

BEGINNERS

Written by
Mike Mills

INT. HAL FIELDS HOME.

A single daisy stands in a vase in an empty kitchen.

INT. HAL'S BEDROOM

OLIVER FIELDS clicks on the light to the closet. He looks at the rack of his parents' clothes.

He begins to put some in a box marked "home", some in a box marked "thrift".

INT. HAL'S BATHROOM

Oliver enters the bathroom and flushes bottle after bottle of pills and liquids down the toilet. Next he struggles as he looks over the old toothbrush, hairbrush, all the bottles and tubes besides the sink. He stares for a beat, then throws them all away.

INT/EXT. HAL'S TRASH AREA

Oliver hauls trash outside, adding it to a very large pile of bags. An older Jack Russell Terrier, ARTHUR, follows him.

INT. HAL'S OFFICE

Oliver and Arthur sit on the office floor surrounded by papers, boxes, books and trash bags. He finds a photo of HAL FIELDS in an open Jean jacket, no shirt, it's attached to a personal ad application which he begins to read.

CUT TO PAST

EXT. LARGE EMPTY PARKING LOT NIGHT

In the dark, OLIVER FIELDS has a tape recorder and microphone, he follows ANDY as he excitedly prepares, a group of friends looks on.

ANDY

Okay. Is it on? (recorder)

OLIVER

Yeah yeah.

ANDY

This is for our friend Hal Fields.
Hal. We love you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Andy quickly lights a rack of large fireworks, they shoot up into the night and explode - smoke - more explosions - everyone's laughing. Oliver looks up at the fireworks, recording the sounds, happy.

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM.

CUT TO PRESENT

EXT. HAL'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Oliver has packed his car, he leans down to Arthur.

OLIVER
You're coming to live with me now.

Arthur looks at him.

OLIVER
This is my car.

Arthur hops in.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Oliver's car drives down Sunset boulevard.

INT. OLIVER'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

Oliver and Arthur enter, he's carrying a box, his house is dark and lonely.

INT. HAL'S DINNING ROOM

Oliver enters his dining room, Arthur in tow.

OLIVER
This is the dining room where
people come and eat sometimes.

The dog listens intently. Oliver moves on, the dog follows.

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM

Oliver and Arthur enter the living room.

OLIVER
This is the living room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver looks around, the dog looks with him.

INT. OLIVER'S BATHROOM

We see the door open revealing Oliver and Arthur continuing their tour.

OLIVER
That's the bathroom.

The dog looks.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Arthur lays next to Oliver in bed. Unable to sleep, Oliver looks to the ceiling.

CUT TO NARRATED SEQUENCE

STILL BLACK AND WHITE AND COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SUN, THE STARS, YOSEMITE, GEORGE W. BUSH FLASH BY:

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is 2003. This is what the sun looks like, and the stars, nature. This is the President.

NOW PHOTOS OF THE SUN, STARS, NATURE, ETC. FROM 1955 FLASH BY:

OLIVER V.O.
And this is the sun in 1955, and the stars, and nature, and cars, and phones, and movies, and the President. These are what pets looked like. These are fireworks. This was smoking.

PHOTOGRAPHS, CROPPED IN ON FACES FROM 1955, VERY FAST SEQUENCE OF PEOPLE KISSING:

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This is what it looked like when people kissed...

FAST SEQUENCE OF FACES FORM 1955 LAUGHING:

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...When they were happy...

SEQUENCE OF FACES CRYING:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...When they were sad.

FAST SEQUENCE OF MARRIAGE PHOTOS FROM 1955:

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
My parents got married in 1955.

SHOT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM, SHOT OF AN OLD HOUSE:

OLIVER
He was a museum director - she
fixed up old houses.

1955 STILL PHOTO OF A BABY BEING BORN:

OLIVER
They had a child, and they stayed
married for 44 years...

A SEQUENCE OF STILL SHOTS OF FRENCH TOAST IN DIFFERENT STAGES
OF BEING EATEN, THEN STILL SHOTS OF STRAWS THAT JUMP CUT INTO
CIGARETTES, THEN LIVE ACTION CLIP FROM THE TELETUBBIES, AND
THEN RAPID FIRE THROUGH STILL SHOTS OF EVERY PRESIDENT FROM
1924 TO 2003 AND BACK.

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...Until she died in their bed,
after four months of cancer and
eating French toast for every meal
and watching the Teletubbies
everyday and confusing white straws
for her cigarettes and skipping
back and forth through time inside
her head.

INT. HAL'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Hal fields sits on a couch, in a purple sweater, looking into
camera, struggling for words.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Six months later, my father told me
he was gay. He had just turned 75.

HAL
I'm gay.

Same camera angle, Hal still looking into camera we jump cut
to him wearing a robe.

OLIVER V.O. (CONT'D)
I always remember him wearing a
purple sweater when he told me this
but actually he wore a robe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL

I'm gay.

Same angle, we continue to jump cut through Hal talking to camera, each cut in different clothes, and with each cut his line has a different inflection.

HAL (CONT'D)

I'm gay.

Jump cut, new outfit.

HAL (CONT'D)

I loved your mother, but, uh... now
I want to explore this side.

Jump cut, new outfit.

HAL (CONT'D)

I don't want to be just
theoretically gay, I want to do
something about it.

New outfit and inflection.

HAL (CONT'D)

...I want to do something about
it...

New outfit and inflection.

HAL (CONT'D)

...I want to do something about it.

INT/EXT. VARIOUS - DAY

A live action "portrait" of Hal, looking into camera, first in old clothes, then jump cut to new all black outfit.

OLIVER (V.O.)

He changed all his clothes.

EXT. PARK - DAY

The camera moves through a large group of men and streamers gathered for Los Angeles Pride event.

OLIVER V.O. (CONT'D)

He got a boyfriend, Andy, a
physical trainer who was also
studying for his professional
pyrotechnic license.

Camera lands on Hal beaming with pride, his arm around Andy who looks into camera and says.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDY

Since I came out to my father, he never speaks to me. That's why I've been always attracted to older men.

Hal and friends laugh warmly at Andy. We cut to live action "portraits" of a priest, a therapist, the Primetimers, his movie-night club, and the large L.A. Pride group, all looking into camera.

OLIVER V.O.

He found an out gay priest to guide him spiritually. He saw a therapist for the first time. He joined the Primetimers. Movie night. Los Angeles Pride, and then...

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM

We see Hal's living room, empty of furniture in the morning light.

OLIVER V.O.

Four years after he came out, he died in this room...

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Oliver enters, followed closely by Arthur. Oliver walks through the kitchen - Arthur follows him. Oliver walks through the living room - Arthur follows. Oliver makes a circle through the house - Arthur follows.

Oliver sits, looking down at Arthur.

OLIVER

Look, its lonely out here, so you'd better learn how to talk with me.

Arthur's face looks up at him filled with a dog's love and no words.

ARTHUR SUBTITLE

While I understand up to 150 words - I don't talk.

Oliver leans down, pushing his head into Arthur's.

OLIVER

I know. I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO PAST

A SERIES OF QUICK MEMORIES...

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Camera follow's Oliver down a long corridor.

INT. ICU ROOM - NIGHT

Oliver sits as HAL lays in a coma on a ventilator. The room is dark, Oliver uses a flashlight to quietly read to his father.

INT. ICU ROOM - DAY

QUICK CUTS. A nurse opens the shades. A DOCTOR and two nurses stand over Hal, everyone's nervous. Hal is struggling with all the tubes down his throat. Oliver is trying to help him breathe, talking into his ear.

Oliver is ushered out of the room. The nurse draws the curtain.

MOMENTS LATER: Oliver sits with Hal, now off the ventilator but still very weak and disoriented. Oliver coaches his breathing.

OLIVER
Calm. Calm, calm breaths.

Hal coughs.

INT. ICU ROOM

It's the middle of the night, Hal is connected to many I.V.s in both arms, still disoriented, he's tangled up in the tubes, trying to pull them out of his arms. He wakes up Oliver.

HAL
Oliver! Please help me with all these ropes.

Oliver rushes and helps him.

OLIVER
Pop, Pop, stop -- you're gonna hurt yourself.

A NURSE quickly enters and helps hold down his arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NURSE

Mr. Fields, we're going to have to
secure your arms again.

She puts his hands in restraints, Oliver helps.

HAL

You two married?

OLIVER

No, Pop.

HAL

Why not? She's great.

The nurse smiles, embarrassed, and continues with her job.

OLIVER

She's a great nurse in the
hospital, we don't really know her,
you're very high on drugs.

HAL

You always have some very good
reason, haven't you?

OLIVER

No, Pop, I just don't want to be
like you and mom.
(aside to the nurse)
Thank you...

