An Inferno

by

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Scene 7: The Concierge

Luke runs in, dragging Ashley behind him.
They have found the special Concierge of the hotel.
He is smiling, staring vacantly off into space.
He carries a service bell in his outstretched palms.
Ashley walks up to him, dings the bell.
The Concierge jumps to life.

CONCIERGE
Hello and good day!
I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you want.
No need is too small or too large for our guests.
No need is too good or too evil for our guests.
No need is too grotesque or too risqué for our guests.
I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you want.

ASHLEY
Great. Bring me Richard.

CONCIERGE
Certainly.

The Concierge strides off, genially.

LUKE
Ashley.

ASHLEY
Shut up, Luke. He said I can have whatever I want.

LUKE
But—

ASHLEY
I just want to have him back.
I just want to hold him.

The Concierge strides back in, genially, with a different Richard, who looks startled.

CONCIERGE
Voila, miss!
I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you want.

ASHLEY
That’s not Richard.
OTHER RICHARD
I’m Richard!

ASHLEY
Not my Richard.

OTHER RICHARD
Can I go?

ASHLEY
What’s the deal?
You said I could have whatever I want.

CONCIERGE
This is the only living Richard in the hotel.

LUKE
What are you talking about, the only living Richard?

CONCIERGE
We have a map of all guests at all times.
Those with pulses.
This is the only living Richard.

LUKE
Ashley, maybe he got out.

ASHLEY
Send this guy away.

CONCIERGE
(Pushing Other Richard out)
Certainly, miss.
I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you want.

LUKE
If he’s gone, Ash, maybe it’s best that he passed not knowing—

ASHLEY
Shut up.
Hey, you?

CONCIERGE
Yes, miss. I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you want.

Luke and Ashley both lunge to ding the bell.
Ashley wins.
LUKE
Ashley, please don’t do anything crazy—

ASHLEY
I want you to find a happy married couple.
The happiest married couple in the hotel.
I want you to find that married couple and bring me the husband.

LUKE
Ash—

ASHLEY
Shut up.

CONCIERGE
Certainly, miss.

*He strides out genially, returns with Other Richard again.*

OTHER RICHARD
What now?

ASHLEY
I want you to give him to the gunmen and bring me a jar of his wife’s tears.

LUKE
What??

CONCIERGE
Certainly, miss.

*He begins to drag Other Richard offstage.*

OTHER RICHARD
But—I don’t understand—

ASHLEY
There’s no understanding!
That’s how this thing works!

OTHER RICHARD
But—why me?

ASHLEY
Why not?

*The Concierge manages to get Other Richard offstage.*

*The sound of gunshots.*

*A sob.*

*The Concierge returns with a jar of tears.*
CONCIERGE
Anything else, miss?
I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever/you want.

LUKE
Ashley, that’s enough.

ASHLEY
No, it’s not. Bring me a second—

LUKE
What is your game plan here?
Kill enough Richards that you feel better?

ASHLEY
No.

CONCIERGE
Anything at all, miss.

LUKE
That’s it. I’m asking for a way/out.

*Ashley dings the bell again before he has a chance to move.*

ASHLEY
Bring me a religious person.

CONCIERGE
Certainly.
Any religion in particular?

ASHLEY
No, I don’t care.
Someone who talks to god.

CONCIERGE
Any god in particular?

ASHLEY
Any religion, any god!
I don’t give a shit.

CONCIERGE
Certainly, miss.
I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you—

LUKE
Get a move on!
The Concierge strides off, genially, reappears with a man named Phil.

CONCIERGE
This is Phil.
He was located under his bed, trembling, speaking directly to God.

PHIL
Is it over?
Is it finally over?

ASHLEY
I need you to make a deal with your god.

PHIL
What?

ASHLEY
I need you to tell him that if I find Richard,
I won’t tell him I cheated.

PHIL
Listen, I’m just a regular guy—

ASHLEY
And that if I find Richard,
I’ll think about his positive attributes.

PHIL
But—

LUKE
Can you just hear her out, please?

ASHLEY
And that if I find Richard, I’ll never cheat on him again.
I’ll find fulfillment in him.
I’ll love him and sleep with him and be happy.

LUKE
That’s not true, Ash.

ASHLEY
I’ll make it true.
I’ll make it true!
His god will help me.
Did you hear that?
You’ll tell your god?

PHIL
Uh, yeah. Totally.
ASHLEY
Thank you.

PHIL
Can I go?

CONCIERGE
Certainly, I am the concierge.
I am here for whatever you want.

*Luke lunges for the bell but Ashley beats him to it.*

CONCIERGE
Yes, miss?

*Ashley stares at him, mutely.*

LUKE
I think we should go, Ashley.

ASHLEY
I don’t know what I want.

LUKE
It’s okay.

ASHLEY
*(To the Concierge)*
Tell me what I want! Show me what I want.

CONCIERGE
Certainly, miss.

*He approaches her and hugs her.*
*She accepts the hug.*
*He then steps back, courteously.*

ASHLEY
How did you know?

CONCIERGE
I am trained to know the needs of our guests.
No need is too small or too large for our guests.
No need is too good or too—

ASHLEY
So how did you know?

CONCIERGE
You are in the fourth of five stages of grief.
You are experiencing depression.
In our training, depressed guests require hugs, then warm baths, then childhood cartoons, then medication, then medical intervention.

ASHLEY
I’m in the fourth of—

CONCIERGE
Five stages of grief.
Is there anything else you need, miss?

LUKE
Ashley, calm down.

ASHLEY
Who does this punk think he is?
Five stages.

LUKE
It’s a commonly known thing.
Now I’m just going to ask him/ how to get out.

Ashley dings the bell.

ASHLEY
Who came up with this system, huh?
Five stages of grief?
Tell me who it was.

CONCIERGE
Certainly, miss.
Psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross.

ASHLEY
Bring her to me.

CONCIERGE
She’s dead, miss.
I could look up where she was cremated—

ASHLEY
Bring me someone who looks like her.

CONCIERGE
The closest thing I have is a man.

ASHLEY
Bring him to me.

The Concierge leaves, genially, and returns with Phil.
PHIL
You again?

ASHLEY
Come here.

She knees him in the genitals.
He falls to the floor.

ASHLEY
Five stages of grief?
I’ll show you five stages of grief.

She kicks him in the ribs.

ASHLEY
How dare you?
How dare you?

She sits on him and punches him.

ASHLEY
(To the Concierge, still punching Phil)
What’s the fifth stage, huh?

CONCIERGE
Acceptance, miss.

Ashley stops punching Phil.

ASHLEY
Did you hear that, Luke?
Did you hear what he said?

Luke dings the bell.

LUKE
What’s the fastest way out of here?

ASHLEY
He said the fifth stage is acceptance!

CONCIERGE
Down the hall, down the stairs, through the kitchen.

ASHLEY
I haven’t accepted, so he must not be dead!
Luke, we have to find him!

Ashley sprints out of the room.
Luke follows.