

"HARPIES OF FLORENCE" - MARINA DI MARZO

INT. ALASIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

We hear breathing over a black screen.

We cut to a woman's eyes. At this moment we don't know when or where we are.

We stay on her eyes, then we see her whole face, then we see her whole head outside in a courtyard as --blurry in the background-- people are putting up colorful decorations for a party.

She's got the whole world in her sights.

Suddenly and loudly a chicken flaps down onto her face, smacking our heroine and ruining the moment.

ALASIA  
Jesus Christ, my GUY!

ALASIA (late 20s compassionate, stubborn, has a flair for drama) engages the chicken in a slap fight. After a bit of struggle, she manages to get the chicken off her.

ALASIA (CONT'D)  
Yeah cluck you too bitch!

We see her dressed in fancy noblewoman clothing as peasants around her place up decor.

ALASIA (CONT'D)  
Where did that even come from?!

Cut to Middle Ages Florence and "HARPIES OF FLORENCE" title card.

INT. ALASIA'S ROOM - DAY

The NARRATOR speaks only in voiceover. He has a Shakespearian, Patrick Stewart type voice.

We go back to ALASIA as NARRATOR speaks.

NARRATOR  
Our heroine is living yet another day in the year of our lord 1350.

ALASIA walks through a grand hall filled with paintings. Screen freezes.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)  
Her name is Alasia. She's unmarried  
and often feels overlooked.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Screen unfreezes. ALASIA enters a beautiful dining room and sees ALASIA'S DAD (40s, stern but easy going).

ALASIA  
Father, I'm headed out to town.

ALASIA'S DAD  
Cool.

ALASIA  
You've got nothing to say to me?

ALASIA'S DAD  
Umm. Good job?

ALASIA  
You don't remember why we're even  
throwing a party tonight, do you?

Servants walk behind ALASIA'S DAD with a huge "HAPPY BIRTHDAY ALASIA" Banner.

ALASIA'S DAD  
No. No I do not.

Screen freezes on ALASIA'S DAD.

NARRATOR  
This is Alasia's Dad. He's quite  
distracted as he's stone broke --  
verging on pennilessness.

Screen unfreezes.

EXT. MAIN ROAD - DAY

ALASIA is now walking on the main road. Around her there's the hustle and bustle of sellers, shops & towns people.

NARRATOR  
Florence in 1350 is what some  
historians might call a "big 'ol  
loser town."

ALASIA looks at several windows of clothing stores.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)  
Previously it was known for its  
powerful banking families.

ALASIA enters a clothing store.

ALASIA  
Hey... did the pastry shop move?

STORE OWNER  
I can make you a pastry out of the  
finest silk.

NARRATOR  
Now it's overrun with wealthy cloth  
merchants.

Cut to ALASIA paying for a pastry at a shop. As she turns to  
leave, an old man next to her coughs on her pastry.

A gloved hand appears from the side of the screen to pick up  
the pastry.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)  
The Black Plague has only just  
ended...

A man in a plague doctor mask takes the pastry and throws it  
into a bonfire behind him. He tips his hat.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)  
After wiping out half the city.

Two men in plague doctor outfits appear, grab the old man and  
throw him into the bonfire as well.

Cut to ALASIA approaching the Cathedral of Santa Maria del  
Fiore. It's missing its dome.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)  
And then there's the Duomo. Or the  
lack thereof.

EXT. CATHEDRAL EXTERIOR - DAY

Alasia waves to BUILDER JOHN (40s, happy and dopey).

BUILDER JOHN  
Hey Alasia! Good to see you!

ALASIA  
Hey Builder John! Got you a fresh  
pastry as promised.

BUILDER JOHN  
Ya the best.

ALASIA  
(referring to the church)  
She's looking good!

BUILDER JOHN  
Yup!

ALASIA  
Just gotta pop on that dome.

BUILDER JOHN  
Sure. One day.

ALASIA  
One day?

BUILDER JOHN  
Yeah too bad we don't know how to  
do it.

ALASIA  
What?

Screen freezes.

NARRATOR  
Work on the dome wouldn't start for  
another 70 years.

Screen unfreezes.

BUILDER JOHN  
So we're calling it an Open Hole  
Concept.

ALASIA  
Well, when she's done she'll be the  
jewel of Italy.

BUILDER JOHN  
You bet.

ALASIA  
But what happens if it rains?

A long pause as BUILDER JOHN stares into the distance, stuck.

BUILDER JOHN  
Welp, duty calls!

BUILDER JOHN marches off. ALASIA tries to talk more but he's gone. ALASIA continues to walk down the main road.

NARRATOR

Alasia isn't alone in this world.  
She's got her three unmarried best  
friends.

We see DIVITIA in the crowd (late 20s, a ride-or-die friend, hard worker, owns her sexuality). She joins Alasia in walking.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Divitia. She's a tough cookie.

**We flash back** to DIVITIA this morning sitting next to her dad at the table. She's sewing as he reads.

DIVITIA'S DAD

You'll never find a man with  
disgusting, calloused hands like  
yours.

DIVITIA

Is that why you're stuck jerkin'  
off to the Song of Songs?

A beat. Then they fist bump.

DIVITIA (CONT'D)

Why do you suddenly care about me  
finding a man.

DIVITIA'S DAD

No reason.

NARRATOR

This is Divitia's Dad. And he's  
stone broke too.

**We flash back** to the girls walking.

DIVITIA

Have I got some hot goss for you  
Birthday girl.

ALASIA

What!?

DIVITIA

Patrizia got her eyebrows  
completely plucked out.