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# Perseids

by  
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*(excerpt in English)*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE: ESTRELLA, MARC, STRANGER IN THE AIRPORT, NACHO and XIMO.

*Present and past go back and forth during the play.  
It is august forever (an interminable month).*

## 0. Trance.

*Summer night on the outskirts of a small town on the Mediteranean coast. A forest where young people pursue lust freely, forgetting about social restraints, letting go of the masks and simply being themselves. A dream of youth where trance music and coloured lights take them on a spiritual journey of their own existence.*

*Four young people dance ecstatically. They are XIMO, who is celebrating his 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary, ESTRELLA, MARC and NACHO. The music, the drugs, the frenzy, the feeling of freedom, the absence of time and space, all of it running through their veins amongst violent leaps of sheer happiness.*

*Time starts slowing down until coming to a halt when Estrella discovers a meteor shower on the sky. They all continue their dionisiac choreography while she is able to float out of her own body, following the meteor shower which is taking her to the lake. She is gazing right in front of her and stands still by the lake, which reflects the starry sky as though it were an underworld living within it. MARC, XIMO and NACHO stop, observe their friend and advance. The four of them remain paralyzed before the reflection of the sky on the lake. They are a picture of friendship and delirium.*

ESTRELLA

I wish for this night to never end.

## 1. Gatwick.

*London. Gatwick Airport. 5.59. Voices are heard over the PA system. Marc is sitting on a chair, his rucksack on the floor, talking to a stranger who is sleeping next to him.*

MARC

Excuse me... Do you speak... speak Spanish? I'm Spanish. And you? *(Silence)* It's like I'm talking to a wall! Are you sleeping, man? You asleep? *(Silence. The stranger stirs.)* Gatwick is the second biggest airport in London, traffic wise. Did you know that? Two terminals. Ninety companies. Thirty-three million passengers a year on average. Crazy! And here I am, all by myself. One of the thirty-three million passengers to be crossing Gatwick this year. Faces staring into the void. Like ghosts wandering through the world without looking into each other's eyes. Like lost passengers on a lost land of a lost world. *(Silence)* This is all such a bunch of nonsense... *(Silence)* Tomorrow it's Ximo's birthday. Thirty-three already! And he insists on celebrating it together. As if I gave a shit about seeing him and celebrating his shitty life. It would be great to be able to see things differently. Ximo is my best friend. He wasn't always like that. My best friend, I mean. But abandoning my life in London to just go there and pretend... Why? I'm so weak. It's so hard for me to say no. How long has it been since we've seen one another? Five? Six years?

*Silence. He checks his pockets, finds a couple of pills, cleans them a little bit and swallows them.*

Motion sickness pills. I get airsick. These pills will relax me. They'll help me sleep. They'll also make me more affectionate, you know? *(Silence)* Sometimes what we have is nothing but the remains of what we have chosen. Ximo is the person who knows me the best. That doesn't mean much, either. I mean: it's not like he knows it all about me. Nobody does. Hey, I might not even know myself that well. The other day I read this article: "*London, the portrait of a city which devours. London, ruthless to those who don't make it*". To make it? We have created a city which is exporting dreams all over the world. Only the people who live here know the truth. London will transform you, it will make you grow old, it will squeeze you and finally, if you give up... it will discard you. That's what London will do to you. Our London. *(Silence)* I came here, stupid me, expecting money to be springing out of the trees. But this city will stomp its feet on you, it will force you to be humiliated in order to stay in this dream. You can't imagine how hard it is to get a job! I had to go through three interviews for a bloody burger joint. And they didn't hire me. So I sometimes get hired for these... these little jobs just to keep going... God, if only my family knew...! *(Silence)* It's fucked up! Really fucked up! But one has to make use of his own youth, and these arms nature has given me... just to earn some pennies while I'm waiting around for the right job. Or the one I don't actually want... working for the Brits. Cause they're so lazy. And bloody racist. Three out of every four employees are foreign citizens. So the Brits can just sit back. And they'll defend that at all costs. That is London.

*Silence.*

A little more than two hours and I'll be there again. It will be weird. I mean: the two of us together again, alcohol again, drugs again. As if we were these dumb kids. No more of... *(Silence)* Shit! Isn't it hot? *(Marc takes his T-shirt off. His skin is wet and shiny because of the sweat.)* This is a hellish nightmare! Aren't you hot?

*Marc closes his eyes, as if he were sleepy. He rests his head on the stranger's shoulder.*

It's the pills. They work fast. I should have waited until after boarding. They work fast. It's always been like that. Real fast. Real fast. Re-al fast... Fast.

*Silence. He takes a deep breath. He opens his eyes with a spasm. He composes himself. He then subtly introduces his hand into the stranger's jacket and slowly pulls out the wallet. He pulls away from the stranger, opens the wallet and takes a few banknotes. While still holding one, he leans back and gently puts the wallet back into its rightful place. Suddenly, the stranger grabs his wrist.*

Hey, man, sorry! I... I don't... No problems... I need...

*The PA system announces the boarding call. The stranger signals to him to keep the bill, then he brings his hand close to Mark's face.*

Okay, man. Ok. Not here. *(The stranger gets up and exits.)* "...boarding pass and passport ready to board..." *(Silence. Marc follows him.)*