

ALASKA
By Gibrán Portela

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Ms. Cruz would like to thank Steve Silpe for his golf tips...

*Navigation is the movement
which best approximates immobility.
Trying to set sail requires a docking,
Requires fixed points on the horizon...*

Peter Høeg
Smilla's Sense of Snow

Cast of Characters

- | JIMI — a man still in love
- | MIGUEL — a man who has fallen out of love
- | MARTINA — a woman who is falling in love

In a store that sells safes & lock boxes.

MIGUEL is checking the shelved inventory, taking notes on a clipboard.

HE is a small, insignificant person, whose manner seems to beg forgiveness for his very existence. He has a prosthetic right hand that is stiff, bluish and translucent.

JIMI is seated, watching MIGUEL work. JIMI is a surly, sullen, vulgar guy, who chews tobacco all the time and goes around spitting a dark, thick mess whenever, wherever.

JIMI: So what does anybody have to keep safe? Huh? What would you have to keep safe? Stupid. Don't ya think? Doesn't it seem stupid? To sell stuff you can't use.

Pause.

JIMI: What a great business. Doesn't it depress you? That old man was a fool until he met you. Now you're the fool. You're too stupid to even know this. But don't you worry, I'm here to protect you.

MIGUEL: ...Mah-ma-mis-Mister Godinez-wah-was tired a-of-wah-working.

JIMI: Mmm yeah...I bet Mr. Godinez has a retarded son—the kind with crazy cross-eyes who can't serve a beer without a giant head of foam. You can't do that either. Oh, you know the kind of retard, I mean. The pigeon-toed ones with the clenched up hands, and crooked mouths. The ones with the heavy retard shoes just like the ones Mrs. Hertz's retard son wore. Remember?

MIGUEL: We're ga-going to pah-pah-put up lots of balloons fah-for the opening.

JIMI: I bet Mr. Godinez's retard son can't control his sphincter or his bladder and he shits and pees himself every time someone says something nice to him—just like a dog. Imagine, a grown man with a dark tangle of hair around his cock—still stammering like a fool—giving Mama Godinez a cracked back from piggybacking “L'il baby” Godinez to the shower every time he throws a tantrum.

MIGUEL: Mah-mah-Mister Godinez dah-doesn't have a wife.

JIMI: What?

MIGUEL: Mah-Mister Godinez-dah-doesn't have a wife.

JIMI laughs.

JIMI: I bet he's got them hidden in a basement so no one sees them and he throws them some raw meat every three days.

MIGUEL: I—I-lah-like him.

JIMI: Who do you like?

MIGUEL: Mah-Mister Go-Godinez.

JIMI: You like somebody who sticks his retarded son in a basement??

MIGUEL: Ji-Jimi...

JIMI: What?

MIGUEL: Wah—we're going to do well here. This pah-lace sssuits us.

JIMI: How can you say that? How can—Nothing has ever “gone well” for us here. We don't belong here. How can it go “well?” What makes you think this place “suits” us? What are you trying to say by that...What?! We're going to go out every Sunday, hand in hand with our wives, eat in some charming—and expensive—café and then go to the movies? Locked up the whole time. Like pigs! Don't you miss the cold? How can you even think that we're going to like it here? How can you breathe here? Without any air?? Don't you miss the silence, the sea? We've been formed by the cold, bonded by ice...and those long nights. There has never been anything here for us.

MIGUEL: Ji-Jimi, you don't have a wife.

JIMI: But you do...and you know what? Imagine this...imagine that everything's going fucking great—ab-fucking-so-fucking-lutely-great. Imagine that in every fucking house in this fucking city there's a 0-0-4-2 Wall Safe. And if that were to happen... You know who'd be your first visitor? Her, of course. Your horrific wife would come here asking for money. She'll have a disfigured and toothless boy by the hand. And she'll demand all the years of child support you owe her. They'll leave you without a penny to your name. And then your mother...She'll be coming by too—to collect every penny, every drop of milk she put in your mouth, she'll claim every last piece of everything you owe her. What you owe her and your father—both. And there's no way you can deny them.

