

Diana R. Chambers

LOVELY WHITE LIES

(Excerpt from Script)

EXT. HONG KONG STREET—NIGHT

Julie moves aimlessly into the rush of STREET LIFE...cellphones and jackhammers, hawkers of steamed prawns, newspapers, cigarettes and joss sticks. It is heavy and steamy and pewter clouds hang low. She feels unsettled.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A crumpled newspaper skips across her feet. A hot wind is rising and people move with increased urgency. As the first drops hit her face, Julie smiles.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A FLASH...then a deep RUMBLE...Water begins pouring down, tossed by tropical winds, lashing her body, stripping leaves from the trees.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A white Bentley spatters Julie as it races past.

EXT. BLACK MIRROR-GLASS SHOPPING ARCADE—NIGHT

We see Julie's drenched image...then follow as she ducks inside...

INT. SHOPPING ARCADE—NIGHT

Julie wanders among the avid SHOPPERS, numbed by icy air and neon, raucous CHATTER, CHINESE POP...and now, a lyrical orchestral melody wafting from a music store, drawing her in. Entering, she sees...

INT. MUSIC STORE—NIGHT—JULIE'S POV

Alexei Borodin, thumbing through the bins, wearing jeans and a brown leather jacket, a stack of CDs cradled in his left arm.

ANOTHER ANGLE

She enters, moving past a skinny CHINESE PUNK...toward Alexei.

JULIE

Hi.

(as he looks up blankly)

...Julie Reilly. We met on the boat after your concert last night?

She stares...at his white teeth, full sensual lips, the dimple in his chin...and now into his midnight eyes. He holds her look, then nods, noting the wedding ring.

ALEXEI

Oh, yes, Mrs. Reilly. It was a pleasure then—and a pleasure now.

JULIE

Julie, please.

ALEXEI

Alexei. Borodin.

He gazes at her body, revealed under wet silk, softly flowing like a cello. But he sees more, her warm smile, her fresh beauty.

JULIE

That music. It sounds like an old Broadway show tune, “Stranger in Paradise.” Do you know it?

ALEXEI

I do indeed. It is from *Prince Igor*, an opera by my great-great-grandfather, Alexander Borodin. This is the scene where the slaves entertain Prince Igor, a captive of the might Khan. Romantic, isn’t it?

She realizes he is staring at her—and how she looks. She flushes, then shivers at a blast of icy air. He sets down the CDs, removes his jacket and places it over her shoulders.

JULIE

Oh, no, please, don’t. I’m fine.

As she tries to hand the jacket back, he shakes his head and moves his palm, side to side, staring into her liquid sea-blue eyes.

ALEXEI

Mamochka would be angry if I did not offer you a hot glass of tea.

JULIE

Mamochka?

ALEXEI

Russian for “mama.”

JULIE

Your mamochka should be proud. She raised a kind, as well as wonderfully talented son. Some hot tea is probably just what I need. But no I—perhaps some other time.

ALEXEI

Perhaps.

She returns the jacket. Hands brush. Jolted, Julie backs off.

ANOTHER ANGLE

She forces herself to walk away, but feels his pull. She turns.

JULIE

I enjoyed your concert—very much.

ALEXEI

Thank you. I will be in Seattle next month. If you wish to hear more.

Their eyes lock on. She nods...then moves away, feeling his gaze scalding her back.