

Road to Machu Picchu

A Romantic Comedy

by

Stewart A Fergus

Stewart.Fergus@mithrandirltd.com

FADE IN:

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

A despondent MATT CAMPBELL (40ish, handsome) sits on a grassy slope, wearing a cheap, garish plastic kagool, his head in his hands. He has a curiously mid-Atlantic accent, neither American nor British.

MATT (V.O.)

A week ago, my life made sense.

He looks up as it starts to rain torrentially. He forlornly pulls the kagool's inadequate hood over his head.

MATT (CONT'D)

Perfect!

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK - SUNRISE - DAY

A wintery sun rises over the familiar skyline of New York.

INT. PENHALIGON MEETING ROOM 1 - DAY

Very slick posters of seriously photoshopped beautiful people and state-of-the-art visual aids line the front of the room, including posters, and huge screens scrolling through static and social media adverts for beauty products.

5 Penhaligon people sit on one side of the large conference table, 5 PMT (the agency) opposite them, all female, including MELANIE DUBOIS (30ish, pretty, French) and NATASHA (mid-30s, American). TESS O'DONNELL, the mid-40s PMT team leader, winds up her presentation.

TESS

So we believe, with this new campaign, Penhaligon can further strengthen its market position. Over the many years we've worked together, PMT Media has built up a strong core team...

(gesturing towards
her colleagues)

... dedicated *solely* to your business. We have a depth of experience-

Penhaligon Marketing Manager, BRIONY SUMMERS, similarly mid-40s, smiles and raises her hand. They clearly have a very good personal chemistry.

BRIONY

Thanks, Tess. I don't think we need all the blah blah blah after all these years. I'm sure I speak for all of us here when I say "What a fantastic job!" You're clearly firing on all cylinders.

The PMT team straighten up proudly.

TESS

Thanks, Briony. We appreciate that. We can roll this out in-

BRIONY

Sorry to interrupt again, Tess, but, as you know, this time David Penhaligon has insisted on a...
(pausing for effect)
... "Beauty Contest" for the account.

The Penhaligon team CHUCKLE politely at their boss' little whimsy. The PMT team flash forced smiles.

BRIONY

I'm sure you've got nothing to worry about. This is gonna be tough to beat.

INT. PENHALIGON BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY

The PMT team files out of the room, shaking hands with their clients. They crane their necks to see JC Associates' presentation in the room opposite, but the pictures are still covered. Melanie nervously pulls Natasha aside. Her English is perfect, but with a clear French accent.

MELANIE

What do you think? How'd it go?

NATASHA

You heard them. They loved it. Nothing to worry about.

Melanie looks decidedly un-reassured.

Everyone's attention is drawn irresistibly towards Matt as he comes into view, gently brushing some imagined fluff off his suit. He has a somewhat distracted, diffident air about him, but exudes effortless charm.

MATT

Tess! What a pleasant surprise!

He kisses her on both cheeks. She is caught off-guard. He looks around at the others.

MATT

Are you pitching for this account
as well?

TESS

(testily)

You KNOW we are.

Tess spots Briony approaching. She softens her tone.

TESS

Of course we are. Penhaligon's been
with PMT since Adam was a boy.

MATT

Really? That l-o-n-g, eh? Hmmm.
Loved your campaign for the anti-
aging cream - went straight out and
bought some myself.

He taps his face and gives her a warm smile.

MATT

You'd never guess I was 65, would
you?

He kisses Briony on both cheeks, giving her a warm hug as he
does so. She smiles broadly.

BRIONY

Matt. Thanks for being so patient -
we're running a little late.

MATT

No problem. Gave me the chance to
drop in on David upstairs.

Briony betrays her surprise. Tess looks nervous. Natasha
turns to Melanie.

NATASHA

NOW you can start worrying.

Matt charmingly introduces himself to everyone there, PMT and
Penhaligon. He comes to Melanie. They shake hands.

MELANIE

Melanie Dubois. Art work.

MATT

Matt Campbell. Piece of work.

Melanie looks a little confused.

Matt sees PMT's presentation through the door. He looks back
at Melanie. He nods appreciatively.

MATT

Kudos. Monet himself couldn't have done better.

As Matt and his team leave, Melanie looks pleased, but then her smile vanishes.

NATASHA

What's the matter?

MELANIE

What did he mean by that? Monet was an impressionist.

INT. PENHALIGON MEETING ROOM 2 - DAY

Again, 5 Penhaligon employees on one side of the table, but 8 JC Associates employees on the other. In contrast to PMT, all the JCA employees are male executives in expensive suits.

MATT

Firstly, Briony, as I just told David, I have to thank you. We've never had a client give us such excellent, detailed specifications before...

Briony looks flattered.

INT. PENHALIGON BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY

Melanie and Natasha exit the bathroom, shaking their hands dry.

NATASHA

Come on, Mel. I'm sure he wasn't calling your work "blotchy". Hey, look! Shhhhh!

She points to the door slightly ajar as Matt begins. They check no one is around, sneak over and listen in.

INT. PENHALIGON MEETING ROOM 2 - DAY

MATT

... but maybe you should stay with PMT.

Briony looks up at him astonished. His own team look horrified.

BRIONY

I don't understand. I thought... I thought you wanted this account.

MATT

Of course we do, Briony. From the little I could see, PMT have done an excellent job. They are a first rate agency.

BRIONY

(amazed)

So... you're withdrawing?

INT. PENHALIGON BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY

Melanie and Natasha look surprised, then a wide-eyed mix of anticipation and excitement crosses their faces.

INT. PENHALIGON MEETING ROOM 2

MATT

Unfortunately, it looks like we may have misunderstood the target demographic. My fault, I assure you. Judging from PMT's presentation, your new focus is clearly on the "mass" market.

INT. PENHALIGON BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY

Melanie and Natasha's jaws drop.

INT. PENHALIGON MEETING ROOM 2 - DAY

BRIONY

But...

Matt reveals the first slide. It is an impossibly handsome young man wearing only Armani briefs and holding a can of beans towards the viewer.

MATT

Oops! Wrong campaign.

Everyone CHUCKLES. The mood relaxes. Matt unveils the next slides, one by one, as he speaks. They are stunning.

MATT

As you can see, we've pitched our campaign at an altogether more *exclusive* demographic, the discerning, sophisticated consumer. We understood THAT was Penhaligon's strategy, but if it is to - how should I put this delicately? -

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

hmmm... *broaden* your customer base,
then clearly we've got it wrong and
you should stay with PMT.

INT. PENHALIGON BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY

MELANIE

Merde!

INT. PENHALIGON MEETING ROOM 2 - DAY

Everyone turns towards the door at the commotion. We just see
Natasha's legs as she pushes Melanie away.

EXT. PENHALIGON BUILDING - DAY

The girls spill out of the building. Melanie pulls herself
free from Natasha's strong grip.

MELANIE

Why'd you do that? He's trashing
our work up there.

NATASHA

Take it easy. Give Briony some
credit. She's not gonna fall for
that smarmy bullshit.

INT. LOBBY OF JC ASSOCIATES, MADISON AVENUE - NIGHT

The tasteful but austere Lobby exudes success. Large pictures
of Angkor Wat, Meteora and Machu Picchu are on the walls. A
sign proclaims "JC Associates, Proud Partners of UNESCO".

An elevator opens. Matt exits with his fiancée, SARAH, mid-
thirties, attractive, with a patrician, Old Money aura about
her. They are dressed in formal Black Tie. She is very
affected as she speaks, with exaggerated hand gestures.

SARAH

Good. That's the wedding list done.

MATT

Of course, we don't actually *need*
any of that stuff, Sarah. Why don't
we just ask people to donate to
your latest Charity of the Month?
Orphan penguins in Uganda, or
whatever. Would be great PR.

SARAH

This is not a funeral, Matthew.

MATT

Scholar's may differ on that point.

SARAH

Oh, Matthew, really.

They pass the RECEPTIONIST, a uniformed man in his 40s.

MATT

'Night, Bill. How's your son's leg?

RECEPTIONIST

Much better, thanks, Mr Campbell.

MATT

Excellent.

Sarah grabs him by the arm and propels him towards the waiting limo.

SARAH

Matthew, you simply shouldn't be so familiar with the help.

EXT. YACHT - NIGHT

The good ship "GALADRIEL", a seriously beautiful private yacht oozing success, money and power, is festooned for a celebration. The limo pulls up in front of it.

As they get out of the car, Sarah's eyes widen with pleasure when she sees the boat. Matt gives it barely a second glance as they go aboard.

INT. BOARD ROOM OF PMT MEDIA - NIGHT

A modest impromptu party is in progress. On the white-board, a sad, makeshift message proclaims:

"Good luck, PMT Penhaligon Superstars

Robbed but heads held high!"

Melanie is standing by a bar full of champagne bottles. Her spirits are low.

NATASHA

These came from Penhaligon.

MELANIE

Huh! Guilty conscience, no doubt. I don't get it. Why aren't you angry? Campbell played dirty. You heard him - he went to see the old man first. We never stood a chance.

NATASHA

That's the way it crumbles, cookie-wise, my friend.

She pours champagne into 2 plastic tumblers.

NATASHA

To us!

They glumly hook arms and take a swig of champagne.

MELANIE

It's all right for you. They're gonna kick me out of the country now. No job, no visa.

Natasha gives Melanie a hug. She points to a portly co-worker, passed out on a pile of empty champagne boxes.

NATASHA

You could always marry Darren.

EXT. YACHT REAR DECK - NIGHT

There is a far more lavish cocktail party in full swing, with about 50 guests, including Briony and the Penhaligon team. Above the bar is a big glossy banner:

"JC Associates welcome Penhaligon Cosmetics"

JAMES CAMPBELL (JC), Matt's father (60s), is a gruff, larger than life, Scot, a commanding presence as he greets his guests dressed in traditional Scottish regalia, kilt and all. In contrast with Matt's urbane, smooth manner, JC's face betrays a much tougher life. Next to him is a beautiful, elegant woman, DEBRA, 25 years his junior. Debra leads Sarah away by the arm.

MATT

Another one, dad!? I just can't keep up. Where's this one from?

JC

Debra Seelinger.

The penny drops for Matt.

MATT

As in...?

JC nods.

MATT

You old dog, you!

JC allows himself a self-satisfied smile.

JC
So, Sarah tells me you've finally fixed a date.

MATT
She told me YOU'D fixed the date.

JC
July's a good time, son. Business is quiet. I might even be able to give you the whole weekend off.

MATT
Hah! Very funny!

They toast each other with crystal tumblers of whisky.

JC
Don't forget you'll be running the shop tomorrow.

MATT
Why?

JC
Prostate. One of the joys of getting older is you get a guy to stick his finger up your arse every couple of years.

MATT
I can't wait.

EXT. YACHT REAR DECK - NIGHT

GEORGE, 40s, not as dapper as Matt, sticks his hand out.

GEORGE
Just heard. Congratulations, sport.

MATT
Yes, it's true. The Supreme Court turned down my appeal for clemency.

George sees JC dancing with Debra. He gestures and gives a quizzical look.

MATT
Seelinger Candies.

GEORGE
Aaaah, that clears up that little mystery. This time last week I wouldn't have given two cents for our chances.

INT. BOARD ROOM OF PMT MEDIA - NIGHT

Empty champagne bottles are piled up on the side. Natasha and Melanie are huddled in a corner, a bit the worse for wear.

NATASHA

You sure about this? A bit drastic, isn't it, throwing it all away to become a tree-hugger in Africa.

MELANIE

Why not? No kids, no commitments. It's that or go back to France. I need a change. I've loved this job, but I can't afford it anymore. Two years in New York and, after taxes, rent and Starbucks, I have less than when I came.

NATASHA

Welcome to the Greatest Country in the World! So, what's the job?

MELANIE

I don't have it yet. The interview's next week, in Cusco.

NATASHA

Cusco?! Why can't they have it in the Hilton, like normal people?

MELANIE

There's a big, how you say, congress of NGOs there. They want to draw attention to the interdependence of culture, the environment and bio-diversity, and-

Natasha SNORES.

NATASHA

My God, you sound like a brochure.

EXT. YACHT REAR DECK - NIGHT

Matt is on a makeshift stage finishing his speech.

MATT

To wrap up, then, I'd like to welcome our new friends at Penhaligon to the JCA family, and to thank my team for going the extra mile to make me look good.

To cheers, he gives them the thumbs up.

MATT

Let's face it, if my father can be persuaded to put his hand in his sporran for this spread, you MUST be good!

There is LAUGHTER and APPLAUSE as Matt leaves the stage and goes to his father and Debra.

JC

Guid yin. But who says I'M paying for this?!

DEBRA

That was great, Matt. You clearly get your eloquence from your mother.

JC

Nice try, Sweetheart, but I'm no taking the bait.

(to Matt)

You ready for your UNESCO speech?

MATT

What UNESCO speech?

JC

Did they not tell you?

MATT

Nope.

JC

Something about the environment and The Great Unwashed. Just give 'em your usual rhubarb.

Matt puts his hand over his heart.

MATT

So touching. When is it?

JC

Monday.

MATT

Monday!?! That's rather short notice, isn't it?

JC

So? Be there!

MATT

What's the angle here? You usually couldn't give a monkey's toss about these boondoggles.

JC

This one's a biggie, my son. All the top international sponsors will be there. Half of them are our clients, so go get the other half.

MATT

Biggest companies in the world. No pressure then? If it's so important, why don't you-?

JC

Let's just say all this touchy-feely...

He hesitates as he searches for the word.

MATT

... touchy-feely bullshit?

JC

Aye, that's it. This shite is much more up your alley.

MATT

Thanks.

JC starts to walk away.

JC

Oh, nearly forgot. The conference is in Peru. You leave on Friday. Only flight we could get.