MIGUEL: Nah-no-bah-body knows I ka-came back.

JIMI: But they're going to find out... And then they'll come, they'll come to ruin your life once again, to suck you down whole, every cent, every miserable penny, and also, of course, every drop of blood. They'll suck your blood out like a swarm of mosquitoes. Big, fat, giant, hungry mosquitoes!

MIGUEL: Wah-why does the bah-boy have to be disfigured?

JIMI: Because he'll be seven years old.

MIGUEL: Ssso—wha-what?

JIMI: The seventh year is the worst year of your life: You lose your teeth, you spend all day filthy and disgusting, covered in snot, with your knees all scabby and scraped.

The only advantage to being seven is that you're still a kid so your brutal ugliness won't affect you as much—but when you grow up...they'll drain you of your last penny and then...we'll be left with nothing—just like the first time.

MIGUEL: I dah-don't want to go bah-back.

JIMI: Do you remember the first time we saw it? The Aurora Borealis? You came to wake me—you were so scared. You didn't know what it was.

MIGUEL: I ah-asked Meh-Mrs. Hertz.

JIMI: The only thing I knew was that it couldn't be the end of the world. We'll never see anything like that here. But what the fuck, it was a hostile world for a one-handed man.

MIGUEL: You said th-that it woo-would be fine for us to stay fah-for a while, bah-but-you cccan go bah-back if you wah-wah-want.

JIMI stands, walks up to MIGUEL and starts to corner him slowly.

JIMI: You want me to go alone? Without my best buddy? I don't want to be without my best friend... what about you?

MIGUEL nods "No"; JIMI gets closer, keeping an eye on him.

MIGUEL doesn't run, but HE does seem to make himself smaller with his somber, hangdog expression.

JIMI: I came back for you. You want me to return alone? Could you really be without me? You want to be without your best friend? I could never be without my best friend. Miguel, friends stay together always, and forever.

JIMI corners him even more, speaking practically right into his mouth.

JIMI: You could live without your best friend? You could live without me? You want me to go back to Alaska by myself? You want to separate yourself from me? Tell me I'm your friend. You know we only have each other. You know better than anyone that there's no one able to help us, understand us—except for us.

The overhead fluorescent lights cross to a warm ambient light in the background.

A piece of Astroturf appears in intense contrast to the [previous scene](#).

MIGUEL takes a golf [club](#) out of [the golf bag](#), examines it at length, breathes deeply and smiles, puts [a ball](#) in place, breathes deeply, his expression changes, now he's relaxed, confident, filled with tranquility and ease. He strikes a professional golfer's pose.

MIGUEL: In order to achieve a good downswing, so that your ball will [go far](#), with the highest amount of loft [onto](#) the green, place your left foot [slightly in front of](#) the tee, so that your club

meets its point of impact at the maximum stage of velocity over the right foot. This way, the club's face is more open upon contact, and will provide the best possible execution of swing.

MIGUEL returns the golf club to the golf bag and leaves the Astroturf. The fluorescent lights turn back on, soaking the entire stage with its glow.

JIMI (through a loudspeaker): *Safes by Alaska*, keeping safe the things you love the most, offers, today only, a grand opening discount of 20% on the 0042 built-in safe and that's not all—receive a gorgeous—and free imitation Rolex. *Safes by Alaska*, safeguard your future. *Safes by Alaska*, pleasure for your treasure, nightmare for the crook.

MIGUEL goes to the counter; he makes calculations on a calculator.

MARTINA enters. She is a thin girl who dresses in shades of gray; she greets MIGUEL with a timid gesture. MIGUEL smells something strange in the air.

MARTINA: Good afternoon.

MIGUEL: Gah-good-after-noon.

