where the ESA launches from.

ALVINA

What are we about to do? Duct tape her to a rocket?

LEIF

It's not a bad idea.

AVA

The visual is certainly funny.

THE INTERVIEWER

We need a list of options, however ridiculous.

ALVINA

Okay, I guess I'm calling French Guiana.

LEIF

I'll go with you, I've got some questions.

THE INTERVIEWER

What is the name of this alleged city?

LEIF

Honestly, everybody just calls it Moon City.

THE INTERVIEWER

They had the opportunity to name a city on the moon and decided on "Moon City?"

CASPAR

London literally means "Place of the Beaver."

THE INTERVIEWER

That is not historically supported!

LEIF

Call it whatever you want. She's not going to know.

AVA

This is good, this is progress. We just need to sell her on Moon City now.

THE INTERVIEWER

Very well. Frau Kepler, we have considered your request.

KATHARINA

It is not a request, it is a demand.

THE INTERVIEWER

We have addressed your demands.

KATHARINA

Continue.

THE INTERVIEWER

You have requested... You have requested something quite beautiful, in all honesty. You have requested that you be whisked away to a magical city on the moon. This was an idea created by your son. A great man. He imagined that his mother would weave magic and take them both up into the stars... This is not an unusual fantasy. Surely there is a time for all of us in our lives when we see our mothers as magical beings. With a wave of a wooden spoon, there is dinner. With a wrapping of fabric and a kiss, a wound is healed. With an embrace, all darkness is dispelled. For a time, as a child, everyone's mother is a witch. A sorceress. A commander of eldritch forces... And then as we reach adulthood, the feeling fades. We begin to see our mothers as human. Fallible. As flawed as we all are... Though somehow, your son, well into adulthood was able to imagine his mother as a magical being... You wish to honor his vision, as any mother would.

KATHARINA

Then you understand.

THE INTERVIEWER

I do... As it happens, your son was not writing fiction. As I have just learned, there is a city on the moon. It is not called Levania.

(MORE)



THE INTERVIEWER (cont'd)

But there on the side of the moon hidden from our world, is a city. People live there happily. And should you agree that this city, though it is not the fictional city of your son's imaginings, will suffice... we will send you there, where you can begin a new life.

KATHARINA

How would you do it?

AVA

We're working on that right now.

CASPAR

It's not magic, but if anyone can get you there, it's this group of weirdos.

GLORIA

She can just live on the moon? Last I checked it was cold there. And also had no oxygen.

AVA

I'm assuming that's taken care of by the city she's staying in, but it's a good point. Living on the moon would be pretty hard on the human body. Low gravity wreaks havoc on bone density, muscle mass, also your eyes. Reflection from the white surface of the moon can give you the equivalent of snow blindness. It would be great if you could go to the moon with a brand new body.

KOZLOWSKI

Challenge accepted, Madam.

CASPAR

(To Ava.)

This guy's so creepy.

AVA

(To Caspar.)

I know, I love it.

KOZLOWSKI

While the others set their efforts toward fashioning you a chariot to the stars, I shall be given the glorious task of transforming you into a lunar being. We shall strengthen your bones, we shall enliven your muscle mass, and your eyes, we shall make them photochromic to protect them from the harsh light. You shall become a creature of the stars.

CASPAR

(To Ava.)

"And all I require is the blood of a Spanish Prince."

AVA

(To Caspar.)

"And the eyes of thirteen albino Chihuahuas."

CASPAR

Mwa-ha-ha-ha-

AVA

Mwa-ha-ha-ha.

THE INTERVIEWER

Do you mind?

CASPAR

Sorry.

ALVINA

(On the phone.)

So there are no direct launches at all? Not for the next three years? Great. I'll call you back.

LEIF

What's the deal?

ALVINA

No launches from French Guiana in the next three years. The ESA is part of the Artemis moon mission, they're contributing to the power systems for the manned rocket and are handling the space station that's going to orbit the moon, but they're not going to *land*.

LEIF

That's better actually.

ALVINA

How?

LEIF

A manned mission isn't going to go to the far side of the moon, but a space station will.

ALVINA

What? You're just going to drop her from the space station?

LEIF

When's the first launch?

ALVINA

Six weeks.

LEIF

Okay... okay... So you'd need a stasis chamber that can work like a soft lander. I can arrange for pickup after she's dropped off.

ALVINA

You can just deliver her to the moon like she's an amazon package?

LEIF

That depends, how's your tech guy?

ALVINA

He's... alright. Probably better with explosives than stasis chambers.

LEIF

Get him on the phone. I've got a very long grocery list for him.

ALVINA

Okay... buongiorno, Salvatore... I've got... a bit of a big ask.

THE INTERVIEWER

Alvina - ask him to get Luke involved!

ALVINA

Oh - yes - Hell! Great idea!

LEIF

Hell?

ALVINA

Don't worry about it! We'll fix the stasis chamber! It might be shaped like a skull and have glowing eyes but it'll work!

LEIF

... Great.

KATHARINA

So you will put me into a cocoon, yes? I will transform into a butterfly there on the moon?

THE INTERVIEWER

That is what we propose.

KATHARINA

But this is not Levania.

THE INTERVIEWER

It is not.

KATHARINA

... I want to ask the talking box.

ZEBULON

I believe she means us, dear.

EFFIE

I gathered.

CASPAR

This is interesting.

KATHARINA

What does your God say about the soul of the fugitive? About one who searches for home?