MATT

But that's Bridge Night.

EXT. MATT'S OFFICE - DAY

George stops dead in his tracks when he sees Matt's assistant, GLORIA, putting her stuff into a box.

GEORGE

Not again, Gloria?

GLORIA

No, this time's for real, George.

GEORGE

Come on. You don't mean it.

GLORIA

Boundaries, George. Boundaries. Too much stress. He calls, any time of the day or night - including weekends - even Christmas day, for fuck's sake!

(MORE)

GLORIA (CONT'D)
 I can't do this anymore. My
 boyfriend's convinced we're
 having an affair! As if!!!

George lets out an involuntary CHORTLE of incredulity.

GEORGE
 What!? You're way too good for him!

GLORIA
 Thanks, George. I'm exhausted.
 I've had enough. I'm gonna get a
 less stressful job - like bomb
 disposal.

MATT (O.S.)
 Gloria! Are you sure the old man
 won't let me take the plane?

GLORIA
 (shouting)
 If "not for tree-hugging pro-bono
 shite" means "no", then no.
 (sotto voce to George)
 Poor lamb!

INT. MATT'S OFFICE - DAY

Matt's shoulders slump with disappointment.

MATT
 Bugger.

Gloria comes in with his ticket, followed by George.

GLORIA
 Here's your ticket. The bus details
 are in the package.

GEORGE
 Bus?

MATT
 Yea. The bus from Lima to Cusco.

GEORGE
 YOU'RE getting a bus?!

GLORIA
 Best I could do.

She exits.

MATT
 That's not all. What the hell am
 I supposed to do until Monday?

GEORGE

Have fun?

MATT

Yea, right.

GEORGE

Meant to ask you, what does Scrooge McDuck make of your impending nuptials?

MATT

Quote: "Time to stop enjoying yourself and settle down."

GEORGE

Well, so long as you love her, that's all that matters, right?

MATT

As Tina Turner so eloquently put it: "What's Love Got To Do With It?" Sarah's good breeding stock, and-

GEORGE

Why don't you enter her in the Kentucky Derby?

MATT

You know what I mean. Besides, it makes sense to have a rugrat while I'm still able to pick the little bugger up.

George dabs mock tears from his eyes, and SNIFFS.

GEORGE

Aah! True Love.

MATT

Come on, George. Look at my father. I can't remember how many wives, girlfriends, mistresses, paramours, he's had - and I'm sure he probably even loved one or two of them. But, where's that got him?

GEORGE

The Seelinger account?

MATT

Don't get me wrong. Sarah's a great girl. She's the only one I've ever been with who wasn't after my money - her old man's richer than God! Not as rich as Bill Gates, but certainly richer than God.

GEORGE
So, what does SHE see in YOU?

INT. SARAH'S 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Matt and Sarah finish dressing very smart casual. Sarah looks at herself in the mirror, checking her breasts.

MATT
Problem with Barnes & Noble?

SARAH
No, of course not. But one day..
Even you've heard of gravity. You
know what that'll mean, don't you?

MATT
Turn the lights off?

A coat hits him in the face.

SARAH
Okay, let's do this.

INT. SARAH'S 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT - DINING-ROOM - NIGHT

Matt and Sarah admire the superb view of Central Park and the Manhattan skyline. The butler stands attentively to the side.

MATT
I never get tired of this view.

SARAH
Okay, now smile for the camera.

A photographer buzzes around them, taking endless pictures. The butler approaches with a bottle of wine, ensuring the photographer gets a very good view of the label.

MATT
I don't know why you do all this
crap. It's not as if you need-

SARAH
Don't start that again, Matthew.
It's me. I was born to be an
influencer.

MATT
And I was born to get influenza.
We're so compatible.

SARAH
(to the photographer)
That'll do. Put them in Dropbox and
I'll decide later. Thank you.

The photographer leaves. They sit down at the table for dinner. The butler pours them red wine from a decanter.

MATT

What are you plugging now?

SARAH

I am not "*plugging*" anything, Matthew, thank you very much. My posts are inspirational. I guide my followers in the finer aspects of living in the metropolis.

MATT

If you say so, Sweetie.

SARAH

Oh, Cynthia called - wants us to sponsor a table at the Met Ball again this year.

He shakes his head disapprovingly.

MATT

I don't know. Some people just think we're made of money. Can you pass the caviar, please?

She hands a dainty silver dish to him.

SARAH

Oh, another thing - I had to let Betsy go today.

MATT

What? Why?

SARAH

She was becoming impossible, kept putting things back in the wrong place. I can't find anything.

MATT

Tsk! It's not rocket science.

SARAH

Exactly.

MATT

My life's falling apart. First, Gloria, now Betsy.

(BEAT)

Who's going to pack my suitcase now?

EXT. JFK TERMINAL - NIGHT

Matt's limo pulls up. Melanie, dressed in almost-hippy casual, puts her backpack and suitcase down next to the last luggage trolley in the dispenser, and fumbles in her handbag for her purse. The limo DRIVER puts his credit card in the machine and takes the trolley.

MELANIE
Hey! That's mine.

DRIVER
Life's tough, lady!

Melanie watches incredulously as the driver puts Matt's cabin-size suitcase on it and wheels it away.

MELANIE
What kinda jerk needs a trolley for an oversized handbag? *Connard!*

INT. JFK CHECK-IN NORTHEAST AIRLINES - NIGHT

Matt is at the Business Class check-in. The Clerk is on the phone. Melanie is at the next desk, Economy, checking in her luggage. She recognizes Matt's suitcase on the trolley. She looks up and is shocked to see who it is.

MELANIE
You!?! Why am I not surprised?

Confused, Matt looks at her, but turns back to the Check-in Clerk when she puts down the phone.

CHECK-IN CLERK
I'm sorry, Mr Campbell. You didn't check in online and reserve a seat.

MATT
So? I have a ticket - just give me my boarding pass.

CHECK-IN CLERK
That's the problem. We're full, and everyone in Business has already checked in.

MATT
What am I supposed to do now?

CHECK-IN CLERK
The next available business class seat is on... Tuesday. Or there are still two seats left in coach.

MATT
 (sarcastic)
 Excellent. Perfect. So, you
 expect me to fly...

He glances at the Economy queue in disgust.

MATT
 ... ballast!?

The Check-in Clerk shrugs.

CHECK-IN CLERK
 I'm sure you'll find our award-
 winning Economy class-

MATT
 Hey, don't bullshit a bullshitter.
 I work in advertising!

CHECK-IN CLERK
 I'm sorry, Mr Campbell, but we
 can't magic extra seats out of thin
 air.

MATT
 (under his breath)
 Morons.

Melanie picks up her boarding pass and passport, and starts
 to leave. Schadenfreude is written all over her face.

MELANIE
 Who would have thought the world
 would have ended on a Friday?

Puzzled, Matt watches her head for Departures.

INT. JFK SECURITY CHECK - NIGHT

Long queues at security. Everyone is intimidated by the
 swaggering TSA Obergruppenführer. Matt is directed behind
 Melanie as she puts her backpack on the conveyor belt.

MATT
 Are you following me?

MELANIE
 I'm in front of you!

INT. JFK SECURITY CHECK - NIGHT

Matt passes through the metal detector. He goes to pick up
 his headphones case from the belt.

SECURITY GUY #1

This yours, sir? Wait over there.

Annoyed, Matt goes to the end where another officer has just finished going through Melanie's stuff. She puts it all back in her backpack.

MATT

Come on, lady. These guys are slow enough already without your help.

SECURITY GUY #2's eyes narrow. A thin smile appears on his face.

INT. JFK SECURITY AREA - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Matt reeks impatience as he enters with Security Guy #2.

SECURITY GUY #2

Okay, drop them.

He raises his right hand, pulling on a latex glove.

INT. JFK DEPARTURE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Matt comes out of the room, walking bandy-legged and uncomfortably. Melanie SNIGGERS when she sees him.

MATT

I suppose you find this entertaining?

MELANIE

Actually, yes!

INT. JFK DEPARTURE GATE - NIGHT

The plane is boarding. Matt's boarding pass is rejected.

MATT

You're kidding me. Is this Candid Camera or Punk'd or something? This can't be for real.

AGENT

I'll have to ask you to wait by the side, sir, while I finish boarding the flight.

Melanie makes no effort to hide her amusement at his plight as she passes him to board.

INT. JFK DEPARTURE GATE - NIGHT

The departure gate is empty. Only Matt is left, pacing in front of the desk as the agent speaks on the phone, while working the computer keyboard.

AGENT

Sir, please be patient. I'm doing this as fast as I can.

MATT

Come on. Come on. What's taking so long? I could have walked there by now.

The agent puts her hand over the phone.

AGENT

Sir, if you don't step back I'll be forced to call security.

Matt stops dead. He clenches his buttocks.

AGENT

(on phone)

Yea, that's right. Muriel's turning 40 this weekend - who'da thunk it?

Matt rolls his eyes. He points at his watch.

AGENT

Look, Sandy, I got a right one here. I'll call you back.

She hangs up and plays some more with the computer.

AGENT

Ah, ha!

This time, the reader accepts his boarding pass.

MATT

Finally! What a shambles! This airline couldn't organize a piss-up at a brewery.

He grabs the boarding pass and bolts down the air-bridge.

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Matt reaches his seat - across the aisle from Melanie. He looks up to heaven.

MATT

Why?

They both look miffed and check their boarding passes.

Matt sits down and buckles in. There is a marked contrast between him, very formally dressed, and the multitude of young backpackers and Peruvian manual workers.

He turns to look at the middle-aged Peruvian maid with pig-tails next to him. She stares at him with a stony face. He quickly turns to face forward once again.

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

The in-flight meal has been served.

MATT

(to himself)

Jesus, this "food" tastes of plastic.

MELANIE

What do you expect? You're flying coach. Oh, no, that's right. You weren't supposed to be with us plebs, were you?

(shrugs)

Life's tough!

MATT

I don't know what your problem is, lady - and, to be honest, I don't really care - so, if you don't mind...

He gestures for her to turn the other way. Melanie allows herself a self-satisfied grin.

INT. PLANE - DAY

The plane lands. Several Latin passengers CLAP.

STEWARDESS (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, we have now arrived at Lima airport. We'd like to thank you for flying with Northeast Airlines. We know you have a choice of bankrupt airlines.

The plane is still taxiing, but people have already started rummaging for their luggage in the overhead bins. A bag falls on Matt. Matt looks very grumpy - he has clearly not slept.

INT. LIMA AIRPORT IMMIGRATION - DAY

People jostle in the long queues at immigration.

INT. LIMA AIRPORT - CUSTOMS - DAY

A row of security x-ray machines. Matt impatiently takes his suitcase off the belt of one. The officer points him over to the checking area. He shakes his head in disbelief.

MATT

Why am I not surprised?

INT. LIMA AIRPORT - CUSTOMS - DAY

The officer finds a gift that Sarah secreted into the suitcase. He hands Matt the note attached.

ANGLE ON NOTE

"To keep you warm in the mountains, darling. S"

It is a joke pair of underpants, with an elephant motif and a 2 foot "trunk". The officer holds it up just as Melanie walks passed with her backpack and suitcase. Matt is mortified.

MELANIE

Ah, now I see what you meant about being a bullshitter!

INT. LIMA AIRPORT ARRIVAL HALL - DAY

Melanie has been met by a young TOUR REP.

TOUR REP

Bienvenida al Perú, señorita. We are just waiting for one more passenger.

MELANIE

Okay. They told me I could leave my suitcase with you in Lima while I'm in the mountains. Is that okay?

TOUR REP

Por supuesto, señorita.

Melanie opens her suitcase and hurriedly takes out a large beach bag that is positively bulging. She locks the suitcase and hands it to the rep.

MELANIE

Now, I'm dying for a coffee. Is there-?

TOUR REP

Starbucks is upstairs, but please be back in fifteen minutes.

INT. LIMA AIRPORT SHOPPING AREA - STARBUCKS - DAY

Melanie is wearing an alpaca poncho and hat she's just bought. She buys a coffee.

EXT. LIMA AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY

Matt is with the tour rep. He looks at the bus with disdain.

MATT

Gloria said it was a luxury bus.

TOUR REP

This *IS* the luxury bus.

Matt stares at the tour rep incredulously. His cellphone RINGS to the tune of "Witch Queen of New Orleans".

MATT

Oh, Sarah. You wouldn't believe...

He gets into the minibus, and throws his jacket over one of the seats.

MATT

... so now I've got to go upcountry in this... bone shaker. I guess it'll be real boondocks, so don't be surprised if I'm incommunicado for a while.

INT. SARAH'S 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Sarah is lying on the bed in all her silk finery, speaking on the phone while absent-mindedly doing her nails.

SARAH

Darling, it's gonna be a tough weekend for me too, you know. I'll be in the Hamptons looking for somewhere for the summer. So tedious. I did tell you to rebook the Elliott's house, but you-

INTERCUT PHONE CALL

EXT. LIMA AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY

The DRIVER puts Melanie's backpack and bag in the back. She steps into the minibus. She freezes as she and Matt are momentarily paralyzed with shock. Both GROAN.

MELANIE

Merde alors!

MATT

Holy shit! I don't believe it.

SARAH

What? Are you listening to me, Matthew?

MATT

Mephistopheles herself just got on the bus. Speak later. Ciao.

SARAH

But-

He hangs up.

MELANIE

Me!? You're the one... Oh, never mind. I was so looking forward to this trip.

MATT

You can always get another bus.

MELANIE

Me? Why should *I* change? I'm surprised you even know what a bus is.

MATT

Of course I do. I've seen them from my terrace.

Melanie moves past him to the back of the bus.

MELANIE

Of all the people-

MATT

The gods are really taking the piss.

They sit grumpily ignoring each other.