MARTINA: I'm looking for a safe.

MIGUEL: Wah-we have jah-just wohwhat you're looking for. Fah-for your every nah-need, sssmall ones, bah-big ones, commercial use, mahmedium-sssized.

MARTINA: I need a small one.

MIGUEL: To keep mah-money or jewels or impah-im-portant papapers or...

MARTINA: It's to keep a...secret.

MIGUEL: Ah...

MARTINA: A little one, a teeny secret...it's mosquito repellent.

MIGUEL: Exccuse mah-me?

MARTINA: Mosquito repellent...do you know what mosquito repellent is?

MIGUEL: Yah-you're gah-going to keep ma-ma-mosquito repellent in the sssafe?

MARTINA: I stink like mosquito repellent, from the top of my head to the tip of my toes. If you want me to go, I'll go. I've been thrown out of a lot places because I smell bad. Now your shop stinks like mosquito repellent.

MIGUEL: You da-don't sssmell ba-bad.

MARTINA: You don't have to flatter me just so I'll buy one of your safes. In any case, I'd buy one because I need one. I don't buy anything I don't need—even if someone tells me I smell like roses.

MIGUEL: I like your sssmell.

MARTINA: I need a small safe, a very cheap one.

MIGUEL: Of cccourse.

MARTINA: Which do you recommend?

MIGUEL: Well, I tha-think the c32b-b-is da-double lock sssafe with da-double combination is vah-very good.

MARTINA: Is it expensive?

MIGUEL: Depends on what you want it to hold.

MARTINA: Oh, so if I want to keep a mosquito in that box, instead of a diamond ring, then it'll come out cheaper? Is that right?

MIGUEL: Excuse mah-me. It's...

MARTINA: A teeny tiny little bitty secret. That's what I want to keep safe. If I tell you what the secret is the secret will stop being a secret. Don't you think?

MIGUEL: Ahhh...

MARTINA: Give me the cheapest one you have.

MIGUEL gets up and moves to the back of the shop, then comes back with a pair of small lockboxes/safes. MARTINA appears nervous. MIGUEL drops the boxes, MARTINA runs to help him pick them up, and they look into each other's eyes. MARTINA kisses him. HE smiles and kisses her back. THEY embrace.

MARTINA: How did you lose your hand?

MIGUEL: In the war.

They put the boxes on the counter, continuing the conversation as if nothing happened.

MIGUEL: Pah-par-ddon me.

MIGUEL takes a small lockbox that is on top of the counter and hands it to MARTINA.

MARTINA: They're secure, but they're small. Any thief could run off with it.

MIGUEL: Bah-but, they'll nah-never na-know what's insside it.

MARTINA: How much do I owe you?

MIGUEL: It's Fah-fif-for—thirty dollars.

MARTINA: That's so expensive.

MIGUEL: Oh...

MARTINA: But if you tell me it's worth it, I'll trust you.

MIGUEL: Ya-yes. It's vahvery—It's guaranteed.

MARTINA: Thanks.

MARTINA smiles, pays & exits.

MIGUEL: Gah-good- bahbah—Cccome bahback ssoon.

*MIGUEL takes a deep breath and returns to totaling things up on the calculator.
JIMI enters, drunk.*

JIMI: How are we doing? How much did we sell? Wooh! It stinks. Are the mosquitoes attacking you? That's what you get for coming back to this tropical Hell-hole!

MIGUEL: A-a customer.

JIMI: A customer.

MIGUEL: A cussstomah-mer pahput on mmosquito re-pah-pellent.

JIMI: Gotta be a filthy pig to use so much bug spray. Must be a psycho. Was it a man or a woman?

MIGUEL: Ma-Wooh-man.