CUT TO PAST

INT. OLIVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME 1978

IN THE KITCHEN: We see 10-year-old Oliver watching his mother
GEORGIA and father kiss quickly, politely, and then his
father leaves quickly. Hal remains in silhouette through the
shot.

DIFFERENT DAY, IN OLIVER'S BEDROOM: Oliver watches Hal and
Georgia kiss, and Hal leave - more like a performance than
anything real.

DIFFERENT DAY, IN PARENT'S BEDROOM: Oliver watches Hal and
Georgia kiss and Hal exit, quick and dry.

10-year-old Oliver studies them each time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIFFERENT DAY, OLIVER'S BEDROOM: Georgia quickly opens the door and finds Oliver drawing.

GEORGIA

Oliver!

He turns and Georgia shoots him with her finger, Oliver falls to the ground.

GEORGIA

Olly, you can do better.

He gets up and she shoots him again - He falls more dramatically, knocking his head on the floor.

GEORGIA

That's good.

His mom looks at him affectionately.

CUT TO PRESENT

EXT. ECHO PARK STREET - NIGHT

Oliver walks Arthur across a lit field, towards the dog park.

EXT. DOG PARK - NIGHT

Everywhere dogs and their people are playing. Oliver and Arthur sit on a bench like two humans. Oliver watches the action, Arthur stares at Oliver.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Go have your own experiences with your own people. I'll be right here...

Arthur stays by Oliver's side.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I'm a human. I'm not a dog. And you're a Jack Russell, that's a breed. Your personality was created by this guy John Russell, a hunting enthusiast, in the 1800s. And he bred your ancestors to have stamina and courage for the hunt. You think you're just you, and you want to chase the foxes, but other people planted that in you years ago.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Now, somewhat arbitrarily, you are considered very cute by us humans, and we keep breeding you not to chase foxes, but to be cute, and we put you in movies and television shows, and you, you're chasing tennis balls cause there as close to a fox as you're going to get.

Arthur stays by Oliver's side.

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE

CU on Oliver's hands as he draws a T-shirt that reads:

"My personality was created by someone else and all I got was this stupid T-shirt."

Reveal that Oliver is in a design office. LIZ, 30's enters, they IMPROV hellos.

JUMP CUT thru a series of Oliver's drawings. A speech bubble that reads: "A fair amount of failures." He draws portraits of girls with dates: "Ellen O. 1984-1988" -- "Julie P. 1988-1989" -- "Liz B. 1993 - 1995" -- "Lynette I. 1995" -- "Amanda Y. 1996-2000" -- "Yuki H. 2000" -- "Christina S. 2001" -- "Michelle M. 2001-2003"

Oliver stops drawing, lost in his thoughts...

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

In the dark I.C.U. room, Hal is still attached to many I.V.s, Oliver is helping Hal look at a book of Japanese rock gardens with a flashlight.

OLIVER

Want me to read this? I found it in your books.

HAL

Yeah, alright. Give me the flashlight.

Oliver opens it, they look at a few pages together, photos of serene gardens.

OLIVER

Nice.

HAL

Oh, that's nice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hal keeps peeking at a bouquet of flowers in the corner of the room. Hal takes the flashlight from Oliver and guides it to the flowers.

OLIVER

Oh, Andy brought those for you.

HAL

Oh, yeah?

Hal continues to direct the light across the room, we follow the circle of light as it moves across a wall landing on a painting.

HAL

Oh, who did that painting?

OLIVER

Well, I don't know. Its just a painting on the wall.

Hal continues exploring, Oliver's enjoying his father's curiosity, he lands on some photos displayed on the table.

HAL

A--, and these?

OLIVER

They're just photos, Pop.

HAL

But how do they relate to the exhibit?

OLIVER

They're just personal photos. They're not art.

Hal slowly moves the flashlight up the wall, across the ceiling to a strange assortment of fire detectors, sprinklers, sensors, all laid out against the acoustic tile ceiling. Hal points up. Oliver looks for a beat, then...

OLIVER

Uh, well that's the water sprinkler thing.

HAL

Well, its beautiful.

OLIVER

What is?

HAL

Putting the Japanese gardens there. It's just beautiful.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver looks from the ceiling to the rock garden book. The ceiling and the gardens look the same. Oliver is moved by Hal's confusion. ANDY, 45-years-old, physical, boyish, storms into the room.

ANDY

Hal.

HAL

Andy!

Andy gets on the bed opposite Oliver. He gives Hal a big kiss on the lips. Hal glows. Oliver backs away slowly. Andy picks up Hal's hand, turns it palm up and presses his face into it.

ANDY

I brought something for you.

Oliver watches from outside the room as Andy excitedly pulls a portable tape player out of his bag.

ANDY

We made a recording for you.

HAL

Oh, God.

Andy pushes play, on the recording we hear Andy's voice:

ANDY ON TAPE

This is for our friend Hal Fields.
Hal. We love you.

We hear voices HOOTING, and then large FIREWORKS, LAUGHTER and CLAPPING.

Oliver watches his father's happiness from a distance.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE

CU on Oliver's hands drawing bright streaming colors of the fireworks.

LATER: Oliver get's to his real work, pulling out a few 8X10 photos of a band "The Sads". There are some instructions on record company letterhead - he is to do an album design for their new record - they want him to draw portraits of the three members.

Oliver begins to do quick portraits of them based on the photo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Jesus, Liz. Another band that
wants portraits.

LIZ
Well, at least it pays the rent.

OLIVER
You do something decent once, and
that's all people ever want.

JUMP CUT through the different portraits developing. It's not
what Oliver want's to do.

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - LATER

Elliott and Shauna let themselves in. Elliot grabs a stool
and sits down.

ELLIOTT
Hi Liz.

Oliver continues to draw, as Shauna and Elliott try to get
his attention.

ELLIOTT
Oliver?

OLIVER
Yeah?

ELLIOTT
The pen is not your friend. The
paper is not your friend. The
party is your friend. We're your
friends. Your friends are your
friends.

INT. OLIVER'S LIVING ROOM

Elliot is now dressed as a cop and Shauna as a large chicken,
they are dancing with no music as Oliver sits on a couch
depressed dressed as Sigmund Freud, complete with wig-beard-
glasses-pipe.

SHAUNA
I got the skills... he's got the
moves...

ELLIOTT
I got the moves... you've got the
skills...

INT. OLIVER'S FRONT DOOR

Oliver, Elliott, and Shauna are leaving. Arthur can't believe he's being left behind. It's actually the first time they will separate.

OLIVER
Arthur, you haven't been invited to this party. You're gonna stay and look after the house.

Oliver tentatively shuts the door, takes three steps, Arthur begins to howl. Oliver tries to ignore it, but stops again.

He looks back at the house and the howling.

CUT TO:

INT. OLIVER'S CAR - DRIVING

Arthur, victorious, sits in Elliot's lap in the front seat, while Oliver drives and Shauna is squeezed in back in her chicken outfit.

ELLIOTT
You remember when Oliver was funny? And he could actually, like, talk, in complete sentences?

SHAUNA
Funny? Funny? I don't think so Fun maybe, but not funny unless, like, serious is funny. Then he's' fucking hilarious.

Elliott and Oliver laugh.

SHAUNA
But, lovable. You are very lovable.

ELLIOTT
Yeah, very lovable.

INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Oliver carries Arthur, they all enter a costume party, making their way through the crowd of people in all kinds of disguises, music blaring, Oliver slides into the less populated kitchen. A woman rushes up to Oliver, surprised to see he has a dog.

FEMALE PARTIER
So cute, does he do tricks?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER

His name's Arthur - he doesn't do tricks.

In the background are a couple dressed as JULIAN and ETHEL ROSENBERG, we see them observe Oliver and Arthur.

PARTIER

No? Arthur, SIT!

Arthur promptly sits down. Oliver's totally surprised.

PARTIER

He's so cute. Shake!

Arthur sticks out his paw. Oliver doesn't like seeing Arthur blindly perform.

PARTIER

Oh my god, he's so cute, I want him.

OLIVER

(in Freud accent)

Does it make you feel powerful to order my dog around? Maybe give you a sense of power?

PARTIER

Oh, you're being a therapist! Freud!

OLIVER

Thanks, yeah. Very good.

Oliver picks up Arthur and escapes the kitchen. The Rosenberg's are still watching.

LATER...

Oliver and Arthur sit in a chair next to a couch where a man dressed as a witch, complete with green face and long black hair, is lying back as if in a traditional analysis session.

LONG-HAIRED MAN

Well, I didn't ask for this. Who would ask for this? This color. This nose. This cheek, this chin. You know, this is my life. This isn't a story. This isn't a joke...