EXT. LIMA - DAY

Melanie LAUGHS. Matt turns around assuming she's laughing at him again, but she's just engrossed in her cellphone.

MELANIE

Don't worry. Nothing to do with you, Narcissus. Just Instagram.

Matt SIGHS.

MATT

Social media - the biggest time waster in the history of the universe. Social media is for people who don't have a life of their own.

MELANIE

But you're on it.

MATT

No, I'm not.

MELANIE

Yes, you are. I've seen you.

MATT

You have?! No, that's my fiancée - way too much time on her hands. What's with the fancy dress? I thought it was Easter, not Halloween.

MELANIE

You do know we're going into the mountains, right?

MATT

(hesitantly)
Of course.

MELANIE

Like, a couple of miles straight up?

MATT

(awkwardly)
Of course.

Wide-eyed, Melanie touches his thin silk jacket.

MELANIE

O-k-a-y.

EXT. PANAMERICAN HIGHWAY - DAY

The minibus drives through a barren moonscape of drab, brown desert. Matt is quite drowsy from lack of sleep.

MELANIE

It's so beautiful in its austerity.

MATT

It's a giant sandbox.

MELANIE

You've got no soul.

Matt sits upright, exasperated.

MATT

Okay, I'm the big bad capitalist. The devil incarnate. Whatever. But I'll have you know, I haven't sacrificed a virgin to the gods for *AGES* (they're very tasty, by the way - especially with gravy).

He relishes seeing Melanie taken aback by his outburst.

MATT

I don't get it. Don't you think all this... *aggro* is a bit much for one stupid trolley? It was a nice one, I grant you, but-

MELANIE

You don't remember me, do you?

MATT

Do you have any idea how many people I meet every day in my job?

He looks at her more closely.

MATT

You do look a *bit* familiar. Interpol poster?
(pointing to her costume)
Woodstock video? I give in.

MELANIE

PMT Media.

Matt shrugs. He is none the wiser.

MELANIE

The Penhaligon account.

The penny drops.

MATT

Ah, now I remember. Wait. The artist, right? And clearly a sore loser. Maybe the clients preferred not being harangued by a bunch of unshaven, wild-eyed, misanthropic harpies.

MELANIE

Hey, we're not unshaven.

Matt is momentarily surprised. He permits himself a smile.

MATT

Hmmm. So you checked me out on the internet, did you? And? Did I live down to your worst expectations?

MELANIE

Totalment. Look, we're gonna be stuck together for the next two days-

MATT

TWO DAYS?! What're you talking about? My secretary said Cusco was "just up the road". We'd arrive tonight.

Melanie SNORTS.

MELANIE

Impossible - unless you fly.

MATT

Hah! Obviously I would have, but you can't, can you?

MELANIE

What are YOU talking about? Cusco's Peru's third largest city. Of course you can fly there.

Matt sits bolt upright, shocked.

MATT

What?!? That bitch, Gloria! How could she?

Matt scowls. Melanie raises her hand to her face in a vain attempt to hide her amusement.

MELANIE

You must have REALLY pissed her off! What a shocker!

She sees Matt totally deflated and, to her own surprise, feels some sympathy for him.

MELANIE

Well, we are where we are, so, how about it - a truce? We keep out of each other's way.

MATT

On this thing?! There isn't room to swing a Chihuahua. Besides, I'M not the one fighting. You're... Okay. Okay. Fine by me. Civility is my middle name.

EXT. PANAMERICAN HIGHWAY - DAY

Matt tries to sleep, but the road is too bumpy. Melanie does a puzzle in a magazine. The minibus driver hangs up his mobile phone. He clears his throat loudly to get their attention.

MINIBUS DRIVER

Señor. Señorita. Bridge down. We take different road. Via Ayacucho.

MATT

We can go via the moon for all I care, so long as we get there on time.

He sees a big M sign.

MATT

Ah, McDonalds. Driver, let's stop at that restaurant for lunch. I'm starving.

EXT. RESTAURANTE MAYKOL - DAY

They get out of the bus in front of a nondescript local restaurant with a large yellow "M" quasi-McDonalds sign in front. Matt looks at it, disappointed.

MATT

Ah! Not quite what I expected.

Melanie CHUCKLES to herself.

MELANIE

We're here now. We may as well.

INT. RESTAURANTE MAYKOL - DAY

It is a small, rustic place, with ten small tables and plastic tablecloths. Melanie, Matt and the driver enter and head for the first table.

MELANIE

I said "truce", not "peace".

She points to another table.

INT. RESTAURANTE MAYKOL - DAY

Melanie is conversing in simple Spanish with the driver. They have finished eating. Melanie pays the WAITER, a friendly-looking man in his 60s.

WAITER
Gracias, Señorita.

Matt, sitting at another table, gives the waiter an Amex card. He shakes his head.

WAITER
No, Señor.

MATT
It seems that WON'T do nicely.

Matt tries Visa. The waiter shakes his head again.

MATT
It would appear civilization has yet to reach these parts.

Matt looks very uncomfortable. He turns awkwardly to Melanie.

MATT
Mademoiselle, I find myself temporarily somewhat embarrassed.

MELANIE
You don't have any soles?

MATT
How was I to know?

MELANIE
What? That foreign countries have foreign currency?

MATT
I wasn't expecting Moses' Journey through the wilderness.

MELANIE
Changing money is pretty much standard procedure, isn't it? Haven't you been overseas before?

MATT
Of course I have. I went to New Jersey once. Look, I'll make you a deal. Sell me some soles, and I'll give you double the exchange rate.

MELANIE
You think you can buy anything and anyone, don't you? Not interested.

Matt looks at the waiter nervously, then back at Melanie.

MATT

If not for me, do it for the owner of this fine culinary establishment - a much worthier cause, I assure you.

Melanie hesitates for a moment.

MELANIE

Okay, I'll do it... if you get my old job back.

MATT

What!? That's a high price for a few bucks, isn't it?

Melanie looks at him, then gets up and heads for the door.

MATT

Wait. Wait. Let's be realistic. I can't tell PMT who to hire.

MELANIE

But, in *your* company-!?

MATT

Well, yes, I guess you could-

MELANIE

Me? Do you really think I'd want to work for YOU?

MATT

But you just said-

MELANIE

Not for me. For my friend Natasha. She's awesome, and, amazingly, she doesn't hate you.

She looks at him, awaiting his response.

MATT

Okay, I promise.

MELANIE

Give her a fair chance. That's all I'm asking. Can I trust you?

Matt looks exasperated.

MATT

I may be many things, Mademoiselle, but I assure you I am a man of my word. If you don't believe me...

He takes off his Rolex.

MELANIE

That won't be necessary, Mr
Campbell. I may be a harpy, but I
do like to believe the best of
people - even cloven-hooved ones.
But you still pay me back in Cusco.

MATT

(sighing with relief)
Naturally. Thank you.

She starts to hand him some money, but then stops.

MELANIE

We're gonna have 2 days of this.
Much simpler if we run a tab, and
you pay me back at the end, okay?

MATT

Thank you. From me, and a grateful
stomach.

EXT. PANAMERICAN HIGHWAY - DAY

Matt and Melanie are dozing again. Thick fog has rolled in
from the sea. The bus crawls along until suddenly there is a
JOLT. They all get thrown about.

EXT. PANAMERICAN HIGHWAY - DAY

They look helplessly at the broken front axle, the wheel
stuck in a hole. The driver puts down his cellphone.

MINIBUS DRIVER

(Spanish)
No repair today.

MATT

What do we do now?

EXT. PANAMERICAN HIGHWAY - DAY

Melanie waves down a local bus, laden down with bags on top.
She speaks to the driver.

MELANIE

(Spanish)
How much?

LOCAL BUS DRIVER

(Spanish)
Five Soles.

MELANIE
(to Matt)
Five Soles.

Matt looks at her awkwardly.

MATT
On the tab? Please.

Melanie allows herself a little smile.

INT. LOCAL BUS - DAY

The bus is crammed to the gills. Melanie, mid-bus, chats in Spanish with a local lady. Matt is in the back row, sitting almost crushed between two huge women dressed in colorful traditional costumes, and wearing black top hats. One of the women is carrying a young baby.

Matt looks distinctly uncomfortable. He struggles to brush fluff off his suit. The women smile at him. He smiles back, then looks forward. The baby starts to WHINE. Matt looks at the mother. She suddenly whips out a huge breast and pushes it in the baby's mouth.

MATT
(nervously)
Excellent. Excellent.

Melanie chuckles. She takes a photo with her phone.

I/E. LOCAL BUS - DAY

The bus, very old, chugs along the road. It strains to get up a steep hill before eventually giving up the ghost.

MATT
Now what?

There is a lot of CHATTER amongst the passengers. The men start to leave the bus.

MELANIE
The men are going to push.

MATT
Good for them.

MELANIE
ALL the men, Matt.

EXT. LOCAL BUS - DAY

The men are pushing the bus, while the women watch on. Melanie walks behind a rock. She finds Matt bending down.

MATT

Just tying my shoelaces.

MELANIE

They're slip-ons, Matt.

He stands up, instinctively dusts down his jacket, and joins the men pushing the bus just as the motor kicks in again. He turns triumphantly towards Melanie.

EXT. POOR VILLAGE - DAY

The bus makes a pit-stop in a very poor village, with very basic amenities. Matt's stomach GRUMBLES loudly.

MATT

Thank God, we've stopped. I need to see a man about a dog.

All the passengers pour out of the bus. Melanie and Matt tower over the local Indians.

MATT

When did we arrive in Lilliput?
Excuse me. Nature calls.

He rushes towards the buildings.

INT. POOR VILLAGE - BATHROOM - DAY

Matt enters the bathroom. The smell is overpowering. He screws up his face in disgust. There are three cubicles. He looks in the first one. It is a porcelain hole in the ground. He is shocked. He checks the other two. The same.

MATT

Oh, my God!

INT. POOR VILLAGE - CUBICLE - DAY

Matt enters the furthest cubicle and unbuttons his pants.

MATT

Jesus! No paper.

INT. POOR VILLAGE - DAY

Matt rushes back to the bus. He seeks out Melanie.

MATT

Do you, er, know where to get some paper? The bathroom attendant wasn't there.

MELANIE

Did you try asking the concierge?
How would I know?

She shrugs. Matt hops from one foot to the other.

MATT

That's really not very helpful. I
don't think I need to spell out the
seriousness of the situation.

Melanie pulls out toilet paper and wet ones from her bag.

MELANIE

Spare me. Here, take these.

Matt looks a little surprised, but grabs them and runs off.

MELANIE

(sarcastically)
You're welcome!

INT. POOR VILLAGE - CUBICLE - DAY

Matt is back in the cubicle. He turns to face the door. There is no lock.

MATT

Jesus wept! How the hell are you
supposed to lock this?

Matt hooks the paper on the door handle, and puts the wet ones in his top pocket. He leans back on the door.

MATT

Now what do you do?

He gingerly drops his pants, trying hard to keep them clean.

MATT

This isn't gonna work.

He struggles to take off his pants and underpants without getting anything dirty, taking off one shoe at a time, and replacing it immediately after the clothes have been removed. He motions to hang them somewhere, but there is nowhere.

With a resigned expression, he wraps them around his neck. He pauses for a moment as he contemplates his next move. He is quite a sight - top half fine Italian silk suit, with pants as a scarf; bottom half nothing, except alabaster white legs, beautiful leather shoes and socks.

With a deep sigh, he gets into the launch position. He then totters as he tries to balance himself on the wall, hold the door AND aim safely all at the same time. His hands flap frantically from one to the other.

MATT
How the hell...?!

INT. POOR VILLAGE - CUBICLE - DAY

As Matt gets redressed, his cellphone falls from his pocket.

SLOW MOTION

The phone falls to the ground, bounces on the porcelain, then drops into the hole.

EXT. POOR VILLAGE - DAY

Melanie is standing by the bus, taking photos. Suddenly there is a SCREAM.

MATT (O.S.)
NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!

EXT. POOR VILLAGE - DAY

A sad-looking Matt comes back to Melanie. He hands back her provisions.

MATT
Thanks.

MELANIE
Hemorrhoids?

MATT
If only. My phone is now connected to a different Peruvian utility.

Melanie looks puzzled as Matt walks away glumly.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

The road is blocked by a landslide. Matt and Melanie survey the scene as the locals start climbing up and over. Melanie takes some pictures. They grab their luggage. Matt heads for the lowest point.

MELANIE
I think we should do what they're doing, go up that way.

MATT
What on earth for? They're just making it difficult for themselves.

MELANIE

You know, there's probably a reason they're-

MATT

You do what you want. I'm going this way.

Melanie shakes her head, then follows the locals.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

Matt is crossing the landslide low down, while everyone else is higher up.

CAMERA ON MATT, WITH MELANIE IN THE BACKGROUND.

MATT

See? Nothing to worry about.

MELANIE

Okay. Maybe you were right..

Matt gradually sinks lower and lower until he is out of the shot.

MELANIE

... but then again-

MATT (O.S.)

Oh, bollocks!

Melanie LAUGHS. CLICK. Another photo.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

Matt is buried up to his knees in the mud. He can't move. Some locals throw him a rope. He grabs hold of it.

MATT

Now what?

MELANIE

Hang yourself, you idiot. What do you think? Pull!

He pulls on the rope but gets nowhere. He gets very fastidious as his elbows go into the mud.

MATT

Rats!

The locals keep speaking to him.

MATT

What are they saying?

MELANIE

They're saying only a moron would
try walking on deep mud.

Matt MUMBLES under his breath.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

The locals have broken up some wooden crates and created a makeshift walkway over the mud to be able to pull Matt out. Four of them grab him by the arms. There is the sound of SUCTION as he emerges without his shoes and socks. In the process, his suitcase also gets sunk when one of the men stands on it for traction. His clothes are ruined. He is a very sorry sight. Melanie takes more pictures.