JIMI: Ha! I knew it! And I bet she has a retarded son. It's because of women like her that mosquitoes have developed defenses against repellents, because of that there's no place to hide from them, there's no way to protect yourself. It's her fault that Mosquitoes are going to destroy the world. There are some total nuts out there. There was this guy at the bar, Doctor Gris, Juan Gris, he studied medicine but now he sells rugs—that's what he told me. The good Doctor Gris

has two tongues. Can you imagine having two tongues? One on top of the other? Doctor Gris told me that his wife was as fat as the world. I thought I had seen everything when I met Mrs. Hertz and her retard of a son, I thought I had seen it all. What would you do with two tongues? But I don't think he would put on a ton of mosquito repellent—no, I'm pretty sure he was content with his two tongues.

MIGUEL: Mah-mrs. He-Hertz had an extra fah-finger.

THEY both laugh. JIMI stops, but MIGUEL keeps laughing. JIMI gives him a dirty look. A serious look.

JIMI: Is something wrong? What's up with you?

MIGUEL: Nah-no.

JIMI: I know when something's up with you, you can't fool me by saying that everything's fine.

MIGUEL: I-I-I dra-dropped sssome safes... In fah-front of a cccustomer...

JIMI: But you have a steel hand. I always tell you to use it... It's your most reliable hand... I should cut off the other one. How many safes have we sold so far?

MIGUEL: Lahlike. Ta-ten.

JIMI: Which ones?

MIGUEL: The ones on pah-pro-mahmotion and a lah-little one.

JIMI: Well then, we sold eleven.

MIGUEL: Nah-no. Nine pah-pro-mahmotion ones and one lah-little one.

JIMI: This stench is never gonna go away. Don't you ever again let someone in here who uses mosquito repellent! Why does she use mosquito repellent like it was perfume? A crazy woman. Don't you think? You saw her. I'm sure she has a nervous tic and she moves her head like a fool. Does she move it like that or not? Like a retarded idiot?

MIGUEL: Nah-Yes.

JIMI: And she came by herself?

MIGUEL: Yah-yes.

JIMI: What did she want a safe for? What did she have to protect?

MIGUEL: I dah-don't nah-know.

JIMI: You do so know.

MIGUEL: Nah-no.

JIMI: You're lying to me, you've got no reason to lie to me... Surely you asked her what kind of safe she wanted and what she wanted it for. What did she say?

MIGUEL: A-a-sssecret.

JIMI: A secret? Between you and me there are no secrets!

MIGUEL: Tha-that's what ssshe sssaid.

JIMI: Women are just trouble. Haven't you learned anything? Can't live with'em—can't live without'em. Alaska has a woman's name. Like that Eskimo who propositioned you—I don't remember her name...

JIMI moves very close to MIGUEL.

JIMI: Do you remember? She wanted to get with you. For sure she was gonna stick you in an igloo and then she was gonna put fish up your ass. Uh, huh. And you remember her husband? Hah. He wanted to kill you. And—*(HE can't control his laughter.)* And you did nothing. *(HE smiles.)* Ha.

MIGUEL walks up to the Astroturf lawn, picks up a golf club, and adopts a pose like a professional golfer. JIMI keeps laughing and exits.

MIGUEL: If we find that the ball is buried in rough terrain, we must try to simply correct the situation by being practical. It is better to lose a stroke and return the ball to the fairway without taking excessive risks. In order to do that, we choose a high iron, placing the ball by the right foot. With the weight on the left side, we take a shorter club than normal for this closed stance and keep it in play with a controlled swing.

MIGUEL returns his club to the golf bag as HE moves out of his fantasy.

MARTINA: Hello...Good afternoon!

MIGUEL: Gah-good afternoon.

MARTINA: I suppose you remember me—my smell is unforgettable. Repellant? Mosquitoes? Uhhh, anyway, I have a problem with my safe. I don't think it's working right. I bought it two days ago...

MIGUEL: Pah-problems with the ca-combination?

MARTINA: Well, I don't know, uhmm...

MIGUEL: Tha-then it mahmahmust bahbe the lock.