Oliver is playing along, but he's really not emotionally ready for this party. He feels very far away.

OLIVER

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LONG-HAIRED MAN

I'm so glad you came, Doc. Just really good to get this stuff off my chest.

OLIVER

(in Freud accent)

I'm sorry. Our time is up, uh... for this week. Thank you for coming in.

The witch moves on.

Oliver sits with Arthur in his lap, alone, lost in all this joviality.

We see that the woman dressed as Julius Rosenberg is watching him.

Just as Oliver is about to get up, she plops herself down onto the couch, ready for her session.

OLIVER V.O.

Oh, I was just- I was gonna take a break, actually.

She pulls out a writing pad, oblivious. Oliver can tell she's not going to give it up.

OLIVER

(back in accent)

Well, I guess we should start with your mother.

The woman writes on her notepad and shows it to Oliver:
"Never had one."

OLIVER

Well then your father.

She mimes shooting herself in the head and dying.

OLIVER

I don't understand. You can't talk? Is it a mental problem? Do you need analysis?

She writes on her pad: "I have laryngitis"

OLIVER

That's a physical problem.

She smiles at him, looks at him a little too long, Oliver is more and more pulled in by her playfulness - she writes:
"Why are you at a party if you're sad?"

CU on Oliver, surprised and impressed by her observation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER

I was doing such a good job of
hiding it. How could you tell?

Ethel holds up her notebook. She has drawn TWO EYES.
Oliver's taken by her.

OLIVER

Clearly, I'm gonna need a drink.
You?

She smiles and nods.

OLIVER

You, stay here, yeah?

Oliver moves to--

INT KITCHEN

Elliot and Shauna are deeply engaged in conversation with
someone dressed as a pickle and someone dressed as much less
colorful chicken.

ELLIOTT

No, its just not a natural color
for a chicken.

SHAUNA

No.

ELLIOTT

(motioning to Shauna's
costume)

And look, you see what happens when
you free yourself from the cage,
walk away from the factory.

SHAUNA

You just have no real color.
You're like--

Oliver slips past, hands Arthur to Elliot. He scoops ice
from the bucket and starts filling two cups.

ELLIOTT

Hey, hey.

SHAUNA

(counting cups)
Uh-oh, one. Uh-oh, two.

ELLIOTT

Two drinks.

SHAUNA

What does that me--, one, two.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOTT
Well that's two, two people.

SHAUNA
Two people. A girl and a guy?

ELLIOTT
Hopefully.

SHAUNA
Yeah, wow, making moves.

Oliver leaves Arthur in Elliott's arms.

OLIVER
Watch him OK?

Oliver begins to leave his drinks. We see his POV of the woman dressed as Julius Rosenberg waiting on the couch. Oliver slips into one of his memories...

CUT TO PAST

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM/INT. HAL'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

INTERCUT: The phone RINGS, wakes up Oliver, he turns on the light, answers the phone. PRE-CANCER Hal talks excitedly.

OLIVER
Hello?

HAL
Oliver?

OLIVER
Yeah.

HAL
I'm not sorry I woke you!
I went to Akbar tonight.

OLIVER
You did?

INT. AKBAR - NIGHT

Hal and his friends, BRIAN and ROBERT, make their way through a crowded gay club. Hal is by far the oldest, and most excited, man there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL (V.O.)
They had wonderfully loud music. In-
sit, in-sit, in-sit. What kind of
music is that?

OLIVER (V.O.)
Probably house music?

INT. HAL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hal gets a pad and pen to write this down.

HAL
"House music."

INT. AKBAR - NIGHT

A bunch of Young Gay guys dance. Hal is on the side, dancing
by himself, hands in the air twinkling his fingers.

OLIVER (V.O.)
So did you meet anyone?

At the packed bar, Hal drinks alone.

HAL (V.O.)
Young gay men don't go for older
gay men.

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE CONTINUOUS

Back to Oliver in bed, on the phone.

HAL (V.O.)
You have it easy.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Oliver snaps out of his memory. He makes his way through the
crowd and delivers the drink to her. He looks at her a little
too intensely, then blurts out.

OLIVER
Would you like to dance?

She happily nods yes. They walk to the dance floor, we think
Oliver's going to be shy, but he breaks into a kinetic,
angular, dance. She's surprised with us - she laughs, they
have a good time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUMP CUT THROUGH THE NIGHT: Oliver, "Julius", Elliott and Shauna are talking to a magician. "Julius" picks a card, the magician mixes it into the full deck, pops a card into the air, it is hers. Shauna and Elliott can see that Oliver's coming alive.

LATER. They dance again, now they're sweaty, the dance floor's packed - it's the pinnacle of the party.

INT. PARTY BATHROOM - NIGHT

The party's winnowing down in the background - "Julius" and Oliver look at each other in the mirror for a beat, and then simultaneously take their wigs off, revealing their true selves.

OLIVER

Hello...

Shes mouths a silent "hi"...

OLIVER

Can I give you my number?

She pulls out her pad and pen and hands them to him.

OLIVER

Thanks.

As he writes, Oliver spies Arthur sitting in the corner of the bathroom, staring directly at him.

ARTHUR SUBTITLE

Tell her the darkness is about to drown us unless something drastic happens right now.

Oliver looks to her.

OLIVER

I feel bad dragging Arthur to the party. I should get home. It was really nice meeting you.

She writes on her pad: "Au Revoir"

OLIVER

(chuckles)

Au revoir. Yeah.

He leaves.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE PARTY - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver and Arthur walk up the empty street - Oliver kicking himself for missing his chance with her. His phone rings.

OLIVER
Hello?

ON THE OTHER END: Silence. A little breathing, the party in background.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Is that you?

BEEP.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
One beep means yes?

BEEP.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I've always wanted to have a phone call with someone who doesn't talk...

BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
You want to do something?

BEEP

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Now?

BEEP.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Okay, I'm parked just right up the street.

BEEP. They hang up. Oliver is filled with hope.

CUT TO: "Julius" walking out into a pool of street light. They smile at each other, but don't say anything. They get into his car.

OLIVER
Okay. You point - I'll drive.

Oliver starts the engine. She points forward and they head off. At the light she points left, he follows. Down the street she points right...

OLIVER
This way?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She nods. Oliver drives up on the sidewalk before the street, heads down it for half a block, then takes her right. We can hear them laughing.

EXT./INT. HOTEL ROOM LOBBY - NIGHT

Oliver, Arthur and the woman enter a very fancy hotel lobby. Oliver is impressed. She mime's giving him a tour but still doesn't talk.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Oliver and the woman open the door and enter her suite. They look at each other nervously.

OLIVER
Nice place.

They sit on her bed. She steals his pipe, put's it in her mouth -- writes on her pad and shows it to him.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Oh, my mother. My mother died five years ago.

ANNA
(in a hoarse whisper)
Oh merd.

OLIVER
Oh, you spoke.

ANNA
(a whisper)
I'm not supposed to.

She writes and present him with a new question.

OLIVER
My father died two months ago, almost three.

She looks at him with sincere empathy and surprise. Oliver's opened up, an now everything gushes out, he barely knows what he's saying.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
He, he was gay.

She's very surprised.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
He was gay the whole time they were married.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (CONT'D)

He came out after my mother died
and, uh... he was 75 years old.

There's a quiet moment of deep connection.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Sorry.

She mouths "No" (don't say sorry). She reaches out and gently runs a finger across Oliver's brow and the outline of his face, he's so vulnerable, she lovingly/mischievously squishes his face together and messes up his hair. Then she leans in, and they kiss for the first time - delicately.

ANNA

(whisper)

Can we just sleep?

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Sure, sure.

They lay down, she takes his arm and pulls him into spooning her. He pulls the covers over them.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Oliver wakes, still in his clothes. ANNA is already up. She waves and Oliver smiles.

Anna holds up her notebook: "Who are you?"

OLIVER

Oliver.

She writes again: "Go to NY. Audition. Back Thursday."

OLIVER

How long are you here when you get
back?

Anna holds up one finger.

OLIVER

A year?

Anna shakes her head and smiles. She gestures smaller.

OLIVER

A month? Right. And then?...

She pantomimes a camera rolling, and herself acting.

OLIVER

You're filming here. Acting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver smiles as he interprets her gestures.

OLIVER
And after?...

She makes a casual tossing motion with her hand.

OLIVER
Just somewhere else. Where?

Anna only shrugs. She writes more, and tosses the notepad on his lap. Oliver reads: "Can I see you again?"

He's very happy.

OLIVER
Yes.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

They walk down the long hallway, Oliver carries her bags, Anna holds onto Arthur's leash. Oliver reaches out and holds her hand. They stop and kiss - gentle and comfortable with each other.

