

# Alisa Rupenyan: Two days in the life of Alisa

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## List of actors

Narrator:

Alisa: Sandrine

Tjaart, Toh, Andy, Rienk, Elisabet, Miroslav, Bart, Thomas, Radi

Manolis

Marloes

John

**Narrator:** Alisa arrives at the very highly reputed Vrije Universiteit, the VU where she is kindly invited after a sever selection for an interview with THE very well known Rienk van Grondelle, big boss of the most famous scientific Biophysics group

**Alisa:** *Hello, my grandmother sent me here. She is looking for some "Arabidopsis/Phytocrome....." special species and said you may have some!*

**Rienk:** *Yes, little girl....*

**Alisa:** *wow, Mister Grandelle, Hee-hee-hee-hee, what a big nose you have!*

**Rienk:** *Yes, little girl, I have here a great set of art machines in that dark room: this is real art – the best of the best of modern art! We call it state of the art!*

**Alisa:** *Cool! I'm crazy about art! And art coupled with science was always my dream.*

**Rienk:** *I just knew you will be perfect for this job! Now let me introduce you to the big girl of our group: Marloes GROOT*

Marloes passes by

**Rienk:** *Marloes, Marloes, don't know if I told you, but here's your latest PhD*

**Marloes:** *Yes it's me Doctor, future Professor Groot! We, well YOU, are going to work very HARD and produce many, very good Nature papers, and soon I can have a full Professorship!*

**Alisa:** *wow, you look so much like the queen Beatrix, doctor, future professor Groot!*

### **Scene: hiking in mountain**

**Toh:** *Alisa, we're going for a hike at Matterhorn and we need one more person to fill the empty space in the car. Fancy joining us?*

**Alisa:** *Wow. But I don't know how to hike. You know, there's many mountains in Bulgaria, but I like the flatter parts, you know. If it's not for the fine weather or food, there should be a good reason to come to Holland.*

**Toh:** *Oh, that's no problem. We have all the tents and cooking stuff. You only need hiking shoes and a warm sleeping bag and a backpack and some thermal clothes for the cold weather high up and a warm waterproof jacket and...*

**Alisa:** *That sounds nice! I'm going to join you guys. Danielis will surely help me to find all the stuff*

**Toh:** *We will go next week. You have enough time to find all the stuff. But one thing you should not forget is to prepare your mind: you must respect the mountain!*

**Narrator:** And so the hiking crew is starting the long journey to Switzerland. Danielis and Manolis take turns to drive and Tjaart joined them on the Swiss border.

**Alisa:** *Wow guys! Look at these mountains! Open the window. I want a picture. Wow! Look at the big lake! It's a pity I did not bring an extra memory card...*

**Manolis:** *Well guys. Here we are and we'll plant our tent just here for the night.*

**Narrator:** Next day the long hike starts... straight up the steep slope.

**Toh:** *If we can keep on this speed, we can reach the summit of Matterhorn in two days.*

**Tjaart:** *I think we should hold on a bit for Alisa. You know, it's the first time she's hiking.*

**Narrator:** Danielis and Manolis have already started to offload some of Alisa's luggage.

**Alisa:** *Cool! Now I'm free to look at the nice flowers! Wow! I just love these flowers. They're the same my grandmother grows in her garden! It will be just perfect for the new recipes I'm trying out in my new apartment, and maybe Marloes allows me to look at the IR signal!*

**Toh:** *Alisa, where are you going to? Matterhorn is in this direction.*

**Alisa:** *Wow no. I saw a small group of people going there half an hour ago.*

Toh: This path goes down to the restaurant. Silly all these restaurants in the Alps!

Alisa: Exactly. A coffee is exactly what I need now...

Toh: NO, no, don't stop now!!!! We are in our best moment, let's keep on going, I feel like we just started!!!!

Alisa: No! No! I am exhausted! My bag is heavy.

Toh: no problem, only solutions: give me your share of food! And then we'll reach the summit in no time!

Alisa: *alright but can I keep the coffee and chocolate, PLEASE!*

### **Scene: Alisa's relationship with coffee**

Narrator: Two days in the life of Alisa. It's all just a question of 1,3,7-trimethyl-1*H*-purine- 2,6(3*H*,7*H*)-dione.

Elisabet: What is that?

Miroslav: You don't know? It's the chemical formula for caffeine.

### **Narrator: Day one:**

It's 9:43. Alisa arrives at the VU and walks down the corridor past the offices looking for a victim. She finds Toh and Andy.

Alisa: *Hey, wanna join for a coffee?*

Toh&Andy: *sure.*

Alisa: *Hey what a wonderful day, I really like analyzing these beautiful amazing positive and negative IR bands. All these questions rising to my mind! I can not stop running all day long Ivo's astonishing and very intuitive program.*

Toh: *well ok...*

Cut

Narrator: Lunch: The brave scientists of the biophysics group are sitting in the coffee room, eating various dishes.