MARTINA: No...uhmm...I think my little secret is sticking out a bit from the safe.

MIGUEL: Is it tah-too sssmall? The sssafe?

MARTINA: Well, no.

MIGUEL: And sso...?

MARTINA: The truth is...do you want to go get ice cream?

MIGUEL: Nah—nah—no. I don't lah-like ice cream.

MARTINA: I'm asking you to come take a walk with me...or do something—you don't have to be so...I mean, sometimes the things you hear mean something else...

MIGUEL gets nervous, hesitates, his body loses its equilibrium/inner compass. HE's filled with an infinite awkwardness.

MARTINA: Me, I like ice cream, that's why I asked if you wanted to go get one with me, but if you don't like it, we can go get a coffee or a...unless I make you gag because I smell like mosquito repellent. Or maybe...you think that I'm a slut who wants something from you. A slut who reeks of repellent. My grandma called everybody a slut—she called me a slut too. But if that's what bothers you—the repellent—that's fine. But don't think I go around doing this all the time. I thought about it all day yesterday at work...

MIGUEL tries to smile—HE finds a gap-toothed grimace instead.

MARTINA: And again last night—but not for too long—because I like to sleep with no worries on my mind—that's the least I deserve. We could also go to the movies—or we could not go anywhere. Well, okay, anyway, I'm going to go and...and ...I'd like you to say something now...I'm not saying I'm going to kiss you or anything if we go out. I'm not even saying I'll ever kiss you. I just want to talk to someone. I'm not looking for anything special, I just... Sometimes things happen you just can't explain.

The sound of birds chirping. MIGUEL and MARTINA at the park.

MARTINA: You said you didn't like ice cream.

MIGUEL: It's bah-been a long ta-time since I had any.

MARTINA: It doesn't make you sick?

MIGUEL: The ice cream?

MARTINA: Me. My smell. You don't have to hold back...you can tell me and I can move a few feet away—I'm used to it.

MIGUEL: I la-like your sss-mah-mell.

MARTINA: You don't have to lie to me. You must think I'm a nut, obsessed with mosquito repellent.

MIGUEL: I-I-I wah-wasn't thinking about anything.

MARTINA: C'mon, you're not stupid, are you?

MIGUEL: Wha-what?

MARTINA: If you're thinking about nothing then you must be very stupid. Stupid people think about nothing.

MIGUEL: I lah-like the sssmell of repellent bah-beca-cause it reminds me of Veracruz.

MARTINA: Are you from Veracruz?

MIGUEL: No.

MARTINA: Well, you must have had a good time there?

MIGUEL: I've never been to Veracruz. Bahbut I don't know why, but I think that—that Veracruz smells like repellent. Sometimes things happen you just can't explain.

MARTINA: You hardly stuttered at all.

MIGUEL: Wha-what?

MARTINA: Just so you know, I have to put on bug spray because I'm allergic to mosquito bites. If they bite me, my face swells up like a big, red ball. Since I was a little girl, they've always bit me a lot, so I was always walking around with great big welts. People gave me dirty looks. They got sick just from looking at me...I still make them sick now. Maybe I'm destined to make people sick...any way you look at it.

MIGUEL: I've never been bah-bitten bah-by a mah-mosquito.

MARTINA: Everyone's been bit by something sometime in their life.

MIGUEL: Not me.

MARTINA: Listen, uhmm...what happened to your hand?

MIGUEL: You asked mahme out sso you cccould ask mah-me that?

MARTINA: You don't have to tell me, but why pretend I don't want to know—when I do—I mean, I told you about the mosquitoes, but maybe you aren't interested, so don't think you have to tell me anything about that. It's not important. But it bothers me when people act like nothing happened. It's stupid, but you don't have to tell me anything. Not nothing. Nothing at all. Not if you don't want to. We could talk about whatever. Movies for instance. Truth is I haven't been to the movies for a long time...