EXT. ANNA'S HOTEL, RED HALLWAY - DAY

Oliver now alone with Arthur - heading home, he's happy.

CU on his face as he remembers...

REPEAT SCENE: Oliver and Anna's first kiss, tentative and delicate.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Oliver's POV: Hal and Andy kiss lovingly.

INT. HAL'S KITCHEN - DAY

Oliver's POV: Andy comes up behind Hal doing the dishes, kisses him. Hal smiles very happy.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Oliver's POV: Andy kisses Hal in the Hospital.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER HOUSE ENTRY WAY

Oliver and Arthur enter his home, much more alive than the last time we saw him come through the door.

OLIVER
Hello house, (Low voice) hello
Oliver.

INT. OLIVER'S DINING ROOM - DAY

Oliver makes two piles of mail, one says Oliver Fields, one has a yellow forwarding sticker that says Hal Fields. The Hal Fields pile is much bigger.

OLIVER
Jesus, Pop, you get so much mail.

Oliver slows and stares at his father's magazine - The Advocate. Two attractive, shirtless men on the cover under the title: America's Sweethearts. Oliver's lost in memory...

DOCTOR LONG (O.S.)
Hal, its remarkable how well you've
recovered from being on the
ventilator.

INT. HAL'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Hal sit's on top of his hospital bed, wearing one of his all black outfits, looking much healthier. A doctor sits on his bed, Oliver listens from the side.

HAL
But...?

DOCTOR LONG
The bronchoscopy revealed a mass
about the size of a quarter. It is
located in your lower right lung.

CU on Hal taking this in.

DOCTOR LONG (CONT'D)
I'm afraid the biopsy showed it's
cancerous.

HAL
Uh-huh. I see.

DOCTOR LONG
It appears to have spread... to the
large hilar lymph nodes in your
chest and liver.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOCTOR LONG (cont'd)
With the already weakened state of
your heart and lungs...

As Dr. Long talks about treatments, Oliver drifts back from the conversation, slowly retreating to a window in the far corner, as we continue to hear Dr. Long speak, we see Oliver's thoughts, fixating on "a mass about the size of a quarter"

WE HEAR:

DR. LONG (O.S.) (CONT'D)
... Surgery isn't possible given
its location. We can start
radiation treatments and see if
you're strong enough for Chemo. You
will be able to go home.

WE SEE:

SHOT OF A QUARTER ON BLACK

SHOT OF TWO DIMES AND A NICKEL

SHOT OF 5 NICKELS.

SHOT OF 25 PENNIES.

We cut back to Hal's face, stoically digesting the news.

DOCTOR LONG
Do you have any questions?

HAL
No. Thank you.

As the doctor leaves. Oliver takes his father's hand.

OLIVER
I'm sorry.

HAL
Well, let's not rush out and tell
everyone.

OLIVER
Andy?

HAL
No need to get him up a tree.

Hal takes a moment and composes himself. In his eyes we can see that he knows there is an end to his life.

HAL (CONT'D)
Can you read me something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hal hands Oliver his Advocate magazine, he begins to read from "Tough Guys Do Dance."

OLIVER
The Brazilian ballet star is already known not only as a skilled partner, but also as a gifted and versatile dancer, who adeptly fields roles ranging...

Camera tracks out of the room, leaving the two men alone...

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY

SERIES OF CU JUMP CUTS: We see Oliver's hands as he draws a series of silhouetted figures hanging from trees, others happily beheaded, all with talking bubbles that say, "Let's not rush out and tell everyone"

JUMP CUTS: Oliver draws another severed head, then a woman smoking next to the words, "First lung cancer."

JUMP TO LATER: Oliver tacks his drawings to the wall, looks at them.

He looks down and pets Arthur, as we hear...

CUT TO PAST

OLIVER V.O.
Yeah, he's fine. He sleeps on your bed.

HAL
But is he eating?

INT. HAL'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Hal sits on his bed fully dressed, Oliver is visiting.

OLIVER
Yeah, yeah, he's eating.

HAL
Oh God, I worry so much about--

As Andy enters, his hands mysteriously cupped together.

HAL
Oh here we are...

Andy shows Hal his cupped hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 HAL (CONT'D)
What have you got in there?

 ANDY
A slug.

 HAL
Oh, Andy, you can't bring that kind
of thing in here.

 ANDY
Oh I can look.

Andy flashes open his hands, revealing nothing. He snorts and
laughs.

 HAL
Fuck you.

Oliver watches with amusement. NURSE SOPHIA enters...

 HAL
It's time for inspection...

The nurse works her way between Andy and Hal to take his
pulse.

 NURSE
Hello, Mr. Fields.

 HAL
Hello.

Andy feels interrupted, strangely hurt by the nurse. The
nurse begins to take Hal's vital signs.

 ANDY
I'm Andy. Hal's boyfriend

 NURSE
I'm Sophia.

Andy gets more and more upset.

 ANDY
You know, I have the right to be
here as much as anyone else.

Hal lovingly cuts him off, trying to ease the tension.

 HAL
Go take a walk. Calm yourself.

Andy walks out, feeling embarrassed and rejected.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
What was all that?

HAL
Oh, Andy hasn't had it easy. Be nice to him.

To everyone's surprise, Andy storms back in with a bouquet of flowers, dumps them on Hal's chest, kisses him triumphantly and leaves again.

HAL
(knowing he stole them)
Andy, where did you get these?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM NIGHT

JUMP CUTS: Oliver helps a group of Hal's gay friends and Andy get settled. They're jovial, they come with drinks and flowers, the room gets very full. Oliver hands out cups, offers wine, Andy lifts his paper cup and makes a toast.

ANDY
Guys, guys, this is to us. Cheers.

A NURSE suddenly enters.

STRICT NURSE
Drinking's not allowed in the room.

All the guys freeze.

HAL
Oh, it's not?

She shakes her head no, the party stops, she leaves. Oliver instinctively polite, starts packing up their cups.

OLIVER
I'm sorry.

Moans and complaints from the group.

HAL
No, no, no. She's a wonderful nurse. (he pauses a beat, then raises his cup again) Here's to health care.

Hal swigs back his wine. They all laugh, grab their cups and toast.

EVERYONE
To health care!

Hal looks happy, Oliver smiles but can't believe his dad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER

What did you do with my father? He was so polite.

HAL

Oh, I invited him - but he never returns my calls.

The guys drink merrily. Someone shoves a cup into Oliver's hand, pours him a drink.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLD MELROSE BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Oliver, Elliott and Arthur are shopping in a very old and crowded used book store. Oliver picks up a stack of magazines as Elliott interrogates him.

OLIVER

Two, four, six, eight...

ELLIOTT

That's it? That's all you're gonna tell me?

OLIVER

I'm gonna meet her at her hotel again. You happy?

ELLIOTT

Yeah, I'm very happy. Are you happy?

Oliver drops his books on the counter to check out.

OLIVER

(to shop owner)
Here's eight...

Turns to Elliot.

OLIVER

We haven't actually had a conversation yet, so, you know...

EXT. STREETS NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The three are now in Oliver's car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLIOTT

You're thinking about her all the time.

OLIVER

And you know that because?

ELLIOTT

Because you're not talking about it. I know you.

There's a pause, then the truth.

OLIVER

It's true. It's embarrassing. I'm 38 and falling for a girl again...

CUT TO PAST

INT. GEORGIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Georgia works at her writing table. Young Oliver, bored, watches her.

OLIVER V.O. (CONT'D)

It's like I lost the instructions or I, I never had them...

Young Oliver walks up to Georgia.

YOUNG OLIVER

Where's Pop?

GEORGIA

At the museum.

YOUNG OLIVER

Is something wrong with you guys?

Georgia is startled, she hides her feelings with humor.

GEORGIA

What're you, in the FBI?

YOUNG OLIVER

No.

GEORGIA

The CIA?

YOUNG OLIVER

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGIA
KGB? (Oliver shakes his head, no)
SLA? (no) PTA? (no) BMW?

Oliver sits silently.

GEORGIA
There is nothing wrong with me and
Pop.

Georgia's mask breaks revealing sadness. Oliver can see it, she can see he sees it. Georgia gets up and leads Oliver out of the room.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
C'mon.

INT. CHILDHOOD HALLWAY - DAY

They stand in front of his bedroom door.

GEORGIA
When you feel bad, you go into a
room and scream - loud as you want,
for a minute or two, then it's out
of you. It's called catharsis.

She opens the door, pushes him inside, and closes the door.

INT. OLIVER'S CHILDHOOD ROOM - DAY

Young Oliver pauses, confused in his room. He doesn't scream.