Bart: *Hey, have you read the latest issue of Nature? There was an interesting paper about caffeine addiction and especially the withdrawal symptoms...*

**Miroslav:** *Yes I did, and of course this is very logical if you think of the C,O double binding at the long end of...*

**Thomas (next to the espresso machine, operating it):** *Hey, who the ....! Who has mishandled and almost exploded my espresso machine! This is so bad. What the hell people are doing with the handle. The seal is going to break....*

**Alisa:** *Meeee, I want to have a cup with no milk but sugar...  
Wow people! I have great news: I'm out of the Hospitium! WE have to celebrate!  
No more planes in the night! Hee-hee-hee!  
I just have a problem: I need help to move my few personal belongings.*

**Toh:** *I could help you with my Rickshaw-bike!*

**Alisa:** Oh, no, Toh! I have too many things!

**Toh:** are you sure?...

**Jos:** I could borrow you a kart...

**Alisa:** Great!

**Narrator:** 15:01 Alisa in her office, working on many intriguing and strange spectra.

**Alisa:** *hey Toh, what do you think about having a coffee in the main building? It's so bad I'm taking care of our coffee supply for so long now and today it's the first time that I forget to bring it to work! I'm afraid that all those exciting data and loads of nice figures I prepared for Marloes are getting my head out of important life matters! I already forgot to eat today!*

**Toh:** *Oh Alisa, you need a coffee! Let's get your nice huge VU cup and go to the main building .*

**Narrator:** 17:45. Radi is at home, laptop on his knees, looking very concentrated. Alisa enters the scene, she just returned from walking the dog.

**Alisa jumping everywhere:** *Hey, how was your day schatje?... mine was beautifuuuuul... I just walked the dog... what about a cup of coffee?*

**Radi:** *Are you sure darling....*

**Narrator:** Day two.

8:42. The sound of an alarm clock sounds, Radi enters the bedroom, Alisa still laying in the bed.

**Radi:** *Good morning honey, here is your macbook, already booted and logged in to googlemail, googleapps and googlemaps. I'm afraid, but due to a virus, we haven't automatically ordered new coffee. But you can have a cup of tea if you like.*

**Alisa:** *Ahh stupid virus, well whatever, I will have my coffee at the VU...*

Narrator: 9:43.

Alisa arrives at the VU and walks down the corridor past the offices looking for a victim. She finds Toh and Andy.

**Alisa:** *Hey, wanna join for a coffee?*

**Andy (holding a cup):** *Hey, how is the beast doing?*

**Alisa:** *I couldn't get a coffee this morning yet! I need one, now! I'm doing fine!*

**Toh:** *No, I think he means your dog...*

*By the way as far as I know Thomas has just started to decalcify the coffee machine...*

**Alisa yelling:** *what...are you kidding me? What are you're drinking Andy then? Tea! No way! You should get some caffeine my friend instead of shaking your computer mouse! Anyway you look a bit slow going today! Leave your computer and come with me to the cantina. We'll get a coffee there.*

**Narrator:** But when Alisa arrives at the very canteen, misfortune seems to be on her side.

**Alisa yelling even louder:** *What, closed due to a mouse plague for indefinite time. Ok, think Alisa...think... ah vending machines...*

**Andy:** *And I came so far for that!*

**Narrator:** So she goes back to the biophysics floor, equipped with a pin pass and she will to buy a coffee from the vending machine, where she encounters John

**John:** *Oh hi Alisa, I just saw your paper laying on Marloes table.. well you know as you have used my setup for one measurement, you should really put my name on there as well... and by the way, I inspected the vending machine, it's out of coffee, only hot water and soup left... have a nice day*

**Alisa (she's about to cry):** *What! Mum tell me this is not true! – she is checking the machine and trying to get coffee*

**Narrator:**

Lunch: The brave scientists of the biophysics group are sitting in the coffee room (as usual), eating various dishes, as usual.

**Bart:** *Hey, about that paper we talked about yesterday*

**Miroslav:** *Yes, very nice work...I totally agree.*

**Alisa:** *Nooooo that's all wrong....and not true... see I just like coffee.... I'm not addicted at all.*

**Narrator:** 2 min later.

**Alisa:** *Jos, by any chance...have you brought some instant cappuccino today..?*

**Jos:** *I'm so sorry Alisa! I just used the last bag...*

**Alisa:** *Noooooooo! ...and you drank it all!  
Wow! Big news my fellows! I'm moving to a great place!  
No more little stairs! No more little kitchen! No more little room!  
I have just a little problem: I need some help to move my stuff!*

**Alessandro:** *I have a little Fiat if you want. Everything should fit in it! That's what my family use all the time*

**Alisa (doubting):** *a Fiat!  
Andy! I heard you have a great big German car! Cool!*

**Andy:** *Yep, the German quality car will be far much better! Those Italian cars are not to be trusted. I can help you if you want me to...*