MIGUEL: In Alaska.

MARTINA: Alaska?

MIGUEL: I la-lost mah-my hand in Alaska. On a ship.

MARTINA: On a cruise?

MIGUEL: Fishing. Ca-ca-cod.

MARTINA: I don't like cod.

MIGUEL: Me neither.

MARTINA: You don't like ice cream either.

MIGUEL: Jah-just straw-bah-berry.

MARTINA: You asked for lemon.

THEY laugh.

MARTINA: So you were a fisherman. A codfish bit your hand off?

MIGUEL: On the ssshup, sssome water got inside mah-my glove. And it froze.

MARTINA holds his prosthetic hand. THEY smile. THEY look out. THEY look at each other. MIGUEL lowers his gaze. MARTINA gives him a little kiss on the cheek.

MIGUEL: Martina. Do me a favor...don't ask me anymore about my past.

MARTINA: You did it again—you didn't stutter.

MIGUEL: Wha-what?

MARTINA: I'm sorry.

MIGUEL: Promise me.

MARTINA: Why?

MIGUEL: Please.

MARTINA leans on his shoulder.

We see JIMI is in the store looking angry as MIGUEL arrives.

JIMI: Where were you?

MIGUEL: Wha-with the sssupplier fah-for Ssstanlees. La-like we ppplanned.

JIMI: It's seven. You left at noon.

MIGUEL: Uhhh, I went to...

JIMI: Uhhh? Uhhh? Where'd you get that "Uhm" from? You've never said that before.

MIGUEL: I wah-wah-went to sssee the sah-supplier and then I went to the mmmovies.

JIMI: The supplier for Stanlees called. You had an appointment with him at three this afternoon—you left at noon, now it's seven. You never went to the appointment. I thought you said you wanted us to do well here, but it looks like you don't. Why do I have to take care of everything? How long have you been like this? You get up late, smiling like a fool. What's on your mind? When someone smiles like an idiot, it can only mean one of two things; he is an idiot or that he's remembering something very nice. What are you thinking about? Mrs. Hertz' retarded son? What was his name? Ornik...just like the sound pigs make. What movie did you go see?

MIGUEL: A-a ha-horror film.

JIMI: Why didn't you invite me?

MIGUEL: I wah-wanted to bah-be alone.

JIMI: Are you going out with someone?

Pause.

JIMI: We're friends. Aren't we? Why don't you trust me? Up there you trusted me...you'd tell me everything. It's fine if you have new friends. Do you think I'm going to be mad? No way. It's just that the business...we have to take care of it. It was your idea to come here, to do this. But tell me the truth and I know I can help you out with anything. Need advice about the ladies? I can give you advice about women. What could possibly be so important that you would lie to me and play with my head like this. You've never deceived me. You can't lie to me.

Silence.

MIGUEL: I mah-met sssomeone.

JIMI: What's her name? Answer me.

MIGUEL: Mar—her name is—Mar-tah-tina.

JIMI: How long have you known her? Answer me.

MIGUEL: A-a-month—or-tah-two.

JIMI: So you've got a girlfriend.

MIGUEL: A-a fra-friend.

JIMI: I want to meet her. I want to be her friend too. We could all go to the movies together. If she's your friend, she can mine too. You got a problem with that? I don't introduce you to anyone because you're my only friend...and Doctor Gris, he's my friend too, but all I know about him is that he has two tongues and a fat wife. I'd like to have a friend to take to the movies and go on walks with. It would be great for all three of us to go out together. It would be great, all three of us could do all kinds of things together. Don't you think?

MIGUEL: She's mah-my girlfffriend.

JIMI: *(with a loud shrill laugh)* Your girlfriend? You want some advice about women? You want me to tell you?

MIGUEL: aaah...

JIMI: You've got enough going on with that horrible wife of yours, and that seven year-old kid.

MIGUEL: She's not my wife!