INT. CHILDHOOD HALLWAY - DAY

He comes back out. Sheepish.

OLIVER
I don't feel like screaming...

Georgia, never ruffled.

GEORGIA
You will...

CUT TO PRESENT

EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET - LATE AT NIGHT

Oliver and Arthur watch from the car as Elliott gets a can of spray paint, heads to a blank wall across the street and sprays a large tag on a wall. He then runs back to the car, looks proudly at his work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
What the fuck is that?

ELLIOTT
L-E-IT, Elliot

OLIVER
Well, that's ridiculous.

ELLIOTT
I know! (Getting his criticism
more) You're not very supportive.

OLIVER
Well, its just copying something
someone did, like, 30 years ago in
the Bronx.

ELLIOTT
Well yeah. I'm part of a tradition
of civil disobedience, something
bigger than myself.

Oliver can't believe Elliott said that.

EXT. NEW STREET

Elliott drives along-side Oliver who's walking with a spray
paint can, terrified as he's never done this before. He
tries to spray, nothing comes out.

OLIVER
How does it work?

ELLIOTT
Shake it, you have to shake it.

Oliver shakes it awkwardly, then sprays across the wall:

1985 BUSH FINDS JESUS

Oliver runs back to the car, exhilarated.

ELLIOTT
What was that?

OLIVER
Historical consciousness... you
know, something bigger than myself.

Elliott scoffs.

OLIVER
Let's do it again.

Elliott drives off. Oliver's coming to life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WE HEAR:

ELLIOTT (V.O.)
Okay, but when you see her, don't
tell her that you painted
historical consciousness on the
wall...

WE SEE: more of Oliver's graffiti on different buildings:

1983 CHICKEN MCNUGGETS

2003 BRITNEY SPEARS MOST GOOGLED

EXT. OLIVER'S HOUSE DAY

Oliver exits his house alone, down his front stairs to the street. Halfway down, he hears now familiar sound of Arthur barking and howling. Oliver can't believe it.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM

Anna is sitting on the bed, gently petting Arthur.

ANNA
He's sweet. He misses your Dad.

She stops. Gets up, nervous, and walks past Oliver into the next room. Oliver follows her in. They pause uncomfortably, Anna suddenly leans in and kisses him. Before it goes to far...

OLIVER
Maybe we, we could, um, just talk
for a second.

ANNA
Right.

They awkwardly break apart. Anna goes to a chair, Oliver follows. While nothing has really been expressed between the two, Anna seems to understand the problem.

ANNA
Well, my name is Anna. You're
worried you can't trust me because
you don't know who I am. I get it.
That makes sense to me.

She falters, looks at him vulnerably. Oliver abruptly kisses her. She pushes back. They pause. She traces his brow slowly with her index finger, the way she did their first night.

JELLY ROLL MORTON'S "SWEET JAZZ MUSIC" PLAYS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO POST SEX:

The music carries us, they lie in bed, naked. Anna innocently leans over and takes Oliver's arm and bites down hard. He grimaces. She stops and kisses it, admiring her teeth marks. She gets up, sits at a side table and finds her cigarettes. Oliver watches her.

The music seems to bend and slow down, this continues as we fall into memory...

CUT TO PAST

INT. GEORGIA'S BEDROOM

CU on young Oliver's hand pushing on a record making the bending, slowing sounds.

GEORGIA
Oliver, stop it.

Oliver stands up bored, Georgia's in the connecting bathroom getting ready to go out.

OLIVER
This music's old.

GEORGIA
It's black, black music is the deepest cause they suffered the most, them and the Jews.

Oliver plops down on the bed, listening to her.

GEORGIA
In my next life I'm gonna marry a good hot blooded Jew - someone full of emotion.

OLIVER
I'm Jewish right?

Georgia comes and sits with him, caresses his hair as she talks with him.

GEORGIA AT 50
You're a quarter, I'm a half, your father's none. He has the least emotions, You'll have more emotions than him, but I'll have the most emotions.

She likes that she has the most emotions. They head out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGIA AT 50
You get to play chauffeur but just
to the bottom of the hill.

EXT. OLIVER'S CHILDHOOD CAR

10 year old Oliver's in the driving seat, Georgia smokes and
admires his handling of the car.

GEORGIA
You're turning into a wonderful
driver.

Oliver's proud.

INT. LACMA ART MUSEUM STEPS DAY

Oliver escorts Georgia up the large steps of the museum. The
crowd from an opening gathers at the top.

INT. DAVID SMITH GALLERY LACMA DAY

Georgia and Oliver approach a David Smith sculpture. After
staring at it's angels for a beat, Georgia begins to do an
angular modern-dance-pantomime of the sculpture, imitating
it's shapes with her body. Oliver locks up with
embarrassment. A confused and concerned museum guard
approaches.

SECURITY GUARD
Excuse me Mrs. Fields....

GEORGIA
What? You're not allowed to
interact with the art?

SECURITY GUARD
It's just that...

OLIVER
C'mon.

Still embarrassed, Oliver takes Georgia's hand and walks her
away from the guard.

GEORGIA
You too? You like being a good
citizen?

OLIVER
No.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Anna's sits in her kimono. Oliver's buttoning his shirt.

ANNA
Can you toss me my camisole.

Oliver throws a sweater.

ANNA (CONT'D)
No, my camisole.

She throws the sweater back at him. Oliver looks around helplessly. He grabs a flower out of a vase and hands it to her.

OLIVER
Camisole?

Anna laughs.

ANNA
You don't know what a camisole is?

OLIVER
I was brought up by these animals
and they didn't like questions.

They're both smiling now.

OLIVER
They were very frowned upon. So I
had to guess.

Anna takes this in.

ANNA
You can ask me anything.

OLIVER
Anything?

CUT TO: Oliver and Anna at the window.

OLIVER
What's out there?

She points.

ANNA
That's a tree.

OLIVER
Yeah.

CONTINUED:

ANNA
And cars.

OLIVER
Uh-huh.

ANNA
Another building like this one.

OLIVER
Right.

ANNA
People in the building like us.
Half of them think things will
never work out. The other half
believe in magic. It's like a war
between them.

Oliver smiles. He moves away from the window.

OLIVER
How do you know so much about
people?

ANNA
Oh. Well, you have to learn how to
read their faces.

She climbs onto his lap, straddles him.

ANNA
For example... here is mad.

Anna passes her hand across her face, and she's "mad".

ANNA
Happy...

Her hand passes again and she's "happy".

ANNA
Sometimes its just nothing.

OLIVER
Oh yeah?

She points at her blank face.

ANNA
This is nothing... And they are
good at looking one way and being
another way.

Her playfulness is very meaningful to Oliver, he's in love.

EXT. FREEWAY PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS

They walk through a caged-in freeway overpass - Oliver is carrying Arthur while blindfolding Anna with his hands. Over this we hear the sounds of the quiet hotel room and an intimate conversation between them.

ANNA (V.O.)
You don't know me. I like that.

OLIVER (V.O.)
No, that's not true.

ANNA (V.O.)
Oh yeah?

OLIVER (V.O.)
Yeah, you have blonde hair that goes down to about here. You smoke in non-smoking rooms.

Oliver is still covering her eyes, leading her to a certain point, the busy sound of the freeway fading up...

OLIVER
Okay, open your eyes...

HIGH ANGLE on huge trucks and traffic racing just beneath Oliver and Anna's feet under the overpass. The trucks lay on their horns as they pass, scaring and thrilling them.

MOMENTS LATER: they walk alongside the LA river together, arm in arm, happy. The intimate conversation continues in voice over.

ANNA (V.O.)
Oh yeah? You drive on the sidewalk. You were raised by animals. Sometimes you look very alone, like you just got here.

They meet up with friends on the banks of the river.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Yeah, you see, you don't know me at all.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL HALLWAY

Oliver and Arthur are leaving, walking down the long hallway together. Arthur seems to stop and look up at Oliver.

ARTHUR SUBTITLE
She's unlike any girl I've ever met.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver stops and looks at Arthur.

OLIVER
Someone flashy walks into your life
and you're just gonna fall for it?

ARTHUR SUBTITLE
Are we married yet?

OLIVER
No, uh, it doesn't work like that.
There are other steps, it's
complicated.

They look at each other a beat and then walk on together.

ARTHUR SUBTITLE
I hope this feeling lasts.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S HOSPITAL BATHROOM - DAY

Oliver is shaving Hal's face.

HAL
What happened with Michelle?

OLIVER
You know... I don't know.

HAL
She seemed great.

OLIVER
She was great.

HAL
Maybe you should take out a
personal ad, where you explain your
situation?

OLIVER
My situation?

HAL
Yeah, I mean, you want to be in a
relationship but you can't stay in
one.