MATT

Nanny would have a stroke if-

MELANIE

Nanny!?! Ah, bless him!

He struggles to walk bare-foot on the stony ground.

MATT

You're not being very helpful.

MELANIE

Sorry.

She hands him a single Kleenex tissue.

MATT

All my problems solved. To think,
there I was, worried for a moment.

Out of habit, he dusts down his jacket.

MELANIE

That's gonna help!

Suddenly he stands on a sharp stone. He jumps up and down in pain.

MATT

Ow! Bugger!

He loses balance and falls forward on top of Melanie. She is pushed backwards. Luckily, it is onto grass, plus she is cushioned by her backpack.

MELANIE

Ooooph!

Matt's face is right in the middle of her cleavage.

MELANIE

Don't let me rush you.

MATT

Sorry. My apologies.

Clumsily, he gets up off her, then helps her to her feet. She looks down at his bare feet.

MELANIE

This isn't going to work.
(shouting in Spanish)
\$100 for a pair of shoes for the
clumsy gringo.

Half a dozen locals take the shoes off their feet and offer them insistently.

MATT

You're kidding, right? So
insanitary. I couldn't-

MELANIE

Look, it's either this or you walk
on your hands. And my guess is
you'd blister before we reach the
first bend.

Matt hesitates for a moment, looks at Melanie, then takes the biggest pair.

MELANIE

You owe him \$100.

Matt looks at her shocked. She gives him a no nonsense look back. He holds one shoe to his feet. They are still too small.

MATT

Bugger.

Melanie takes a Swiss army knife out of her bag and cuts off the toes of the shoes. Now they fit, sort of.

MATT

What DON'T you have in that bag?
It's like a whole other dimension.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

They are riding donkeys, very uncomfortably. Matt looks a sorry sight with his muddy suit, and shoes with his bare toes sticking out the ends.

MATT

24 hours ago I was in a comfortable
limo. Now, reduced to... this.
(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

Not only the humiliation, but the, er, upholstery chafes like buggery.

MELANIE

You sure complain a lot. Hard to say which is the bigger ass.

MATT

I might be a *big* ass, but at least I'm not a *hard* ass.

That comment startles Melanie. Matt YELPS as he nearly slides off the donkey's back and struggles to stay on board.

INT. SMALL TOWN SHOP - NIGHT - MONTAGE

Matt tries on various brightly colored Indian clothes, mostly way too small for him. Melanie sits patiently by, allowing herself the occasional smile.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - NIGHT

Matt and Melanie walk the streets of the very simple poor Andean town. Matt is wearing his new ethnic clothes.

MATT

I look like a pizza.

MELANIE

You didn't expect to find an Armani store here, did you?

MATT

Of course not. But maybe a Gap?

MELANIE

Have you ever been out of Manhattan before?

MATT

Now that's just silly. Of course I have. JFK is in Queens.

MELANIE

What on earth possessed you to travel in a silk suit?

MATT

Strangely, enough, I didn't expect to be hiking through quicksand or riding a donkey in the middle of the Andes.

MELANIE

You're such a boy scout!

EXT. SMALL TOWN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

It is a very simple local dive, dimly lit, with just half a dozen simple bare tables, under an awning. Next door, some locals are gathered together in front of the house in a festive mood. Four of them are playing ANDEAN MUSIC (panpipes, guitars and a drum). Melanie sits at one table, enjoying the music, while Matt sits at the next one.

MELANIE

This is ridiculous.

She picks up her glass and moves to his table.

MATT

Sure you feel safe?

MELANIE

What can I say? I like living life on the edge. I was looking forward to some scintillating conversation this evening, but I guess you'll have to do.

MATT

So, why Machu Picchu? What's so special?

MELANIE

You're kidding, right? It's one of the wonders of the world. It's a mystical place that-

MATT

You're not going to go all patchouli on me, are you?

MELANIE

You're a philistine.

MATT

It's just another bunch of rocks and ruins. When you've seen a hundred, you've seen them all.

Melanie is stunned. The waiter brings their food. He places a guinea pig in front of Melanie. It is lying flat on its stomach facing Matt.

MATT

Would you mind asking your road kill to stop staring at me like that?

He eagerly tucks into his dish.

MELANIE

The food here is so natural, unlike in the States. Much better for the people AND the environment.

MATT

In my experience, people who go on about the environment, it's all about that warm fuzzy feeling.

MELANIE

Climate change and so-called "progress" are destroying our planet. Don't you care about the environment?

MATT

Of course I do. I live in one.

MELANIE

Huh! Manhattan?

MATT

Central Park. I rest my case.

MELANIE

Okay, what do you do for the environment?

MATT

I'm pretty sure we recycle our champagne bottles.

MELANIE

Relax, everyone. The planet is safe.

MATT

I was kidding.

MELANIE

You mean, you DON'T recycle them?

MATT

Whoa. Whoa. Give me a break.

MELANIE

What about plastic? We're choking Mother Nature with all the plastic we throw away.

MATT

You'll be pleased to know I don't buy anything in plastic bottles.

MELANIE

Why does that not surprise me? Why can't you be normal?

MATT

Tried it once. Worst day of my life.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

There is a very modest Easter celebration in the town square. Matt & Melanie walk about, taking in the sights. Melanie takes some pictures.

MELANIE

So, what's with the nanny? You sure were born with a silver spoon in your mouth.

MATT

More a silver boot up my arse. Nanny brought me up until I went to Boarding School in Britain.

MELANIE

Ah! That explains the funny accent!

MATT

Kettle calling the pot black?

MELANIE

How could your mother do that to you?

MATT

I ask myself the same question. It seems she took one look at me when I was born and...

He feigns dropping dead.

MELANIE

Oh, my God! I'm so sorry. I-

To her own surprise, Melanie momentarily SOBS.

MATT

Don't worry. I got away with probation.

MELANIE

That's terrible. But how could your father send you away like that?

MATT

What are you implying?

MELANIE

I'm not implying anything. I'm, er, EXplying that your father has a lot to answer for!

MATT

Huh. It wasn't so bad. Let's get real. He couldn't raise me alone, and he worked all hours to build his business from nothing.

MELANIE

But still.

MATT

The old man went through wives and girlfriends like a dose of salts, so the closest I had to a mother, after Nanny, was Matron at school. I'm proud to say, I came out the other end with my anal virginity intact, so can't complain.

MELANIE

Aren't you pissed, being shipped off like that?

MATT

Why? What's the point? Besides, the Scots are different. We don't get all mushy. We think a handshake is already verging on mawkish sentimentality.

MELANIE

Hah! We finally agree about something: we're definitely different. We French like the, how-you-say, touchy-feely, but you're so... cold. You'd never feel comfortable with my family and friends.

MATT

Don't worry. I already know enough people, I couldn't possibly handle any more.

MELANIE

It wasn't an invite!

INT. HAY BARN - NIGHT

A farmer leads Matt and Melanie into a barn full of hay. They look at each other. Melanie shrugs, and hands the farmer some money. Matt walks about, a look of disdain on his face.

MATT

It's a bit... New Testament, don't you think?. Where's the minibar?

Melanie looks at him. He shakes his head in disbelief.

MATT

I'm kidding.

Melanie grabs some hay and spreads it out to make beds.

MELANIE

Thank God it's hay, not straw - and no animals! Give me a hand.

Matt tries to assist, but he's awkward and useless.

MELANIE

Have you ever gotten your hands dirty?

MATT

Duh! I would remind you what transpired earlier today.

INT. HAY BARN - NIGHT

Matt, lying in the hay, watches impressed as Melanie does some yoga exercises.

MATT

I'd join you, but, you know, the foot.

Smiling, she settles down at a respectable distance.

MATT

Look, I know we didn't hit it off that well to begin with - and I'm far too much of a gentleman to mention that that was all your fault - but I would like to say I appreciate your help today. Lucky you had so much cash.

Melanie CHUCKLES.

MELANIE

You have no idea of the value of money, do you?

MATT

How can you say that? I live on Fifth Avenue.

MELANIE

Nice. But that's not what I meant. Do you know how much dinner was this evening?

MATT

No. \$100?

MELANIE

\$20. For both of us.

MATT

Amazing. I tip more than that.

MELANIE

That should help you sleep soundly tonight.

MATT

My heirs will be eternally grateful.

INT. HAY BARN - NIGHT

Melanie is sleeping soundly in a sleeping bag, using her backpack as a pillow. Matt sleeps restlessly on hay. He has Melanie's poncho over him for warmth.

INT. HAY BARN - DAY

Matt stirs. A shaft of sunlight beams into the barn and illuminates Melanie. She is sitting in the lotus position. Her arms are down by her side and her eyes are closed as she meditates.

MATT

What the...?

She is a picture of serenity and loveliness. He stares at her for a moment, then shakes his head, as if to dispel the image. He spots her phone. He picks it up quietly and takes a few quick snaps.

FREEZE FRAME Beautiful picture of Melanie bathed in sunlight.

MATT

Hey, Lakshmi. We've got to go.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY

Matt and Melanie are negotiating with a taxi driver.

MELANIE

(Spanish)

How much to Ayacucho?

TAXI DRIVER

(Spanish)

Twenty soles each.

MELANIE

(to Matt)

It's one of those collective taxis.

(MORE)

MELANIE (CONT'D)

They pick up as many people as they can. He wants 20 soles each.

MATT

Let's spoil ourselves and travel in luxury. It holds, what, four passengers? Offer him 100 soles for the whole taxi. That's \$35, right?

MELANIE

You sure know how to sweep a girl off her feet... with her own money!

The driver agrees. They get in the back and the taxi heads off.

MELANIE

Okay, but I'm not sure he understood the concept.

I/E. TAXI - DAY

Aerial shot of the taxi driving along twisty roads in a majestic mountain landscape.

Matt and Melanie are asleep in the back. Suddenly, the taxi is jolted by a hole in the road. They wake up to find 4 passengers in the front passenger seat.

MATT

Please don't say I told you so.

Melanie shrugs with a big smile.

MATT

Okay, we've got time to kill. Now that you are privy to my sordid story, what about you? How did you escape from the coven? Is there a Mr Pain-in-the-Butt? No, wait - let me guess - you live alone with a cat, right?

Melanie is surprised. Matt is triumphant.

MATT

Fifteen-Love!

Melanie looks hurt. She recovers.

MELANIE

Okay. I bet you live in a penthouse overlooking Central Park, with a fleet of long-suffering servants.

MATT

Of course I do. What's your point?

MELANIE

Huh. Well, for your information -
although it's none of your business
- my fiancé, Pierre, is in France.

Matt looks at her hand.

MATT

No ring.

MELANIE

(hesitantly)

Only an idiot would wear jewelry on
a trip like this.

She looks pointedly at his Rolex. Sheepishly he pulls his
sleeve down to hide it.

MATT

Why isn't Pierre here?

MELANIE

You didn't get HIM fired.

MATT

Okay. Okay. Give it a rest, will
you? What about your childhood?

MELANIE

Luckily, I wasn't born a super rich
brat. I had a great childhood on a
farm near Bordeaux. And I could
recognize my dad without checking
the Annual Shareholders Report.

MATT

So could I. He wore a name tag.

MELANIE

I studied art at college, then
fooled PMT into giving me an
internship in the big city, which
turned into a real job.

(enthusiastically)

It was awesome, creating with
photos, drawings, paintings,
whatever. And Photoshop!! Wow! Love
photoshop. So much fun.

MATT

Lucky you.

MELANIE

That's basically it. Just a lowly
fantassin, a foot-soldier in your
war. Not as glamorous or exciting
as you, but happy.

Melanie smiles contentedly. Matt feels a little envious.

MATT

Our industry is very incestuous.
How come I've never seen you at any
of the bashes?

MELANIE

As if you'd notice someone like me!

MATT

Of course I would've - security
would have been escorting you off
the premises.

EXT. AYACUCHO - DAY

Establishing shot. Ayacucho from the air - a pretty colonial
city nestling in the mountains.

The taxi drives into Ayacucho and hits the Palm Sunday
festivities. It is just the two of them in the taxi again.
The car crawls through the crowded street. Many are carrying
palm leaves. Melanie looks around wide-eyed, taking pictures
through the open window as she chats with the driver.

MELANIE

Okay, gracias.

Melanie gives the sleeping Matt a sharp elbow in the side.

MELANIE

Look at this.

MATT

Is it a funeral? It's not mine, is
it?

MELANIE

Do you want the good news first, or
the bad news?

MATT

Knowing my luck this last couple of
days, there won't be much
difference.

MELANIE

It looks like we've arrived in the
middle of the Palm Sunday
celebrations here. Isn't that
great?

Matt claps his hands together and misses, feigning
enthralment.

MATT

I can barely contain my excitement. I'm assuming from your agitated demeanor that that's the good news? What's the bad news? I'm going to be the human sacrifice?

MELANIE

They wouldn't take you. I tried. No, because of the festival, there's no way out of town until tomorrow.

MATT

Jesus wept. That's cutting it fine. I've got to be in Cusco tomorrow night.

MELANIE

Relax. We're half way there already. If we leave early in the morning-

MATT

We don't have much of a choice, do we? Where are we going to stay?

MELANIE

Ah! That's the other piece of bad news. The place is totally booked.

MATT

Excellent! And what was the good news again?

MELANIE

Don't worry. Something'll turn up.

MATT

My own French Polyanna.

TAXI DRIVER

(Spanish)

I know a hotel you can try.

EXT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

An impressive colonial building, overlooking the main square. The taxi pulls up and everyone gets out.

TAXI DRIVER

(Spanish)

The best hotel in town, señorita.

MELANIE

Isn't it pretty?

