

Still Life

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Still Life

"Each of us is a kind of crossroads where things happen. The crossroads is purely passive, something happens there. A different thing, equally valid happens elsewhere. There is no choice, it is a matter of chance." ð Levi-Strauss

"It was boring."

"How could you find it boring?"

"It just...sat there. Mooned over itself. It was talky."

"It was...great. I dunno. I think it says something to people in transition."

"Well, I'd hardly think of my life as...I don't know..."

"Static?"

"Right."

My mother, my sister, my father and I walked two blocks, and took the subway back to our hotel.

That wasn't the first time I'd seen the movie. The summer I learned how to wear cologne, I was burning my last bridge to the city of Los Angeles, one kiss at a time in a Venice Beach [apartment](#). There was an early cut of Lost In Translation playing on a gaudy television, in a gaudy entertainment center, in a gaudy black leather-smeared den, in a rundown walk-up.

You can see without seeing, obviously. I can certainly tell you the converse is true. I'd been working most of that summer as an overnigher in a chic department store catering to aging Westwood matriarchs, leaving the sales floor perfumed with my distaste for high fashion. But I remember, more than anything else from that last tango on Figueroa, Scarlett Johansson in a pink wig, singing "Brass In [Pocket](#)" to a dried-up matinee idol.

"You know, looking back, I'm beginning to realize...those characters were assholes! How did we like them?"

"Maybe they were but...I dunno. I just see something in Charlotte that's so...I am trapped here, and I don't know it."

"But Bill [Murray](#)! What a fuckin' dick!"

"I don't see that. I just...Maybe this rings to me in a way it shouldn't."

"I'm not trying to make fun of the movie, I liked the movie too, but you've got to--"

"I know. You're very even-handed, Josh, and I'm putting on extra eyeshadow."

"Fuck you, you know what I mean."

"You workin' today?"

"Shit, yeah. Call after you're out of seminar."

"Cool."

I walk home, and sure as silver, we meet at 7.

He is certainly not wrong, but he forgets completely why I, and many others, are completely in love with these two unlikely friends. Chance. The best part of Lost In Translation is not what everyone points out - the imagery, the music, the acting, the sweetness and strangeness of the narrative, but it is how the viewer finds it.

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