OLIVER
That's your fatherly advice?
Personal ads?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL

Well, a lot of people use them... I did.

OLIVER

What?

HAL

If Andy wasn't going to be monogamous, why should I be?

OLIVER

Jesus, Pop.

HAL

Jesus yourself.

INT. HAL FIELD'S HOUSE- DAY

Hal's friends hold up a hand-made "WELCOME HOME" sign in the living room. Oliver helps Hal walk to his crew, Andy at the center holding Arthur.

HAL

Hello house (Answers back in deep voice) Hello Hal.

Andy holds Arthur. Hal and Arthur kiss. They've clearly missed each other.

JUMP CUTS: Oliver takes bottles of pills and syrups and inhalers out of a Sav-On bag. He makes a chart of the medicine, the dosage, and puts the pills in a dish. It's emotional job for him.

INT. HAL'S DINING/KITCHEN

Oliver watches as Andy sneaks up behind Hal with his hands cupped closed. Hal turns and smiles.

HAL

Oh God, what have you got this time?

ANDY

It's a green caterpillar.

HAL

No, no, no, you don't have a green caterpillar.

ANDY

Oh yeah I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Andy opens his hands to reveal he actually does have a green caterpillar.

 HAL
Oh my God. Gross! Oh, Jesus...
(laughing)

Andy puts the caterpillar down on the saucer of Hal's tea cup, gives him a big kiss, and starts to leave...

 HAL
Hey, you going?

 ANDY
Yeah, Michael's in town.

 HAL
Oh. Right.

Andy waves goodbye and leaves. Hal is sad but covering it up. He catches Oliver watching.

 OLIVER
I thought he was your boyfriend?

 HAL
Well, at least I'm the number one
boyfriend.

Hal grimaces in pain, doubles over.

 OLIVER
Pop.

 HAL
Oh, my stomach.

 OLIVER
Alright, come on. Come on.

Oliver tries to clear the couch of books and dogs for Hal to sit down.

 OLIVER
Arthur, down.

 HAL
Well, let's say, when you were
little, you always dreamed of some
day getting a lion?

Oliver eases Hal down onto the couch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL

And you wait and you wait and you wait and you wait and the lion doesn't come. Then along comes a giraffe.

Oliver helps Hal get his feet up.

HAL

You can be alone or you can be with the giraffe.

OLIVER

I'd wait for the lion.

Oliver grabs the oxygen tubes and puts them on Hal's face.

HAL

That's why I worry about you.

Hal looks at Oliver with love and concern.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY

CU on Oliver's hands as he writes "THE HISTORY OF SADNESS". CUT TO him drawing an explosion with the caption: "EARTH BEGINS (SADNESS NOT YET INVENTED)". He draws a man and a woman with the caption: "FIRST COUPLE TO MARRY FOR WRONG REASONS." He draws a spilled glass - "INVENTION OF ALCOHOL, ANCIENT EGYPT." He draws a man's face and torso: "FIRST GAY MAN ACCUSED OF BEING MENTALLY ILL." He draws a man labelled "PRESENT" having been crushed by a giant boulder labelled "PAST."

Oliver stops drawing, thinking of a conversation with his father. CUT TO: Hal on his couch (previous scene) talking to Oliver.

HAL

You want me to be with someone like me. I like Andy cause he's not like me... he's fun.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL HALLWAY

Arthur runs down the hotel hallway, followed by Oliver, they come to a corner and Anna jumps out, scaring them, they laugh and continue on together.

INT. MELROSE BOOK STORE NIGHT

Oliver and Anna are in the overcrowded used book store we saw earlier. Oliver sees her down the aisle.

OLIVER
Hey, what did you get?

She puts the cover of Liv Ullman's "Changing" over her face - Ullman's face on the cover becomes Anna's.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Liv Ullman. Very serious.

ANNA
And I found this crazy book.

She holds an old copy of THE JOY OF SEX in front of her face.

OLIVER
That's kind of a classic American thing.

Anna opens the book to a large drawing of a couple having sex.

ANNA
Maybe we can figure out some classic American things to do.

Oliver takes the book and flips through the pages.

OLIVER
Yeah, Like page 75?

ANNA
Uh-huh.

OLIVER
Or 75 all the way through, through 80.

LATER...

Oliver, Anna and Arthur sit at the end of an aisle looking at a book on "Old Hollywood". The book has a photo of Louise Brooks from the Twenties.

OLIVER
(reading)
Louise Brooks, star of silent screen... effectively banned from Hollywood in early Thirties, ended up working as a salesgirl at Saks Fifth Avenue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anna listens. Oliver turns the page, we see a photo of Veronica Lake.

OLIVER
Veronica Lake.

ANNA
Oh I love her.

OLIVER
She was a pin-up model and a film star... Success was short-lived... series of broken marriages... She struggled with mental illness and alcoholism. She died of hepatitis at the age of 53.

ANNA
All these actor stories end sad. I can tell you that already. It's not a good life.

Oliver closes the book, they share a look, and something vulnerable. Anna changes the mood, pulls out *The Joy Of Sex*, skips through the pages as she talks.

ANNA (CONT'D)
So. Now I want real Mexican food.

She stops on an illustration she likes.

ANNA (CONT'D)
And I want to try page... 46.

EXT. STREET TACO TRUCK - NIGHT

Oliver, Anna and Arthur walk up to a typical L.A. Taco truck on the side of the street. There is nothing fancy looking about it.

ANNA
No.

OLIVER
Yeah.

ANNA
Really?

OLIVER
It's really good.

JUMP CUT: They're sitting on milk crates by the truck, ready to take their first bite, Anna dives in un-selfconsciously, we're not sure what she thinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
What do you think?

ANNA
It's so good.

Oliver's so relieved.

OLIVER
It's good? Oh, I wasn't sure you'd
like it.

ANNA
Why?

OLIVER
You're an actress and staying in
that fancy hotel.

Anna can barely swallow her huge bite...

ANNA
I like *this* place.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM

They lie on the bed, continuing their conversation, side by side, looking up at the ceiling together.

ANNA
I used to love hotels. But now I'm
always in a new apartment or... in
another hotel somewhere.

OLIVER
How do you keep hold of friends...
or boyfriends?

ANNA
It makes it very easy to end up
alone - to leave people.

OLIVER
You can stay in the same place and
still find ways to leave people.

She reaches up with her hand, their fingers intertwine.

ANNA
You are like that? Its what you do?

Oliver nods yes. They know each other much better than either one knew.

ANNA
So we are the same?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Yeah, I guess so.

The look to each other.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S HOUSE - OLIVER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Thumps and loud 1920's music wakes Oliver in the middle of the night. He turns the lights on, discombobulated.

He gets up, works his way through the dark house. Turning on lights.

OLIVER
Pop?

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Hal's awake, he's taken down dozens of books from a wall to wall bookshelf. A huge physical task. MARIA a nurse is with him. Oliver's dumbfounded.

HAL
Oh, did I wake you? Yeah. (Handing Maria some books) Thank you Maria. (to Oliver) And now that you're here, uh, would you please put those up there?

OLIVER
What are you--? Pop. What?

HAL
I'm reorganizing.

OLIVER
Prednisone makes you crazy.

HAL
I'm just not sleepy. I feel great.

INT. HAL'S OFFICE

Oliver and Hal are sitting at either side of his desk, Arthur is in hal's lap. The sound from last scene bleeds over...

OLIVER (V.O.)
Pop, you should rest.

Hal looks sick but energized, he shuffles his desk of papers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL

As soon as I finish these papers.
Right, papers? (In a different
voice) Right, Hal. As soon as
you're done, you can rest.

Oliver can only sit and worry.

CUT TO PRESENT

EXT. ELYSIAN PARK

Anna, Oliver and Arthur are walking in Elysian park, a view of downtown behind them. Oliver's looking at her face, she notices.

ANNA

What?

OLIVER

Nothing, you're pretty.

ANNA

No...

OLIVER

Yeah.

ANNA

Jewish girls are not pretty. They
can be "interesting", or cute, but
not pretty.

OLIVER

You're kidding right?

ANNA

That's what my mom told me.

OLIVER

She did not.

Anna laughs. As Anna continues to explain, the sound begins to fade down...

ANNA

No, you're right, this girl at
school told me that. And I went
home and my mom said, 'Anna, who
told you that?

And Oliver's narration fades in over them walking...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is what it looks like when
Anna tells me about being Jewish in
2003. And when I tell her that my
mother was Jewish. And then my
father turned in his gay badge when
my mother turned in her Jewish
badge. And they got married in
1955.

CUT TO NARRATED SEQUENCE

STILL PHOTOGRAPHS FLASH BEFORE US:

PHOTOS OF GEORGIA IN 1938, F.D.R., BUSINESS MEN...