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

Matt (no luggage) and Melanie (beach bag and backpack) walk up to the receptionist. He looks at Melanie and smiles warmly. He looks quizzically at Matt in all his ethnic Peruvian splendor. He checks the computer.

AYACUCHO RECEPTIONIST
You are in luck, señorita. There was a landslide on the road and our guest couldn't get through.

MATT
What a pussy!

AYACUCHO RECEPTIONIST
This is the last room in the city.

MELANIE
The last room?

The receptionist nods. She pulls Matt to the side.

MELANIE
What are we gonna do?

MATT
Look, we've got this far without killing each other. So long as I don't have to sleep on hay, you can have the bed. Fair enough?

Melanie is touched by his generosity.

MELANIE
Thank you, Matt. That's the first humanly decent thing you've done.

MATT
I can still change my mind!
(anxiously, to the
Receptionist)
American Express?

AYACUCHO RECEPTIONIST
Of course, señor.

Matt gives out a huge SIGH of relief and smiles happily. He gives his Black Amex card a kiss and hands it over.

MATT
Thank God. Plastic isn't *always* bad!

The receptionist rings a bell for the bellboy.

AYACUCHO RECEPTIONIST
The bellboy will take your luggage.

MELANIE

No need. This is it.

The receptionist and the bellboy look at each other amazed.

MATT

We prefer to travel light. Do you know where I can get some sneakers?

AYACUCHO RECEPTIONIST

The shops are all closed.

MATT

This is sort of an emergency.

He points down. The receptionist peers over the desk. Matt wiggles the toes peeping out the end of his shoes.

AYACUCHO RECEPTIONIST

My cousin has a shoe shop. I'll see what I can do.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - BEDROOM - DAY

Melanie opens the balcony doors to a spectacular view of the Easter celebrations. Most of the people are decked out in traditional costume, especially the women. A procession enters the square, waving palm branches, thronging around a resplendent figure of Christ on a donkey.

MELANIE

That dummy rides the donkey better than you.

MATT

It's also better dressed.

Melanie excitedly takes some pictures.

MELANIE

This is great. Worth losing my job for!

MATT

You're welcome. Speaking of which, what're you going to do now? Why are you here actually?

Melanie is too busy taking pictures.

MELANIE

I'll tell you later.

MATT

I don't know about you, but I'm dying for a shower right now.

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

From my somewhat limited experience of women, I would hazard a guess that I can shower much quicker than you. It becomes a habit - you don't hang around in the showers too long at an all boys Boarding School! So, with your permission...?

Melanie continues taking pictures.

MELANIE

Fine. Go ahead. Don't forget your life vest.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - BEDROOM - DAY

Matt comes out of the bathroom, wrapped in a bath towel, drying his hair with a hand towel.

MATT

I needed that. All yours now.

Melanie comes in from the balcony.

MATT

I had dirt in places I never knew existed. I'm going for a walk while you do your "thing".

She pulls a bag of white powder from her backpack. Matt panics when he sees it.

MATT

Are you crazy?

MELANIE

It's talcum powder, you moron. It's easier to carry this way.

Matt heaves a sigh of relief.

MATT

Okay. But don't let me catch you snorting it!

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

Matt tries on the sneakers the receptionist has given him.

RECEPTIONIST

You won't get to Cusco tomorrow, señor. It takes 20-22 hours. It's mostly dirt track.

MATT

What? You're kidding me? But I've got to get there tomorrow evening.

RECEPTIONIST

My cousin has a small plane.

MATT

Are you related to everyone here?

RECEPTIONIST

My uncle's the mayor, if that helps. My cousin go to Andahuaylas tomorrow. That's most of the way. I can ask him.

MATT

Please do.

(to self)

Shit! A private plane! Why didn't I think of that earlier?

EXT. AYACUCHO - DAY

Matt walks the crowded streets. He looks down a side street and sees several clapped out VW Beetles.

MATT

Beetles!? Have I just passed through that whole Space/Time Continuum wotchamacallit?

Suddenly a large bunch of youths run by.

YOUTH 1

Hey, Gringo. Corre. Corre.

MATT

What?

YOUTH 2

Run, Gringo. Run.

Some of them grab him by the arm and propel him forward. He half-heartedly goes through the motions, totally confused. He runs a little, then looks back. A bull is running after them.

MATT

Holy Shit!

He runs faster, but very quickly starts to WHEEZE.

MATT

Jesus. I can't breathe. What happened to the air?

He slows down.

YOUTH 2
Faster, Gringo, faster. El toro.

The bull gets ever closer. Matt tries another spurt, but just can't keep it up for more than a few seconds. Luckily for him, the runners draw the bull away down a side street. Matt catches his breath and staggers the rest of the block.

He sees Melanie at the corner, taking pictures. Suddenly, more runners rush past him, SHOUTING.

YOUTHS
Toro! Toro!

Melanie looks confused. Matt SHOUTS at her.

MATT
Melanie, get out of the way!

She can't make out what he's saying. Matt forces himself to run to Melanie, and he pushes her roughly into the crowd. The phone CLICKS as her arm swerves in the air. Suddenly the bull catches up with him.

P.O.V. MATT LOOKS DOWN

A bull's horn suddenly appears between his legs.

MATT
Yikes!

Matt is carried along for a few yards by the bull until it lifts its head and tosses him over its back. Immediately, a crowd of youths turns back and distracts the bull so that Matt can be saved. They carry him to the sidewalk, where a Red Cross MEDIC checks him out.

Melanie rushes up to him. It is obvious it is mostly his pride that is hurt.

MELANIE
(Spanish)
Is he okay?

MEDIC
(Spanish)
He's fine.

MELANIE
(to Matt)
You okay?

MATT
A little shaken, not stirred.

MELANIE

I don't know. I let you out of my sight for five minutes, and you start molesting the local livestock. You frightened the life out of that poor calf.

MATT

Calf!? It was the sodding minotaur!

MELANIE

Come on! You're such a drama queen.

MATT

That was bloody close. I've got a parting in my pubic hair.

Melanie helps him up. She stands awkwardly in front of him, then kisses his cheek.

MELANIE

Thank you. That was very brave.

MATT

That was very stupid. That's what that was.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

Melanie and Matt approach the desk for their key. Matt is walking very uncomfortably.

RECEPTIONIST

All arranged, señor. A taxi will pick you up at 7 in the morning.

Melanie looks puzzled.

MATT

His cousin has a plane. He'll get us most of the way.

MELANIE

Duh! A plane! Why didn't I think of that?

MATT

That's what I've been asking myself - why didn't you?

MELANIE

How much will this be? We don't have that much in soles.

RECEPTIONIST

No te preocupas, señorita. He's flying there already. \$100 ok? I can put it on the bill.

MATT

Perfect.

MELANIE

Have you got internet here?

MATT

(laughing)

You've got to be kidding, right?

RECEPTIONIST

Of course, señorita. There's wireless here in the lobby, or you can use the Business Center.

Melanie gives a "hah, what do you know?" look at Matt.

MELANIE

What about you?

MATT

I'm going to lie down. I need to de-tense my buttocks.

The receptionist hands Matt the key.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Matt enters the room. He picks up a pillow from the bed, puts it on the armchair, and carefully lowers himself onto it.

MATT

Ow! Oho!... Aaaaaah!

With a look of relief, he closes his eyes and nods off.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

Melanie HUMS happily as she goes through the pictures in her iCloud. She pauses when she comes to the one Matt took of her in the barn. She is touched by how ethereal it looks.

She chooses a few and uploads them. She leaves a voice message for Natasha.

MELANIE

Hi, Nat. You're never gonna believe what's been happening here. Check the pix I just put up for a real shocker!

(MORE)

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Anyway, gotta go - better make sure
Wile E Coyote hasn't wrecked the
place. Ciao.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Matt is sitting on a plump cushion on his chair. He licks his lips approvingly as he sips a pisco sour. He doodles absent-mindedly in a notepad, but covers the picture nervously when Melanie arrives.

MELANIE

Amazing. The building's still
standing.

The waiter brings her a pisco sour. Matt raises his nearly empty glass to hers. They toast each other.

MATT

(Scottish accent)
Slainte Mhath!

MELANIE

Santé

Melanie sips it.

MELANIE

Awesome. So, what's with the
picture?

MATT

(embarrassed)
Just doodling.

Matt stuffs it in his pocket before she can see it.

MELANIE

Please yourself. Looked quite good
from over there.

MATT

I thought of studying art once.

MELANIE

Why didn't you?

MATT

My father said there wasn't any
money in it.

MELANIE

Ah, your famous father again. Well,
he's right about that - there
really is no money in it. You know,
I met him once. Job interview.

MATT

You're kidding? O-k-a-y. Wouldn't be surprised if he hit on you.

MELANIE

To think, I could be your Stepmother now. Wouldn't that be great? Me and your tyrant dad?

Matt makes the sign of the cross with his index fingers.

MATT

Hmmm. Thanks a lot! You don't take any prisoners, do you? It's not what you think. If he were a real bastard, it would be so much easier to hate him. But he isn't. He's been very good to me.

MELANIE

Have you considered therapy?

MATT

You're kidding. My dad's from Glasgow. He'd think I was a total fairy. As he always says:
 (fake Glasgow accent)
 Stop yer whingin'. 95% of the world would love to suffer like you.
 (back to normal accent)
 And he's right, of course - I've got a life others would kill for.

MELANIE

There are worse.

MATT

Exactly. Self-pity would be incredibly self-indulgent, don't you think? The poor little rich kid? Be honest, that's what you're thinking.

MELANIE

Yea, I guess so.

MATT

I KNOW so. Don't waste your time. I get it a lot - you know: "money doesn't buy happiness" and all that crap. But I'll tell you one thing - it definitely buys a better class of misery.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The waiter brings the main course. By now, they are clearly loosening up, unaware of how strong pisco is.

MELANIE

So, Matthew...

MATT

Huh. Sarah's the only one who ever calls me that. Even when we're... er, you know.

MELANIE

(mischievously)

No, what?

Matt looks embarrassed. Melanie LAUGHS.

MELANIE

So, tell me, how did you propose? I bet you were really romantic. Did you send her a text message? Did your secretary - Gloria, right? - arrange it for you?

Matt thinks for a moment, puzzled.

MATT

Actually, I think SHE proposed. It's all a bit of a blur. It just sort of happened.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Matt and Melanie are having dessert. There is now also a half empty bottle of wine on the table. They are clearly the worse for wear.

MATT

So, why'd they fire you?

MELANIE

You took our biggest client, remember? They fired the whole team. They had no choice. Don't you feel bad about people losing their jobs through no fault of their own?

MATT

That's how it works. We probably took on as many new people to handle this account as you lost, so, net net-

MELANIE

I was happy in my little niche,
but, I'll tell you something, none
of the big guys ever looked happy.
Just look at you.

MATT

Yes, you're right, it is very
stressful at the top. I have a good
life - I'm not going to apologize
for that - but I work 24/7. I am
never off the clock. I'm an account
manager, a rainmaker. I-

MELANIE

But it was a fix. You stole our
account.

MATT

(genuinely surprised)
What are you talking about?

MELANIE

You fixed it with Mr Penhaligon.
You said so.

MATT

You're kidding, right? Sure, my dad
plays golf with David Penhaligon.
That can get us in the door. But
there's no way he's just going to
give a contract out of *friendship*.
It's HIS company, and he's one
tough son of a bitch. We have to
earn it.

Melanie doesn't look convinced.

MATT

You don't have to believe me if you
don't want to. We have to fight to
get accounts, just like everybody
else. Hundreds of lives, directly
and indirectly, depend on me not
screwing up. If I lose an account -
well, you know what happens.

MELANIE

Unemployed, broke and homeless.

MATT

My bad.

MELANIE

If I get this job in Africa-

MATT

Africa!? How the hell did Africa
come into this?

MELANIE

I've got an interview with an NGO
in Cusco.

MATT

You'll be even more broke!

MELANIE

But I'll be doing something
fulfilling and worthwhile.

MATT

Lucky Africa. Lucky us!

MELANIE

You know, the first thing I noticed
about you was your charm - you
don't have any.

Melanie raises her wine glass to him. He CLINKS it back.

MELANIE

But maybe you're not such an ogre,
after all.

MATT

Whoa! Did a backhanded compliment
just slip out there?

MELANIE

I'm sorry. I'll make sure it
doesn't happen again.

MATT

Much appreciated. But, Africa? A
bit extreme, isn't it? I thought
you loved your job.

MELANIE

I do. I did.

MATT

Look, if it's any consolation, I
thought your artwork was brilliant.
Honestly. And I'm not just saying
that so you won't dump me here in
the middle of nowhere. Jesus!
Now you've got me doing it.
Reckless compliments. My apologies.

She smiles.

INT. SARAH'S 5TH AVENUE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sarah is speaking on the phone, in front of a large Apple Desktop.

SARAH
Okay, I've got it now.

She makes a sharp intake of breath. We can see a page of photo thumbnails. There are several embarrassing pictures of Matt, including stuck in the mud, hopelessly riding a donkey, and with a bull's horn between his legs.

SARAH
Ohmigod! You're right, Melissa.
That's Matthew. What the hell is he doing?

She hangs up, then zooms in on a couple of pictures. The first is of a smiling Matt, garishly dressed, posing with his arm around Melanie in a restaurant. The second is Matt fast asleep in the hay, with a bra and other ladies clothing in the background.

Sarah is spitting blood.

SARAH
That two-timing little shit.

She takes a deep breath, then speed dials.

INTERCUT Sarah and JC on the phone.

SARAH
JC? Matt isn't missing. He's gone AWOL and run off with some bimbo in Peru.

JC
What about the client?

SARAH
What!? The client!? JC, I don't think you understand the gravity...

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Matt signs the bill and hands it to the waiter.

MELANIE
Tomorrow, Cusco. You won't have to put up with me busting your balls ever again.