JIMI: Ahhh...are you getting all maddy-waddy?? What's she look like?

MIGUEL: aaah...

JIMI: What's her name again? I'm talking to you! What's her name!?

MIGUEL: I allrready ta-told you.

JIMI: Well, I guess I just didn't hear you. What is her name? I'm talking to you!

MIGUEL: Ma-ma-Martina.

JIMI: I want to meet your girlfriend.

JIMI makes an exaggerated gesture of clearing an awful stink from the room.

JIMI: You stink. It's not that bug repellent psychopath, right? I really want to meet her. What d'ya think? We could invite her over to our house. How would that be? I want to check her out. I'm your best friend, I have only your best interests in mind...bring her home.

MIGUEL: Th-that's nnot a gah-good idddea.

JIMI: Are you afraid I'll embarrass you? That I'll fuck with you? Are you afraid she'll know you're a loser, an idiot? Are you afraid of what she'll find out? Are you afraid?

In JIMI & MIGUEL's house. THEY have just finished eating dinner. There's an uncomfortable silence.

MARTINA: How long have you lived here?

JIMI: Like six or seven months, (to MIGUEL) right?

MARTINA: And you met in Alaska?

JIMI: We met here, at a strip club.

MARTINA laughs.

MARTINA: You like strip clubs, my love?

MIGUEL (*An anguished plea*): D-d-don't ca-call mmme "my love."

Silence.

MARTINA: Is it pretty?

JIMI: What?

MARTINA: Alaska.

JIMI: It's like being at the end of the world. We were in the Northeast, at Point Hope, very close to Bering Strait...do you know where that is?

MARTINA: I have no idea.

JIMI: We would head out of port very early in the morning and we'd spend several days out at sea. Isn't that so, my love?

MIGUEL: I-I-dddon't wah-want to ta-talk about that.

JIMI: Miguel was not a good fisherman. Sometimes he'd faint.

MIGUEL: Ji-ji-jimi...

Silence. JIMI takes an exaggerated sniff of the air.

JIMI: How can you live like that? Miguel must love you very much, not just anyone could stand that smell. Don't you think? How do you live like that? Tell me. We're going to have to sleep with the windows open for the rest of our lives.

JIMI begins to laugh like he's losing it.

JIMI: I'm just kidding! Ha! I wanted to break the ice, that's all. Trust me.

MIGUEL: Ji-ji-jimi.

JIMI keeps laughing.

JIMI: So, what do you do?

MARTINA: Quality control.

JIMI (*with a laugh*): For bug repellent?

MARTINA: I spend my mornings looking at Tupperware, every day I inspect Tupperware, I see if they are okay or if they are faulty, if they close correctly, or if the colors are—

JIMI: Whatever floats your boat—but for Miguel and I, few things excite us, after being out there, in the cold, with the constant risk of freezing to death, having taken that journey—it's hard for anything to surprise us anymore in this life. Don't you miss it, Miguel?

Silence.

JIMI: Martina...so has Miguel already told you about Ornik, our friend the retard?

MARTINA: ...

MIGUEL: Ji-ji-jimi...

JIMI: You've gotta hear this...Martina.

MARTINA: Maybe I don't want to hear it.

JIMI: Oh, sure you want to.

MARTINA: Well, I don't.

JIMI laughs.

JIMI: Ornik was the retard son of Mrs. Hertz, the cook in the dormitory where we stayed. He helped us out a lot—he was very nice. When Miguel lost his hand, he had to stay in bed for a while. On one of those days, Ornik went into Miguel's room...*(laughs)* Ornik was the goalie when we played soccer, the worst goalkeeper ever, he had two left feet, incapable of coordinating the most basic movements.

JIMI laughs.