OLIVER (V.O.)
My mother didn't know she was
Jewish until she was 13. It was
1938. This is what people looked
like.

THEN LIONS AND GIRAFFES FROM 1938. THEN ADOLF HITLER ON TIME
MAGAZINE COVER.

OLIVER (V.O.)
And lions and giraffes. This man
was Man of the Year.

THEN GEORGIA'S FATHER IN 1938, GEORGIA'S SWIM TEAM PHOTO.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Her father tried to hide that they
were Jewish. This is the swim team
that asked her to leave once they
discovered that she was Jewish.

THEN A QUICK SERIES OF ANGLO LOOKING FEMALE MODELS AND PIN-
UP'S FROM 1938.

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is what pretty looked like in
1938.

NOW A STILL PHOTO OF HAL IN 1938.

OLIVER (V.O.)
My father realized he was gay when
he was 13. It was 1938.

THEN A SERIES OF PHOTOS OF MALE MODELS IN SWIM SUITS AND
EXERCISING.

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is what pretty looked like.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THEN PHOTOS OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL, G.I.'S FROM W.W.2, AND JAMES DEAN.

This is the high school where they first met. This is the war they both went to. And this man was popular when they met again.

NOW A PHOTO OF A PUBLIC RESTROOM.

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is the only place my father could hide and have sex in the Fifties.

NOW HISTORICAL FILM FOOTAGE OF GAY MEN BEING BUSTED BY THE VICE SQUAD IN THE 1950'S AND BEING LOADED INTO PATTY-WAGONS.

OLIVER (V.O.)
My father said if you got caught by the Vice Squad you could lose everything...

This is everything.

A RAPID-FIRE SEQUENCE OF FACES AND PEOPLE FROM 1950'S ADVERTISEMENTS - EVERYONE HAPPY AND ENJOYING THEIR CARS, FAMILIES, MEALS AND HAIR PRODUCTS.

NOW A STILL PHOTOGRAPH OF A PSYCHIATRISTS COUCH.

OLIVER (V.O.)
My father laid down on a couch like this and told the psychiatrist all his problems in 1955. The doctor told him that homosexuality was a mental illness, but it could be cured.

AND THEN A MEDICAL MODEL OF A HUMAN BRAIN.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Not everyone got cured.

A MAP OF 1950'S LA, WITH SMALL ARROW POINTING TO THEIR HOME

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is where my parents lived in 1955.

ANOTHER ARROW SUPERS ON VERY CLOSE TO THEIR HOME.

TITLE: THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (V.O.)
And this is the home where the
first gay rights group was secretly
meeting.

NOW A STILL PHOTO OF AN EMPTY CHURCH FROM THE 1950'S.

OLIVER (V.O.)
While they were reciting their
vows, here in this church...

AND THEN A STILL FROM ALLEN GINSBERG'S 1955 APARTMENT.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Allen Ginsburg was writing his
famous poem, Howl, blocks away in
this room.

AS WE SLOWLY ZOOM INTO GINSBERG'S APARTMENT, HISTORICAL
RECORDING OF HIM READING HOWL FADES UP AND OVER THE NEXT
SCENE.

ALLEN GINSBERG (V.O.)
Who let themselves be fucked in the
ass by saintly motorcyclists and
screamed with joy. Who blew and
were blown...

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY

GINSBERG'S READING CONTINUES OVER: Oliver flips through a
mock-up he made for "The Sads" - it's all the happy faces
from 1950's advertising that we saw in the last scene. One
face per-panel.

LATER: the three members of "The Sads" and a RECORD COMPANY
REP arrive. Jelly Roll Morton piano plays, we see but do not
hear the meeting take place. The Sads look at the designs,
which include many of the "History Of Sadness" drawings we
have seen now in CD cover format - and no portraits of the
band. It's clear that The Sads are not into Oliver's work.

CUT TO: After the meeting, the RECORD COMPANY REP talks to
Oliver alone.

RECORD COMPANY LADY
Just do the portrait of them, it's
an album cover, right? That's what
they want. Yeah?

Oliver's very disappointed but polite.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Yeah. Right.

CUT TO:

EXT OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Oliver and Arthur leave the office, defeated.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Oliver walks into Hal's living room, carrying his full tray of medication.

OLIVER
Here, Pop.

HAL
Oh, God.

OLIVER
I know, I know. Come on.

Hal begins taking his many pills, with each one he pings his glass with a teaspoon as he swallows. The room is cluttered with books. Oliver picks up a toppling pile of files from a paper-filled side table.

HAL
Hey, no, no, no. That's the Gay
Pride Day stuff. Just leave those.

OLIVER
Alright.

Oliver begins to neaten a messy pile of books on top of a chair.

HAL
And that's for gay book club. You
better leave those too.

OLIVER
But what about this chair? Is it
gay?

HAL
The chair's not gay. Obviously.

Hal gets up and walks to the kitchen, his oxygen cannon cord is attached to the pump behind him, stopping him short.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER

Pop, Pop, the cord won't go that far.

HAL

Oh, to hell with it.

Hal pulls off the oxygen and keeps walking, frail but determined. Andy enters with a large pilates ball.

HAL

Oh, hey what's that?

ANDY

Now that you're out of the hospital, you'll have to exercise, get you back into shape.

Oliver can't believe it.

HAL

That's a great idea.

ANDY

Okay, let's try it. I'll, I'll show you how.

Hal's still heading to the sink.

HAL

Yeah, later on, I'm gonna make myself some tea.

ANDY

Okay, I'll clean it up. It's a little - yech.

Andy walks out, Hal pours water into a kettle, in front of him on the window sill is the same vase from the first scene of the film, with some dead daisies in it.

HAL

Your mother's vase needs some flowers.

Oliver looks at them frustrated and uneasy...

INT. STAPLES - DAY

Oliver and Hal walk amongst all the products. Hal wears his portable oxygen and grabs different kinds of papers, dumping them in the basket Oliver holds.

OLIVER

Pop, you just got out of the hospital, you should take it easy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They're in a new isle, Hal continues his march.

OLIVER
You need to tell Andy that
you're... not well.

Hal, continues on, avoiding looking at Oliver.

HAL
You'll tell him, won't you?

Oliver's flabbergasted, but his dad's vulnerability is clear to him.

OLIVER
Me?

HAL
Please?

INT. HAL'S GUEST HOUSE - DAY

Andy's on an elliptical trainer, through a window we can see Oliver approaching with the weight of the world on his shoulders. Andy see's him, can immediately sense that something is wrong.

OLIVER
Hey.

Oliver approaches seriously, this makes Andy nervous, he stops his workout. Oliver tries to find his words.

ANDY
You know that I tried to have sex
with women?

OLIVER
Yeah?

ANDY
Yeah. I wanted you to know I
tried, it just, it didn't work.

OLIVER
Hey, I don't have a problem with
gay guys.

ANDY
Have you ever had sex with a man?

OLIVER
No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDY

I heard that if a man hasn't had sex with another man, he's always afraid of gay men. You know, they're a threat.

Oliver's blown away by the logic.

OLIVER

I don't know Andy.

ANDY

I didn't want you to feel threatened, I don't want to have sex with you. What I do, most people wouldn't even call it sex.

Andy's relieved he got this off his chest, all tension is relieved for him, Oliver is just confused.

OLIVER

Okay, okay.

ANDY

Hey...

Andy gives Oliver a big sweaty hug. Oliver leaves.

INT. HAL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Oliver enters as Hal's finishing the dishes.

OLIVER

I couldn't tell him.

HAL

That's okay.

OLIVER

No it's not. You can't hide this from him. He loves you.

HAL

For someone with so much relationship advice, you seem awfully alone.

Oliver, angry but at a loss for words, takes the flower vase and leaves, Arthur follows.

EXT. HAL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Oliver and Arthur exit a side door, go to a planter full of daisies and cuts some for his mother's vase. He looks back Arthur.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Just act natural. When he's not
looking, we'll make a run for it,
okay?

CUT TO PRESENT

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK

We cut to Arthur sprinting up a trail in Elysian park. Oliver and Anna chase after him. In contrast to the previous scene there is lightness and laughter here.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM NIGHT

The three enter, the phone is ringing, Anna is staring at it with dread. Oliver looks at her, he finally moves to pick it up.

ANNA
Don't, don't.

It keeps ringing.

ANNA
It's my dad.

They both watch the phone as it rings and stops.

OLIVER
He's that bad?

She picks up the phone, and gestures for Oliver to pick up the line next to him.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I'll be my dad, you be me.

OLIVER
OK.

ANNA
(In a deep man's voice) Honey?