MATT
(unconvincingly)
Thank God for that!

BEAT

MATT

Right. Early start tomorrow. We'd better get to bed - if you know what I mean.

MELANIE

It's such a lovely night, let's go for a walk in the square first.

MATT

Okay. Sounds good to me.

They get up. Melanie immediately falls back into her seat. Matt's legs almost buckle, but he manages to stagger to his feet. He picks up an empty pisco glass.

MATT

What the hell is this stuff?

Matt helps Melanie up. Melanie GROANS.

MELANIE

What happened to my legs?

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Matt supports Melanie as they stagger into the bedroom. He is also carrying his cushion.

MATT

Hold on just a...

Melanie trips. He drops the cushion as he takes her full weight and staggers precariously over to the bed. He pulls the covers back with one hand.

MATT

Stay with me here. Hello? Hello?

He loses balance and they fall onto the bed, him on top. Their faces are touching. He SNIFFS her perfume. He hesitates, then pulls himself back sharply. He sits up. He looks dazed.

MATT

You couldn't have lasted five more minutes?

He bends down and takes her shoes off, then swings her legs onto the bed. Awkwardly, he lifts up her torso to take her jacket off. Her head rests on his shoulder. He finds his face covered in her hair and has to blow it out of his mouth. He struggles to throw the jacket onto a nearby chair. It misses, and falls onto the floor.

MATT
Bugger. Well, it can't fall any
farther.

He lowers Melanie carefully back on the bed. He looks at her lying peacefully there.

MATT
Now what?

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL - BEDROOM - DAY

Matt and Melanie are fast asleep, her under the covers, him on top. Matt has his arm around her.

A cock CROWS in the background. Melanie stirs. She feels Matt's arm across her chest and looks puzzled. A look of horror crosses her face as she realizes where they are.

MELANIE
(quietly)
Oh my God! We didn't...?

She whips up the cover to check, waking him in the process. She relaxes when she sees she is still basically clothed.

Matt looks shocked at her reaction, then sad. She starts to extricate herself from his embrace, sliding out of the bed onto the floor. He closes his eyes. She looks closely at him and waves a hand in front of his face. No reaction. She looks relieved. She grabs her clothes and goes into the bathroom. We hear the shower start.

Matt opens his eyes. He lets out a deep SIGH, shaking his head sadly.

MATT
(to himself)
Excellent! Perfect! The story of my
life. I am clearly every woman's
worst nightmare.

INT. AYACUCHO HOTEL CONDOR - BEDROOM - DAY

Matt is lying in the bed, looking thoughtful. The phone RINGS. He scrambles to pick it up. He holds it upside down to his head. It is an automatic wake-up call.

PHONE (O.S.)
This is your wake-up call. The time
is... 6 a.m. Breakfast is available
in...

Melanie comes in from the bathroom, fully dressed. Matt points to the receiver.

MATT

The Pope wants to know if you're free for lunch on Sunday.

MELANIE

Tell him to stop hassling me. I've told him, it's all over between us.

MATT

(to phone)
She'd love to.

Staring at Melanie in embarrassment, he awkwardly replaces the receiver. He gives a couple of small COUGHS to clear his throat. He tries to appear cool and businesslike.

MATT

You're up early. Couldn't you sleep?

MELANIE

Y-e-s. But we gotta go, remember? Don't wanna miss the plane.

MATT

Right. Of course. The meeting.

MELANIE

And you? Did you sleep?

MATT

Like a log. I must have zonked out - I can't remember a thing.

MELANIE

Nothing?

MATT

Nothing after your pole dance in the dining room.

Melanie smiles and looks relieved.

MELANIE

What happened to my tips?

MATT

I used them to pay for the damage.

I/E. SMALL PLANE - DAY

The plane bobs uncomfortably on the mountain air currents over beautiful scenery. Matt is sitting in front with the pilot. For the first time, he looks engrossed by what's going on. He looks calmer and less wound up than before. Melanie sits behind, looking decidedly the worse for wear.

Matt points out the window.

MATT

Melanie, look. A herd of Alpaca.
Why don't you take a picture?

The plane suddenly banks to the side to come in low and give her a better view. Melanie nearly throws up. Matt grabs her phone and takes some pictures.

MELANIE

What the hell are you doing?

MATT

Hey. Adolfo's just being nice. He's even arranged a lift for us at the other end.

MELANIE

Well, unless he's got good valet cleaning, he should get this thing back on the ground - pronto.

MATT

(to Adolfo)
Time of the month.

INT. SMALL PLANE - DAY

They bounce uncomfortably as the plane makes a very bumpy landing. Melanie looks very green.

EXT. ANDAHUAYLAS AIRFIELD - DAY

The pilot, Matt and Melanie are standing by the plane. Matt is carrying the luggage, as well as his cushion. Melanie leans on him for support.

A pick up truck pulls up. Matt pulls Melanie clear just as it goes through a large puddle and splashes. It just misses her.

MELANIE

Merci.

MATT

You're welcome.

The pick up truck stops. The driver is in the front with his heavily pregnant wife. There is only room for three in the cab. Melanie hands him a 50 Soles note.

MELANIE

(Spanish)
50 Soles to Cusco, right?

PICK UP DRIVER
 (Spanish)
 Si, señorita.
 (to his wife)
 Hey, mi cholita gorda. In the back.

The pregnant woman gets out. Melanie looks at Matt.

MATT
 What?

MELANIE
 She can't sit in the back.

MATT
 Of course not.

Matt signals for the pregnant woman to get back into the cab. She looks at her husband. He shrugs. She gets in. Matt starts to follow her in. He turns back to Melanie.

MATT
 Enjoy the fresh air!

MELANIE
 You're making me sit in the back!?

MATT
 What happened to Women's Lib? Or is it only when it suits you?

MELANIE
 Okay.

She starts to get in the back.

MATT
 My God, you're a pushover today.
 It's no fun if you don't fight
 back. Relax - you get in the front.
 What's one more humiliation?

Matt climbs into the back. It is very sparse and empty except for a wooden coffin.

MATT
 Holy shit!

He knocks on the cab window and points to the coffin.

PICK UP DRIVER
 (Spanish)
 It's empty.

MELANIE
 (shouting)
 Don't worry, he's dead!

I/E. PICK UP TRUCK - DAY

The truck makes its tortuous way along dangerous roads. Matt tries to stay comfortable on his cushion, but finds it difficult on such a bumpy journey. He looks over the edge, down a sheer drop, and pulls back sharply.

The truck hits a real hard bump, and the lid of the coffin dislodges, scaring the life out of him. He nervously edges forward to replace the lid but sees that the coffin is empty.

Matt knocks on the back window of the cab.

MATT
(shouting)
Very funny, Frenchie!

Without turning around, Melanie smiles to herself.

Matt sits down again. He grimaces in pain.

MATT
Jesus wept! I'm going to need an
arse transplant after this. Could
this get any worse?

It starts to rain. Matt sticks his hand out, and looks up to the heavens.

MATT
Excellent! Perfect!

He looks around. What to do? There is nothing. He looks at the coffin. Hesitation is written all over his face. The rain gets heavier.

MATT
What the hell!

He climbs into the coffin with his cushion and an empty cigarette packet he finds on the floor. He pulls the lid closed, propping it open with the cigarette packet.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

The truck makes its way slowly through heavy rain.

INT. COFFIN - DAY

Matt has fallen asleep in the coffin.

EXT. PICK UP TRUCK - DAY

The truck picks up another passenger on the road. The weather is really bad.

INT. PRIVATE JET - DAY

JC is reading the Wall Street Journal. A flight attendant refills his tea cup.

Debra Seelinger and Sarah are standing by a small self-service breakfast bar. Sarah pours them both some orange juice. She gestures towards JC.

SARAH

Is he pissed at Matthew?

DEBRA

I dunno. He doesn't exactly wear his heart on his sleeve.

SARAH

He must have said something.

DEBRA

Just something about a client. I wasn't really paying attention.

SARAH

Nothing about Matthew?

DEBRA

Nothing.

SARAH

It's all so humiliating.

DEBRA

What is?

SARAH

Those pictures. Everyone at the club will have seen them on the internet. I'll be a laughing stock.

Debra looks at Sarah a little shocked.

DEBRA

(mildly sarcastic)

Your concern for Matt is very touching.

SARAH

Thank you. I knew you'd understand.

JC

What are you two hens clucking about?

EXT. PICK UP TRUCK - DAY

The truck stops on the road with a jerk. The rain has stopped.

INT. COFFIN - DAY

Matt is awoken by the jerk.

EXT. PICK UP TRUCK - DAY

The lid starts to move slowly off the coffin. The new passenger's expression becomes one of terror. Matt sits up. The new passenger leaps from the truck SCREAMING.

MATT

Are we there yet?

EXT. ABANCAY - SMALL CAFE - DAY

A small town. The four are having lunch, outside a small cafe. The pregnant woman observes Matt and Melanie very carefully. The interaction between the two gringos is now much more friendly and relaxed.

MATT

How're you feeling now? You looked like death warmed up earlier.

He absent-mindedly straightens her jacket so it covers her shoulders properly. She gives him an appreciative smile.

MELANIE

Better now. Thanks. Never liked those toy planes. Were you worried about me, or about being left alone in the middle of nowhere?

MATT

Huh! Me, worry? Nonsense. I'd have picked your pocket and been out of here like a bat out of hell.

Melanie shakes her head.

MELANIE

You just can't say anything nice, can you?

MATT

Sorry?! People in glass houses...

Melanie smiles and absent-mindedly squeezes his hand.

EXT. ABANCAY - SMALL CAFE - DAY

Melanie puts the change from lunch in her purse. She spots a paper under Matt's chair. She stoops to pick it up.

MELANIE

You've dropped something.

She opens it to see it's the picture Matt was drawing the night before. It is a very credible picture of her. She looks at him surprised. Matt looks embarrassed, grabs the picture back and puts it in his pocket.

MATT

Just a doodle.

The pregnant woman has been watching all this very closely.

PREGNANT WOMAN

(Spanish)

A beautiful picture. Thank you for lunch. I'm getting out here. My husband will take you to Cusco now.

MELANIE

(Spanish)

Thank YOU for giving us the ride. We're very grateful.

PREGNANT WOMAN

(Spanish)

It's been nice to talk with someone sensible for a change.

She gives her husband's face a playful squeeze.

MELANIE

(Spanish)

I know what you mean!

Melanie squeezes a bemused Matt's cheek. The women CHUCKLE.

MATT

What? I deny it all.

MELANIE

Jesus. Relax. Everything isn't always about you.

MATT

Actually, when people are laughing amongst themselves, it usually is.

PREGNANT WOMAN

(Spanish)

Your husband seems a kind man.

Melanie is nonplussed.

MELANIE
 (Spanish)
 Er, we're not married.

The woman shrugs, with a knowing smile.

MATT
 What did she say?

MELANIE
 Er... she's getting out here.

MATT
 Thank God. I can come inside the
 cab now.

Melanie shakes her head again. They all stand up, and give the pregnant woman a hug. Matt is still holding his cushion.

Some relatives arrive in an old banger to pick up the pregnant lady. The driver starts to give the keys to Matt, then changes his mind, mid-air, and gives them to Melanie.

PICK UP DRIVER
 (Spanish)
 I'm going to help my wife. Can you
 two open the garage door?

MELANIE
 (Spanish)
 Of course.

EXT. ABANCAY - SMALL CAFE - CAR PARK - DAY

The car park is open air, surrounded by a 6 ft white-washed wall. The large double door onto the street is closed. Matt and Melanie open the truck and put their stuff in.

MELANIE
 He wants us to open the garage door
 so we can leave.

MATT
 No problem. Even I can do that.

Matt goes up to the door and looks around on all sides.

MATT
 (to himself)
 Huh. Where the hell's the button?

He sees a small hut in the corner and knocks on the door.

POV Matt. The door opens. Nothing. He looks down to see a small girl.

MATT
(loudly and slowly)
Clicker? Remote control? Controllo
remoto?

He makes a gesture of pressing a remote control button. The child looks at him, initially puzzled, then with increasing concern. She runs back in and slams the door. Matt returns to the truck.

MATT
We'll have to wait for the driver.
Can't find the opener.

Melanie looks at him incredulously. She gets out of the truck and walks up to the garage door.

MATT
There's no...

Melanie pushes the bottom of the door with her hand and it swings up and open. Shaking her head, she walks back to the truck, triumphantly.

MATT
Bugger me! It's a manual.

I/E. PICK UP TRUCK - DAY

They are all now in the cab. Melanie is very pensive.

MATT
You've got no idea the aggravation
my poor arse was going through in
the back. So, what was the old girl
saying back there?

MELANIE
What? Oh, nothing really. Just
wished us a good journey.

MATT
That's all? I thought she was going
to squeeze the life out of her old
man's face.

He looks out the window.

MATT
It really is beautiful here, isn't
it? Look at those mountains. And...
shit! Is that a condor?

A condor glides over the mountains in front of them.

Matt excitedly grabs Melanie's arm and points to the condor.

MATT

Quick. Melanie. Take a picture.
They're rarer than bacon ice cream
at a Bar Mitzvah.

Unhurriedly, Melanie reaches in her bag for her phone. Matt looks at her amazed.

MATT

They'll be extinct by the time you-
Here, let me.

He grabs the phone off her and hangs out the window to get a better snap.

MATT

Great pic - even if I say so
myself. What's the matter with you,
all of a sudden? This thing's
usually red hot.

She shrugs.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

Melanie is asleep on Matt's shoulder, with one arm around his middle. He, also asleep, has his arm around her. The driver looks at them and smiles.

EXT. CUSCO - MODEST HOTEL - DAY

The truck pulls up outside a modest hotel in Cusco. Matt, Melanie and the driver are standing on the sidewalk saying their farewells. Matt shakes his hand.