JIMI: Anyway, Ornik got into the bedroom, where Miguel was recuperating, grabbed him by the neck, actually, I don't really know how it happened but—*(HE can barely speak from laughing so hard.)* ...when I went in to see him, Ornik had his pants down and he was putting it in, Miguel had his pants down too and they were fucking...excuse the expression, huh..but...*(HE laughs even more.)* Can you imagine? He was tearing Miguel's ass to shreds. *(Laughs)* Ornik jammed it in and yanked it out over and over again and Miguel said nothing, he just stared at the wall. *(Laughs)*

MIGUEL takes out a golf club. He moves to the Astroturf.

MIGUEL: The key to a good swing is to have the shoulders, arms, hands and club rotate in a single, fluid motion, like a pendulum whose focal point is our head. We place the club on the ground, behind the ball and in line with your shot, in order to feel a certain resistance when we begin the backswing to the top of our swing and straight on to the downswing and subsequent follow through. The goal is to conquer that resistance while maintaining our energy throughout the swing.

MIGUEL takes a swing and punishes the ball. MARTINA appears behind MIGUEL, off the grass, and embraces him.

MARTINA & JIMI in the park.

JIMI: He's my friend and I worry about him. What happened to him in Alaska wasn't easy. Losing his hand was the least of it. Miguel is fragile and I'm afraid of anything hurting him again.

MARTINA: Miguel can take care of himself.

JIMI: I can't help being afraid of what might happen to him, he's my best friend. We ran away from this place together, and that's how we were able to survive. There're some things that you should know before you go thinking stupid thoughts, before you both go off and do something foolish.

MARTINA: I like foolish things.

JIMI: You have to listen to me, there're many things you have to know.

MARTINA: He'll tell me what he wants me to know when he wants me to know it. It doesn't matter to me.

JIMI: You're dying to know, I see it in your eyes. Of course you want to know.

MARTINA: Oh, really? I wouldn't bet on that.

JIMI: Surely he told you not to ask him anything.

MARTINA: I don't think it's any of your business what he tells me. This is between me and my honey, sonny, so don't even try to butt in.

JIMI: Yeah. Right. You're dying to know. You have to know the burden he carries.

MARTINA: We all carry something around with us. So what? You don't have to reveal everything that happens in life. We are made of secrets and that's fine by me.

JIMI: All women are curious, they always want to know everything.

MARTINA: I didn't know you were an expert on feminine behavior. Why don't you get your own talk show?? You could save thousands of unfortunate women.

JIMI: If you weren't curious, you wouldn't have come.

MARTINA: You told me it was something important, but now I see it wasn't.

JIMI: It's very important you find out everything. Miguel isn't a bad person, but he does stupid things sometimes. You want me to tell you?

MARTINA: ...

JIMI: If you didn't want to know you would have left by now.

JIMI smiles, looks at her. MARTINA has a moment of doubt, turns around and begins to move away from JIMI. JIMI catches up to her.

JIMI: Miguel is married. And he has a son. She could show up at any minute—a horrible woman—her breath stinks. It smells like shit.

MARTINA: Have they been seeing each other?

JIMI: She doesn't know he's back, but she's going to find out, those things are always found out, don't you think? Miguel destroyed his father's business, put him into bankruptcy and then left them with nothing. His wife found out and left Miguel because she thought he was an idiot. And she was right. Miguel was ready to kill himself.

MARTINA: Oh, my! How awful! How blind I've been! Thanks, Jimi! How nice of you to tell me all these rumors that have nothing to do with me.

JIMI: I don't want you to hurt him and I don't want him to ruin your life either. I only want you to be careful with him, so...

MARTINA: If we look at this logically, you seem more dangerous than Miguel, you look like a serial killer.

JIMI: Ha! You have no idea, Martina, no idea—how fragile he is. You should have seen him when Ornik and Jonny and Marc and José Paredes and the entire crew of the *Ludmila*...

JIMI laughs in horror.

JIMI: Even including that stupid guy who never spoke. All of them wanted to fuck him. They drooled like hyenas. And Miguel just looked at the wall, like an idiot.