**Alisa:** *Hee-hee-hee-hee. Great! You save my life!*

**Narrator:** 15:00  
Alisa is "sitting" in her office, working on Ivo Plots...

**Alisa:** *hey Toh, wanna go to the main building for a cup? This program is running too slow!*

**Toh:** *No sorry I have to read this test about digital cameras and how to attach them to my bike..*

**Narrator:**15:01

**Alisa:** *arrgghhh I'm getting crazy with this plot stuff, I just go home now...*

Narrator: at home:

**Alisa:** *OH Nooooo! – crying*

*Bad dog! You ate again the coffee beans!  
I'll better go to StarBucks.*

**Scene: Princess Alisa on her spiritual journey to India.**

**Narrator:** One day, Princess Alisa woke up to find herself pondering the relevance of life again. You all know by now that this woman is a philosopher, an art house movie critic and on top of that a well-informed reader of heavy lecture, but to even widen her horizons a little further she decides to embark on a spiritual journey to the motherland of spirit, India!

Luckily, at exactly the right time, a conference on photo and radiation chemistry was going to be held as if her wishes had directly been heard by the great Shiva himself. So off she goes to Cochin, in the province of Kerala, southern India.

**Alisa:** *Oh my god, I have always wanted to travel to this deeply profound and highly cultural continent and now I can actually do it.... Practically for free!*

**Narrator:** The next morning, after harsh travel on a plane, no foot-massages and not even smoked almonds on the plane, she arrives at her palace: The Windsor Castle!

She opens the windows and looks out over her own jungle, standing on her own 5-star balcony and thinking about her Imperial possibilities for today.

**Thomas:** *Hi Alisa, had a good night?*

**Alisa:** *Yeah, I had my own three person bed, a separate toilet for visitors, and a balcony that overlooks complete India!*

**Thomas:** *Hmm, I had to share everything with a guy from Sri Lanka, even the bed! You arranged that well.*

**Alisa:** *Yeah, well, you know what they say... If you are worth it... you will get it...*

**Thomas:** *So what is the plan for today, we have the afternoon off, you know.*

**Alisa:** *I know! I am going to get a very special facial massage. It's ayurvedic medicine! I have heard from it, and it is supposed to be really healthy and it works perfectly with my karma and the astrological signs are good now too!*

**Thomas:** *A facial massage? Well, that's really, really spiritual.... Uhuh..*

**Alisa:** *I know! And even better, I only have to walk 3 minutes... since it is in the back garden of the Palace.*

**Narrator:** Alisa, after having spent a lovely morning conversing with other high-class scientist, is, after dressing up and down three times, completely ready to face the challenge and undergo the spiritual sensation.

**Thomas:** *And how was it?*

**Alisa:** *Well, the spiritual lady rubbed a thick greenish cream onto my face, and rubbed so damn hard that my complete skull is burning with a strange sensation...*

**Narrator:** That night, Alisa is not to be found... Thomas even gets a little nervous, what could have happened? Did she perhaps ascend to the heavens already? Did the ayurvedics maybe give her a revelation?

Only the next day, after several knocks on her majestic entrance, a very thin voice responds...

**Alisa:** *Who is there?*

**Thomas:** *It is just me...*

**Alisa:** *No one other than you?*

**Thomas:** *No no... .there is nobody there, why?*

**Narrator:** The princess finally comes out of hiding only to portray her face, still swollen up to a red balloon...

So much for Spiritual medicine ☺

**Narrator:** A few weeks later, when Princess Alisa arrives at a border town to enter the holy country Nepal, all road traffic appears to be halted by MAO terrorists.

**Alisa:** *Well, that's nice. I come all the way to be able to see Buddha's birth place, and now we can't go anywhere. It is only 50 km away!*

**Thomas:** *Yeah, it sucks... ah well... there is plenty to do around here. I will just sit here and enjoy a free day.*

**Alisa:** *No way! I have wishes... I want to go to the big tree... Buddha is born there, you know that don't you?*

**Thomas:** *But there are only Rikshas, driven by old men... and I think it is a three hour ride there. By bike... that's what they tell me here.*

**Alisa:** *Ah.. well, don't these old men have to make money?*

**Thomas:** *Didn't you see them, they have only half the bodyweight as us, and its hot today!*

**Alisa:** *Well, I do not care about that... I will go, I am here now.*

**Narrator:** About 7 hours later... a slightly upset Alisa returns...

**Alisa:** *This damn little driver didn't bike fast enough, because of all these stupid roads going uphill! Even I offered him all he could ever get in all his life, he gave up before getting there! I even had to bike back by myself!*

**Narrator:** Indeed, Nepal has been known to have some hills...

Pictures of the moon during adventure in the Highlands

**Scene: end of thesis**

**Alisa:** wow, today is my last experiment! Finally! After so many hours fighting with this set up!

**Narrator:** After hours spent in the lab and after a look to the data, she is back to the lab.

End: all sing the song of Queen