MATT

Muchas gracias, señor.

PICK UP DRIVER

(Spanish)
Good luck, señor.

Melanie pulls a 100 Soles note out of her purse and gives it to the driver. He refuses.

MELANIE

(Spanish)
For the baby. Buy something for the
baby.

The driver reluctantly accepts. He is touched.

PICK UP DRIVER

Gracias, señorita. Buena suerte.

He gets back in his truck and leaves.

EXT. CUSCO - MODEST HOTEL - DAY

Moments later, Matt and Melanie walk out of the hotel.

MATT
Your own fault for being a no-
show.

She gives him a playful slap on the arm.

MATT
Look, come and stay at my hotel.
Your own room, of course.

MELANIE
I can't afford-

MATT
As my guest.

MELANIE
No, really, I can't-

MATT
Why not? I owe you for getting me
here in one piece - more or less.

He clenches his painful buttocks.

MATT
You can pay me back by being my
guest at this "Do" this evening.
I'm not sure I can face it alone
right now.

MELANIE
Well, I-

MATT
Good. That settles it then.

He hails a cab.

EXT. LUXURY HOTEL, CUSCO - DAY

A beautiful colonial-style hotel. Incongruously, they arrive
in a tiny "tico" taxi - basically a sardine can on wheels.
Melanie gets out first, followed by Matt with the luggage.

MELANIE
Not so shabby.

The Bellboy comes out and looks down his nose at them.

MATT
Jesus. So pompous!

Melanie looks at him surprised.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Melanie is filling in the registration forms while Matt goes through the contents of a conference envelope the clerk has given him. He stretches and yawns.

MATT

Looks like we made it by a whisker.
I'm still on the menu, sadly. I
guess that was too much to hope
for. Kick-off's at 8.

MELANIE

Okay. I'm gonna have a long bath.

MATT

Fortune favours the French! I've
got two hours to figure out what
I'm going to say, and to find
something less garish to wear. Wish
me luck!

MELANIE

I can help you go clothes shopping
if you like.

MATT

(smiling)
Thanks, but you relax. Besides...
(pointing to what
he's wearing)
... so far, your taste in clothes has
been somewhat unconventional.

The receptionist pushes a registration form and pen towards Matt. They look at each other silently for a moment. Awkwardly, Melanie gently flicks some fluff off his shoulder and straightens his jacket.

MELANIE

Thanks. I have to say, it's
certainly been an... *interesting*
couple of days.

She gives him a kiss on the cheek. It is just too long to be a social kiss. He closes his eyes and gives her a kiss back. They hug each other tightly. Slowly, they pull away from each other. Avoiding eye contact, Melanie gives him a shy smile, and heads for her room.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Matt is filling in the registration forms, when he gets a tap on his shoulder. He turns round to see Sarah. He nearly jumps out of his skin.

SARAH
Matthew, you asshole!

MATT
Jesus wept, Sarah. You scared the living daylights out of me. What the hell are you doing here?

He looks around nervously to see if Melanie is still visible. He tries to give Sarah a kiss, but she recoils.

SARAH
We've been worried sick about you, Matthew.

MATT
We?

SARAH
Yes. Your father and Debra are here as well.

MATT
Why? What's happened?

Sarah looks at him surprised.

SARAH
What's happened!?! You tell me. Where've you been?

MATT
Gloria shafted me and put me on an overland bus instead of a flight. No big deal - although I suppose we did rather take a long cut.

SARAH
We? Who's we?

MATT
You should have seen the countryside, Sarah. It was so beautiful. You know, in Ayacucho-

SARAH
Lots of passengers, were there?

MATT
Not too many.

SARAH
How many, exactly?

MATT
What difference does it make?

SARAH
Where is she, that slut?

MATT
What!?

SARAH
This isn't over. We'll talk about it later. Men - you're so weak. Let's get this tedious ceremony over with and go back home. And you'll have to get out of that hideous fancy dress. Good thing we brought you some clothes.

Matt's face drops. He looks at Sarah talking, and waving her hands about theatrically, but doesn't hear a word she says.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - CHAPEL - NIGHT

The function is in the former chapel, now part of the hotel. At the far end, there is a sign over the altar area:

"UNESCO: Promoting Heritage Protection"

JC and Debra are doing the meet and greet at the entrance. A very tired looking Matt walks up to them. Debra hugs him.

DEBRA
Thank God, you're all right, Matt. We were so worried. Where's Sarah?

MATT
Upstairs, I imagine. She insisted on having her own room. She's mad at me about something.

DEBRA
She-

JC puts his hand gently on Debra's arm to stop her.

MATT
Hi, dad.

JC and Matt give each other a formal handshake.

JC
Hi. You okay? You look a bit peelly wally.

MATT

I'm fine. Why?

JC

Good. I knew you wouldnae let me down.

MATT

'Course not. How's your arse? It's got to be better than mine!

JC

What? Oh, the prostate thing? Back in therapy, but recuperating nicely. Thanks for asking.

MATT

After the wars mine's been through, I sympathize.

Debra looks at them in disbelief as they stand there coolly.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - CHAPEL - NIGHT

Melanie enters and smiles warmly at Matt. They kiss each other on the cheek. JC is surprised how they look at each other. Matt becomes noticeably more nervous.

Melanie then kisses JC and Debra on the cheek. Matt looks surprised.

MATT

Dad, this is-

JC

We met earlier. She told us all about it. Was it worth it, hen? I hope he wasnae tae much bother.

MELANIE

So long as he was fed, watered, and burped regularly-

JC

(smiling broadly)

Ah, you know him well! I'm no' sure if we should thank you or sympathize with you, but, let's say, we're grateful for your forbearance.

He raises a glass of pisco sour to her.

JC

You should try the local firewater. It'll put hairs on your chest.

Melanie looks at it, then at Matt. They both smile.

MELANIE

Thanks. I think I'd better stick
with something safer.

The M.C. in the background makes an announcement.

M.C.

... pleased to welcome, Mr Matthew
Campbell, from JC Associates, New
York.

The audience APPLAUD politely.

MATT

That's my cue. Hang around,
Melanie. I'll see you later.

Melanie smiles at him and nods. JC and Debra look at them
very carefully, then at each other. Matt heads for the stage.

Sarah has spotted Melanie and marches up to them.

SARAH

What is this trollop doing here?
Are you having an affair with her?

Matt stops in his tracks.

MATT

What the hell are you talking
about?

DEBRA

Calm down, Sarah. It was Melanie
that got Matt here in one piece.

MATT

That's right. She saved my arse -
literally.

SARAH

Why are you defending her? She's
humiliated us... YOU. She's damaged
your reputation, the company's
reputation - and mine!

MATT

What are you talking about!?! You
don't even know her.

SARAH

I've seen her photos on the
internet. They're obviously
photoshopped to look like you're
cheating on me.

Confused, Matt turns to a shocked Melanie.

MELANIE
Ce sont des conneries!

MATT
What she said.

SARAH
Did you upload pictures of Matthew onto the internet?

MELANIE
Well, yes, but-

SARAH
No buts. They've spread like wildfire. They're everywhere, and they make Matthew and me look like complete idiots. All our friends have seen them. We've become a laughing stock.

MELANIE
I never meant-

SARAH
We know exactly what you meant.

M.C.
Mr Campbell?

They all look at Matt. He looks hurt and confused.

MATT
Why would you do that? I thought-

MELANIE
This is all a misunderstanding. I can explain.

M.C.
Señor Campbell? Whenever you're ready.

Matt hesitates, confused. He looks very sad. Sarah pushes him towards the stage.

SARAH
Go on, Matthew. That's why we're here, isn't it?

MATT
Look, I can't deal with this now, but my word is my bond. Leave your friend's name with my secretary and I'll do what I can for her.

Matt heads for the stage.

MELANIE

Matt, I can't believe you buy this...
this... *merde*. I never...

Melanie's shoulders momentarily slump, then she straightens up in defiance, head held high.

MELANIE

Uff! Forget it. Have a good life,
Matt. I hope one day you grow a
pair. Monsieur Campbell, nice to
meet you again. Madame Seelinger.
Bonne nuit.

She starts to walk out, but then turns to Sarah.

MELANIE

Happy now, you paranoid bitch?

JC looks impressed. Sarah is triumphant.

SARAH

Good riddance, I say. White trash.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - CHAPEL - STAGE - NIGHT

The Ceremony. Matt is on stage, delivering his speech, without notes. He is very polished, but there is an air of sadness about him.

MATT

Ladies and Gentlemen. I was invited here this evening to talk about getting the message across: How to convince communities that conservation is in their own interest, and not just that of rich white people in distant lands. I had a very polished speech all prepared, but that was before I just made the most incredible journey through this beautiful country to get here. I am glad that speech is now buried somewhere in the Andes.

What I realize now is that it was great in theory but lacking in soul. Before you can ever hope to get the message across to communities, you have to understand them, their culture, their way of life. You can't just assume what works in one place will work everywhere...

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - CHAPEL - NIGHT

Matt is still talking in the background. JC and Debra stand well to the side watching.

DEBRA
He's really very good.

JC
The best. He's pulled many
victories from the jaws of defeat
with that silver tongue of his.

Matt finishes talking and there is loud APPLAUSE.

DEBRA
Why don't you ever tell him that?

JC
He knows what I think.

DEBRA
It's still nice to hear it.

JC
He's no' a Jessie.

Matt rushes up to them.

MATT
Can you hold the fort, dad? I'm
going to check the internet. I've
got to find out what Sarah's
talking about. Where is she anyway?

DEBRA
She went to bed. Migraine.

MATT
She didn't even stay for the
speech? Have you seen these
pictures she's talking about?

JC
No, Sarah told me you'd gone AWOL
with a bird, and may be in some
sort of bother, so, here we are.

Matt starts to leave, but stops.

MATT
So you *did* come because you were
worried about me?

JC clears his throat and looks very uncomfortable.

JC
 Huh. Someone's got tae look after
 the clients.

Matt smiles knowingly.

MATT
 Of course. Of course.

He heads for the door.

DEBRA
 Would it really be so terrible for
 you two to actually show what you
 feel?

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - NIGHT

Matt is at Reception.

NIGHT RECEPTIONIST
 Sorry, sir. The Business Center is
 closed until 7 in the morning.

MATT
 Is there no way-?

He subtly pulls out some money. The night receptionist looks
 at him with disdain.

NIGHT RECEPTIONIST
 Señor, I don't have the key. But
 the wireless is on, so you can..

Matt shakes his hands in the air out of frustration. He looks
 at his watch. He paces up and down for a second. He grabs the
 phone on the counter, and dials zero.

MATT
 May I? Internal call.

NIGHT RECEPTIONIST
 Of course, señor.

MATT
 (to phone)
 Room 312, please.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - MELANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Melanie is soaking in a bubble bath. She looks VERY sad, and
 wipes away a tear. The phone RINGS. She looks at the handset
 on the wall. Her expression hardens.

MELANIE

I don't want to hear it.

(mimicking Sarah)

Matthew, you spoilt brat. It took you 5 minutes to revert to type, you asshole.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - NIGHT

A dejected Matt slowly replaces the handset.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - MATT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT -

MONTAGE

Matt is tossing and turning in bed. He keeps checking the clock. He remembers episodes of the journey.

- the body search at security in JFK
- the hole-in-the-ground bathroom
- the landslide
- the donkey
- the bull run
- the coffin

He smiles broadly. Then he remembers in soft focus:

- Melanie in a pool of light meditating in the barn
- carrying a worse-for-wear Melanie back to bed in Ayacucho
- holding her in his arms in the bed in Ayacucho

He SNIFFS as if to smell her perfume again. He has a dreamy look on his face. He turns, but the bed is empty. His expression changes to one of sadness.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - MELANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Melanie is in bed, unable to sleep. She looks at the clock by the bed. It's 02:17. She wipes away a tear.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

The clock behind the desk says 6 am. JC is picking up an envelope when Melanie walks by. She looks very pale and tired after a sleepless night.

JC

Ah, good morning. Please satisfy my curiosity. You spoke last night as though we've met before Cusco - have we?

MELANIE

Yes. You interviewed me once.

JC

Thank God. It's been driving me crazy!

A flicker of recognition crosses his face as he remembers.

JC

Och, aye, now I remember. Please indulge an old man. I'm going in for breakfast, and it would be nice to have company.

MELANIE

Monsieur Campbell, the flower vase will be better company. I had a terrible night.

JC

Please. I have no axe to grind in this matter. At least a coffee.

He smiles and gently guides her towards the dining room.

MELANIE

You're very persuasive, Mr Campbell.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Matt rushes up to the receptionist. The clock behind now says 07:10.

MATT

Please ask the guest in 312 to speak with me before she-

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, sir. She paid her bill and left half an hour ago.

MATT

She paid? Did she leave any messages? A forwarding address. A phone number.

The receptionist shakes his head.

MATT
Bollocks! Shit! Bugger! Wank!

JC comes up behind him.

JC
Yer up early. Nice wee lassie, that
Melanie. I-

Matt grabs him and drags him towards the Business Center.

MATT
Sorry to interrupt, but I've got to
see those damn Armageddon pictures.

JC
You know, I offered her a job a
couple of years ago and she turned
me down. Aye, SHE turned ME down.

Matt looks impressed. JC reaches into his inside pocket and
hands Matt a check.

JC
Very talented as well, if memory
serves. She asked me to give you
this.

MATT
What? I owe HER money.

JC
She said she'd worked it all out -
what she'd spent, and what you put
on your Amex. This makes it quits.

MATT
No. No. No. That wasn't the deal.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

Matt is on the internet, with JC looking over his shoulder.
Melanie's photos pop up on the screen. They look at photos of
Matt:

- buried in the mud at the landslide
- balanced precariously on a donkey
- dressed in Indian clothes, with his feet sticking out of
the shoes
- being tossed in the air like a salad by the bull
- and the "offending" picture of them posing in the
restaurant

JC LAUGHS. Matt CHUCKLES.