ZEBULON

The bible says quite a great deal about searching for a home. Much of the beginnings of our faith are stories of the fugitive. Stories of the lost.

EFFIE

So much so that I'd struggle to pick one. But I suppose Ruth comes to mind.

ZEBULON

Ruth was a Moabite woman who married an Israelite. When there was a great famine, Ruth and her mother in law Naomi, both lost their husbands and were bereft. They left the land that was their home and wandered, and they found themselves in Bethlehem. The people of Bethlehem took them in as if they were their own, and found a safe place in those rolling fields of Barley. Ruth remarried and gave birth to Obed, and Obed was the grandfather of King David himself.

EFFIE

It is the fugitive that gives birth to kings, Katherine. Often times it is the refugee that is the seed of a great land, for only they can truly know the value of having a land to call their own.

KATHARINA

I will not be giving birth to kings or creating kingdoms.

EFFIE

Well, to hear the others tell it, you already did that. A great many people have a great many wonderful things to say about that son of yours.

(MORE)

EFFIE (cont'd)

Most look up at the stars and see a great mystery and it seems as though your son looked up and said "No. No, it can all make sense. I'll make sense of it. I'll start at one side of the sky and work my way across. That will be my life." Makes sense to me for you to rise up into that sky. It's a kingdom that he made for you.

KATHARINA

... He was a good boy... Very well. I will go.

GLORIA

Oh, shit.

AVA

Amazing.

THE INTERVIEWER

Excellent. Alvina? Next steps?

ALVINA

Well, it's simple. All we have to do now is escape this alien planet, escape this magical diner that will be surrounded by the police any second, then put Katharina through some VERY complicated surgeries, have Luke and Salvatore build some sort of stasis chamber, AND sneak it on board a rocket bound for The Moon's orbit, and we have to do all of that in six weeks.

THE INTERVIEWER

Simple enough.

ALVINA

Sure.

THE INTERVIEWER

Frau Kepler. Gather your things. It is time to leave the woods.

KATHARINA

I have no things. I only have myself.

THE INTERVIEWER

For a journey such as this, that is all that one needs.

WE MOVE TO THE ROOF OF THE DINER. THE DINER IS SURROUNDED BY A POLICE BARRICADE.

THE INTERVIEWER (cont'd)

Why is it that the London Police are never inept when you need them to be?

GLORIA

Do you have a plan to get out of here?

ALVINA

I called upstairs. She's about to pick us up.

CASPAR

Upstairs?

ALVINA

That's what we call the boss.

CASPAR

Huh. And how is she picking you up?

ALVINA

Apparently in a helicopter. She's on her way.

THE INTERVIEWER

She can fly a helicopter? I had no idea.

ALVINA

I didn't know either.

KATHARINA

A flying machine?

CASPAR

Spends weeks on another planet and she's amazed by a damn helicopter.

GLORIA

Leif, when are we getting a helicopter?

LEIF

I hate helicopters. Let's get a hovercraft.

GLORIA

Not the same.

KOZLOWSKI

And they are always dwelling within the radio?

AVA

Pretty much. I mean sometimes they have a day out. Sometimes they're robots.

KOZLOWSKI

Fascinating.

EFFIE

I don't like it when the big one looks at us.

ZEBULON

I am uncomfortable.

KATHARINA

I will be glad to leave this place behind. Too many unknown things here.

CASPAR

I think your recent experiences with witch trials has made you too paranoid Katharina.

KATHARINA

And you are too trusting.

CASPAR

I'm too trusting. You're the one who just agreed to get carved up by Viggo the Carpathian over there.

THE HELICOPTER APPROACHES.

THE INTERVIEWER

I imagine we'll leave you in quite a mess once we've gone.

AVA

Don't worry about us.

LEIF

We always let in the customers but we've also gotten really good at keeping people out.

THE INTERVIEWER

Including the entire City of London Police force?

LEIF

Oh, yes.

KATHARINA

You. You are like my son?

AVA

Me? Sure, in a way.

KATHARINA

You will guard his legacy? After I am gone?

AVA

Yes. I promise.

THE HELICOPTER IS NOW HOVERING ABOVE THE DINER.

AMELIA

(shouts)

There's no room to land! You have to climb the ladder!

AMELIA THROWS A LADDER OUT.

THE INTERVIEWER

It's incredible how it can stay still in the air like that!

ALVINA

(shouts)

I didn't know you knew how to fly a helicopter!

AMELIA

I don't! Now hurry up before gravity finds out!

ALVINA

I'll go first Katharina, then you follow me.

KOZLOWSKI

Then I will follow behind and make sure you do not fall.

ALVINA, KOZLOWSKI AND KATHERINE CLIMB THE LADDER.

THE INTERVIEWER

This has been quite an odd experience.

GLORIA

You've handled it very well.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Shall we all meet again, do you think?

GLORIA

We will. We already have. We are right now.

THE INTERVIEWER

... Right. Best of luck to you all... Midnight Burger.

THE INTERVIEWER CLIMBS THE LADDER.

GLORIA

Good luck to you, Amelia Project.

THE INTERVIEWER

(shouts from the ladder)

"What a strange world we live in... Said Alice to the Queen of hearts."



THE HELICOPTER FLIES AWAY. AS IT'S ALMOST GONE...

CASPAR

Oh, like Amelia EARHART.

AVA

Right.

CASPAR

Because she disappeared.

AVA

Yes.

CASPAR

Now I get it.

THE END.