JC
These are hilarious.

MATT
Yes, they are.

Anger crosses his face, as he scrolls through the photos.

MATT
I don't get it. Where the hell are those terrible, company-destroying pictures Sarah was talking about? This is what REALLY happened. There's ZERO Photoshop here, I promise you. No wonder Melanie was pissed. I've been a complete idiot.

JC
I see what she meant about you being helpless - or was it hopeless?

MATT
You got no idea - I was such a doofus. I don't know what I would have done without her, dad. She saved my arse - repeatedly. She's as infuriating as hell, but...

Matt closes the internet and they leave.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Matt and JC walk back into Reception. Matt is deep in thought. Suddenly he stops and turns to his father.

MATT
I've got to find her. I don't want to lose her.

JC
You'd better be quick. If this guy gives her the job, she'll be in Africa by the end of the month, and Africa's a big place.

MATT
I have to try to get her back. I think I..., I love her.

He surprises them both with the phrase.

JC
I've never heard you say that before.

Matt feels reborn.

MATT

I've never felt like this before.

JC

Well, don't just stand there like a great girl's blouse - go get her!

MATT

What!?!?

JC

We saw how you two looked at each other last night. It reminded me how I felt about yer mother - God rest her soul. I never found that again. For God's sake, son, don't let it slip away. Go get her before she buggers off to Africa.

MATT

What about Sarah? I thought you liked her.

JC

Just being supportive because I thought YOU liked her. To be honest, always found Cruella de Vil to be a dour numpty.

MATT

What about her father's account?

JC

(shrugs, with a smile)
If I have to get married again-

MATT

Don't. I really like Debra.

JC

Actually, so do I. But give me some credit, please. I know what you all say about me, behind my back.

MATT

What about the networking?

JC

I got it covered. Playing golf with some of the guys this afternoon.

MATT

How did you...?

JC
 (exasperated)
 Does it matter? Get oot o' here!

Debra arrives in reception, stops discretely and observes.

MATT
 Don't hold the plane for me.

JC
 I wasnae going to.

Matt takes a deep breath and rushes for the door, then stops, and goes back and hugs his father. JC looks visibly moved.

MATT
 Thanks, dad.

JC
 Why are you still here? Go, will ye? Don't piss this away, otherwise I've thrown away a bloody good account for nothing.

Matt smiles and rushes out. JC wipes away a tear. Debra comes up and gives him a big hug. She smiles kindly as JC stiffens up and COUGHS slightly to hide his emotion.

DEBRA
 Who's the Jessie now?

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Matt bursts into the room.

SARAH
 There you are, Matthew. You could at least have-

MATT
 Sarah. No time. In a hurry. I suggest you call Bergdorf Goodman and cancel the list.

SARAH
 What!? I don't think so.

MATT
 Yes so, Sarah. Those pictures weren't malicious sabotage, at all. Your Park Avenue snobs might not like it, but all that crap actually happened, and, you know what, it was the most fun I've had in years. It was so... liberating. I should have done this long ago.

SARAH

I'll speak with JC.

MATT

I couldn't give a bugger. I'll move my stuff out of the apartment when I get back. Or you can send it to my dad's boat.

He laughs to himself.

MATT

I don't care what you do with it. Isn't that great? I feel free already!

He heads for the stairs.

SARAH

You'll regret this Matthew Campbell. Wait till I tell my father how you've treated me. You'll be sorry!

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Matt is back at reception.

MATT

How long does it take to do the Inca Trail? To Machu Picchu?

RECEPTIONIST

Usually two to four days, depending where you start. Which route do you want to take?

MATT

Me? Walk? Yea, right! So, she could be there tomorrow. I've got to get there today. Book me something, anything.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry, sir, but you've missed the tourist trains, and tomorrow's are already booked up.

MATT

Okay. Plane, car, hot air balloon. I don't care. Anything.

RECEPTIONIST

There's really only the train - but it's booked up weeks in advance.

MATT

There's got to be a way.

The receptionist looks at him for a moment.

RECEPTIONIST

Well, maybe...

INT. LUXURY HOTEL - DINING ROOM - DAY

Matt nervously drinks a coffee. The receptionist comes in with a pint-sized 13 year old boy, MARLONBRANDO.

MATT

You found something?

RECEPTIONIST

Si, señor. There's only one possibility at such short notice - a train, tomorrow.

MATT

Tomorrow? Okay. It'll have to do. At least I'll get there. Excellent!

RECEPTIONIST

But-

MATT

There's always a bloody but.

RECEPTIONIST

Si, señor. This train is only for locals, for Peruvians.

Disappointment consumes Matt.

MATT

What!? You have separate trains?

RECEPTIONIST

I'm afraid so, señor. But don't worry. I have a plan. This is my nephew, Marlonbrando Quispe. He will get you to Machu Picchu.

Matt looks skeptically at the small boy.

RECEPTIONIST

Or you wait till we get you a ticket on the tourist train?

MATT

No! No. Okay, but how?

EXT. LUXURY HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

Matt is dressed in his Indian outfit again, carrying a large cotton bag with colorful ethnic motif. The receptionist summons a taxi and negotiates a price with the driver. Marlonbrando is very casual.

RECEPTIONIST

Remember, señor, foreigners are NOT allowed on this train, so DON'T speak! Do whatever he tells you to do. Okay?

Matt looks again at the boy, unconvinced, then back at the receptionist.

MATT

He's the boss.

The boy gives him a big smile.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, OLLANTAYTAMBO - DAY

Matt stands to the side with his Indian hat pulled low. He has darkened his hands and face. Marlonbrando comes up with two tickets in his hand.

MARLONBRANDO

Okay, señor, got them.

MATT

How come you speak such good English?

MARLONBRANDO

I work in hotel since I was kid.

MATT

That long, eh?

MARLONBRANDO

Yea. Now, no talk. I tell them you my idiot uncle, so be simple.

MATT

Shouldn't be difficult after the fool I've been!

EXT. TRAIN, OLLANTAYTAMBO - DAY

The GUARD checks the tickets as the passengers board. Matt and Marlonbrando reach the front of the queue.

GUARD

(Spanish)
Tickets.

Marlonbrando gives him the tickets. He grabs hold of Matt hard and yanks him back, as if preventing him from escaping.

MARLONBRANDO

(Spanish)

Uncle Jorge. Don't be afraid. It's okay. Here, eat this.

He gives Matt a piece of cake, and gestures exaggeratedly for him to eat it. He turns to the guard, raises his hand to his temple and makes the crazy sign with his finger.

MARLONBRANDO

(Spanish)

Estupido. Got kicked in the head by a donkey.

Matt takes the cake and starts to eat it, making a real mess, with crumbs falling everywhere. The Guard punches the tickets and waves them on.

INT. TRAIN, OLLANTAYTAMBO - DAY

Matt and Marlonbrando are seated at the back of the carriage. Matt keeps his face covered.

MARLONBRANDO

You do a good idiot.

MATT

Years of practice.

I/E. TRAIN - DAY

The train rides through a beautiful valley along the banks of a river. Matt sits with his hat hiding his face.

MATT

(whispering)

Hey, Marlon, you were really good back there. Smart kid.

MARLONBRANDO

Gracias, señor. But my name Marlonbrando. Marlonbrando Quispe.

MATT

Ah! O-k-a-y. Different.

Matt starts to doze on the headrest.

EXT. INCA TRAIL - DAY

Melanie is walking with a young female American BACKPACKER, part of a small group on the Inca Trail. It is a beautiful scene. She half-heartedly takes photos.

MELANIE

I should've picked up the phone.
Why didn't I pick up the phone?

BACKPACKER

But you said he was a schmuck.

MELANIE

Well, yes... to begin with, he-

BACKPACKER

Sometimes it's better to reject,
before being rejected.

MELANIE

Not really what I was looking for.

EXT. AGUAS CALIENTES - DAY

Matt stands impatiently on the sidewalk. Marlonbrando skips up to him.

MATT

Well?

MARLONBRANDO

No more bus today. We wait here
till tomorrow or we climb stairs.
Hotel is up there.

Matt looks up at the steep mountain.

MATT

What do you think?

MARLONBRANDO

It not far, señor. Maybe she arrive
today, then you miss her.

Matt looks dubiously up at the mountain again. He hesitates, but Marlonbrando has already set off.

MATT

The gods are determined to make me
pay for this cock up.

He rushes to catch up.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - MOUNTAIN SIDE - DAY

Marlonbrando sprints up the steps. Matt WHEEZES behind. He sits down, gasping.

MATT

Whoa, Marlon...brando. Hang on a minute. Can't this country afford any air? You never said this was the bloody Stairway to Heaven.

INT. MACHU PICCHU HOTEL - RECEPTION - DAY

A very exhausted Matt lifts Marlonbrando onto the desk as the MACHU PICCHU RECEPTIONIST attends to them.

MACHU PICCHU RECEPTIONIST

Here's your key, señor.

MATT

Thank you. What about the boy? I asked for 2 rooms.

MACHU PICCHU RECEPTIONIST

The boy will sleep with the staff, señor.

MATT

No. No. He'll have his own room.

MACHU PICCHU RECEPTIONIST

Are you sure, señor?

MATT

Get him his own room, please.

The boy looks wide eyed at him and gives him a big hug. Matt looks uncomfortable.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Title: Thursday.

Matt sits overlooking the glorious ancient site, carefully watching all the tourists coming and going.

MATT

Now I get it. What a phenomenal place.

Marlonbrando brings him a sandwich and a soda, and sits next to him, chatting.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Title: Friday.

Sunrise. Marlonbrando is playing with some other kids. Matt sits in the same spot, looking more restless. He pulls out the picture of Melanie he drew.

MATT

You know the drill. You're on duty.
If you see her-

MARLONBRANDO

Si, señor.

Matt rushes off.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Matt rushes back with refreshments, and resumes his seat.

MATT

At ease, Private.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Sunset. Matt gets up. He looks much sadder. Marlonbrando brings him an ice-cream to cheer him up.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Title: Saturday.

It is raining cats and dogs. Matt sits on the hill again. He looks a forlorn figure. Marlonbrando is nearby. They are wearing colorful plastic kagools against the rain.

THIS IS THE PICTURE FROM THE OPENING SCENE.

MATT

A week ago, my life made sense.

He looks up as it starts to rain torrentially. He pulls the kagool's inadequate hood over his head.

MATT (CONT'D)

(V.O.) (CONT'D)

Perfect!

He turns to Marlonbrando.

MATT (CONT'D)

Did we miss her? Did she get here
before us?

(MORE)

MATT (CONT'D)

We haven't moved from this damn spot for days - I'm not kidding, my buttocks have lost all sense of feeling.

MARLONBRANDO

Señor, you sure gringo lady took Inca Trail?

MATT

What?

MARLONBRANDO

Maybe she go back to America. Or stay in Cusco.

A look of horror flashes across his face.

MATT

Now you mention it? It never occurred to me she might change her plans.

MARLONBRANDO

Call her cellphone.

MATT

I never got her number.

MARLONBRANDO

How you not get...?

Marlonbrando looks at Matt likes he's a hopeless naive idiot.

MARLONBRANDO (CONT'D)

Not looking good, is it, señor?

Matt's demeanour slumps.

MATT

You're right. You're right. We'd better go back to Cusco, try to find out what happened to her. I just assumed...

They get up and head back towards the hotel.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

They walk along the path to the exit. It stops raining.

MATT

Bugger, I've forgotten the bag. You tell the hotel we're checking out, I'll go back and get it.

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Matt rushes up the hill, the hood of his kagool still up. He picks up the bag, swings round, and knocks an unsuspecting woman over. He proffers his hand.

MATT

Oh, my God. I'm so sorry. I'm
not the daintiest-

She grabs his hand and pulls herself up. Suddenly they are face to face. It is Melanie. A zillion feelings flood across their faces.

BOTH

You!?

MELANIE

You're here!

MATT

You're late.

Melanie puts her finger over his mouth.

MELANIE

Don't spoil the moment by being
you.

She gives him a big kiss and a hug as the sun breaks through with the full majesty of Machu Picchu behind them.

FINAL IMAGE Matt and Melanie, in silhouette, are kissing in front of the glorious sunlit ruins.

FADE OUT

END CREDITS

MINI SCENES OVER THE END CREDITS

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Long shot of Matt and Melanie from behind, in silhouette, looking out over the ruins.

MATT (V.O.)

You can see why they abandoned the
place - no roofs.

MORE CREDITS

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Matt and Melanie sitting on a wall. She touches his kagool.

MELANIE

Nice. Armani?

MATT

(nodding)

Of course.

Melanie looks inside his carrier bag. Inside there's toilet paper, wet ones, bottled water, etc etc.

MELANIE

I'm impressed.

MATT

Be prepared. That's my motto.

MELANIE

My work is done.

MORE CREDITS

EXT. CARIBBEAN BEACH - DAY

JC and Debra are reclining by a pool in a luxury villa. JC is on his cellphone.

JC

Yes, Georgina, don't choke. You heard me right: hold all my calls for 2 days.

Debra grabs the phone.

DEBRA

Make that a week.

She hangs up. JC is about to protest, then shrugs and smiles. Debra gives him a kiss.

MORE CREDITS

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Matt and Melanie are walking through the ruins with Marlonbrando.

MELANIE

So, what's with the kid?

MATT

They were on sale.

MORE CREDITS

EXT. MACHU PICCHU - DAY

Long shot of Matt and Melanie walking arm in arm through the ruins.

MATT

So, what changed your mind about me?

MELANIE

Pity, I guess. How's your ass?

MATT

Much better since you pulled my head out of it.