She gestures again, Oliver picks up the phone on his side of the bed. Anna turns away, he can only see her back across the bed. He turns away too.

OLIVER
Oui?

Anna continues to talk in a different voice.

ANNA
C'est toi, cheri?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Oui Papa.

ANNA
You never call me back.

ANNA
You know, I can't stop thinking
about, you know, about it. Doing
it.

OLIVER
Doing what?

ANNA
Killing myself. You are the only
one I can tell that to.

Oliver breaks role, turns around looks at her.

OLIVER
You should tell mom about that, not
me.

She just looks at him. Back into phone.

ANNA
You are my girl.

They hang up. She's embarrassed, she lightens the mood to get
out of this intimacy.

ANNA
Now I have to kill you.

OLIVER
Just as it was going so well.

ANNA
I know. I'm sorry.

She tosses a pillow over his face and pretends to shoot him
twice. She pulls the pillow back tentatively, he's smiling.

OLIVER
Hey Anna?

ANNA
Hey Oliver?

OLIVER
How do you feel about vandalism?

It's the last question she thought he'd ask. She's amused.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA

I don't know. Pretty okay.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS/INT. CAR - NIGHT

Anna, Oliver, Elliott, Shauna and Arthur drive up Sunset Blvd. They arrive at Alvarado, park and get out. Above them a well lit large blank/white billboard. As Oliver and Elliott get spray paint cans from the back of the car...

ELLIOTT

Oliver, don't write any of that serious stuff, okay? Just write something funny. Girls like funny.

EXT. ROOFTOP

The gang get to the top of the stairs, on to the roof where they can see the large blank billboard towering in front of them.

SHAUNA

You know what? Here, give me Arthur. We'll just stay here and get arrested. You know, that's good.

Oliver leaves Arthur with her, and Anna and Elliott and him head off to the billboard. They climb it's structure, it's high and a bit scary. On the top is a gang plank looking over the city. Anna is happy she came. Elliott goes to paint the back side of the billboard. Oliver meets up with Anna, over looking the city.

OLIVER

You okay?

ANNA

Yeah. I'm gonna stay here with my new friend (the handrail she holds).

OLIVER

Okay.

Oliver walks out and writes big letters across the billboard.

YOU MAKE ME LAUGH BUT IT'S NOT FUNNY.

He makes his way back. Anna's not where she was, he looks and finds her in the gangways between the two billboards with a view to downtown below her.

ANNA

C'est beau ici.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER

Yeah.

He comes to her, wanting to get beyond the romance somehow.

OLIVER

I'm trying to impress you.

ANNA

(Gasps ironically) Really?

She walks to him and puts her hands around his head, somehow it's more intimate and vulnerable now.

ANNA

It's working.

They kiss.

MOMENTS LATER. They're at the bottom of the ladder. They all run back to their car.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL - NIGHT

Oliver, Anna and Arthur walk down the hallway. Arthur bolts ahead suddenly, getting free of Oliver, he runs to and OLD MAN - wearing all black and looking just like Hal. Oliver runs up to stop Arthur.

OLIVER

Arthur, Arthur. I'm sorry.

We see the old man's face, it's not Hal, but it the resemblance hits Oliver too. The man is struggling with his hotel key card.

OLD MAN

Oh. No problem. No problem. What's with this card?

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Uh, do you mind?

Oliver swipes the man's key, the door opens.

OLD MAN

Thank you.

He disappears. Oliver looks overwhelmed by this ghost. Anna senses what's happened. She leads Oliver to their room.

INT. ANNA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Oliver sits on the bed, sinking. Anna watches him. She comes to him, hugs him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA
He looked like your dad?

OLIVER
Yeah.

She wants to take care of him, she lays him back on the bed, helps him take his coat off, she's sitting on him, caressing him - Oliver is overwhelmed by memory.

OLIVER
Somewhere along the line, he stopped admitting to himself that he was sick.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A SERIES OF REPEAT ACTIONS ON DIFFERENT DAYS:

1. Camera tracks with Oliver helping Hal into the Cancer Center. Hal is full of life.

SAME ANGLE TWO MORE TIMES, DIFFERENT DAYS, DIFFERENT CLOTHES AND EXTRAS.

2. Hal arrives at the cookie plate in the Cancer Center Lobby.

SAME ANGLE TWO MORE TIMES, DIFFERENT DAYS, DIFFERENT CLOTHES AND EXTRAS.

3. CU on the cookie plate.

SAME ANGLE TWO MORE TIMES, DIFFERENT DAYS, DIFFERENT COOKIES.

4. Hal sits happily eating his cookie. He is chipper, alive, without self-pity.

SAME ANGLE TWO MORE TIMES, DIFFERENT DAYS, DIFFERENT CLOTHES AND COOKIES.

INT. RADIATION ROOM

Hal looks into camera (Oliver's perspective) as he pulls his shirt off, the radiation machine is in the background. Hal grandly introduces Oliver to the Technician.

HAL
Oliver, this is Blake. He's a wonderful man.

CU of the small round registration tattoos on Hal's chest

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 HAL
 Look. I finally got a tattoo.
 Registration purposes of course.

CUT BACK TO PRESENT

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM

Anna still straddles Oliver, she's moved by his story.

 ANNA
 Good for him.

CUT BACK TO PAST

Oliver continues to tell Anna about Hal.

INT. COUNTERPOINT BOOKSTORE

 OLIVER (V.O.)
 He did a lot of shopping. Bought
 all these books.

SAME ANGLE AND LOCATION, JUMP CUT THROUGH 3 DIFFERENT DAYS OF
HAL LOOKING FOR BOOKS.

JUMP CUT THROUGH 3 DIFFERENT SETS OF BOOKS BEING PUSHED
TOWARDS THE CASH REGISTER.

 OLIVER V.O.
 And new clothes.

INT. MENS CLOTHING STORE DRESSING ROOM.

SAME ANGLE, MENS DRESSING ROOM, 3 DIFFERENT DAYS, OLIVER
BRINGS DIFFERENT CLOTHES TO HAL IN THE DRESSING ROOM.

INT. STAPLES STYLE STORE - DAY

Hal buying more and more paper, Oliver helping him.

 OLIVER (V.O.)
 He was obsessed with Staples.

INT. NURSERY

JUMP CUT THROUGH TWO DIFFERENT DAYS, OLIVER HELPS HAL BUY
PLANTS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (V.O.)
He bought a lot of plants.

CUT BACK TO PRESENT

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM

Oliver's very emotional now, as is Anna.

OLIVER
He had a lot of parties.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Oliver arrives at Hal's, there is a party going on, Oliver is surprised, he carries groceries with him.

HAL
Well, glad you could make it.

OLIVER
I thought I was making dinner?

HAL
It's movie night.

Oliver and Hal make their way through a crowd of Hal's gay friends. They're in party mode.

PARTY GUEST
Hal, you look wonderful.

HAL
Oh, I'm turning the corner on this thing.

We loose Hal and Oliver in the group...

INT. HAL'S DINNING ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Twelve of Hal's gay friends sit around the table in an assembly line of paper folding-envelope stuffing-labeling, stamping...

OLIVER (V.O.)
He had these political letter writing parties, there was an out gay congressman he was supporting...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hal leads the guys as they put the letters together.

INT. HAL'S HOUSE (BACK TO MOVIE NIGHT PARTY)

BACK TO Oliver and Hal, arriving in the kitchen with the groceries.

OLIVER (V.O.)
He started telling everyone that he was getting better.

They're finally almost alone.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Why're you telling them you're "turning the corner"?

HAL
Well...

OLIVER
You have stage 4 cancer?

HAL
It's not as bad as it sounds.

OLIVER
Pop. There is no stage 5.

HAL
That's not what it means.

OLIVER
What does it mean?

HAL
It just means it's been through 3 other stages.

Oliver doesn't know what to say, he looks through the door at all of Hal's friends -- happy, laughing, partying. He looks back at Hal, ready to fight him more, but for the first time we can see fear and doubt in Hal's face.

OLIVER
What movie are we watching?

HAL
"The Life of Harvey Milk." He was the first openly gay politician...

OLIVER
Yeah I know who Harvey Milk is.

HAL
Good, good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hal heads back to the party, leaving Oliver alone in the kitchen overwhelmed.

MOMENTS LATER: Everyone is crowded onto the couches, they're watching the Harvey Milk film.

INT. HAL'S OFFICE

Hal paces and dictates to a secretary.

OLIVER (V.O.)
He hired a secretary that he could dictate to.

LIVE ACTION PORTRAIT OF THE SECRETARY LOOKING INTO CAMERA.

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He wrote an essay about religion...

INT. HAL'S DINNING ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Hal works with his secretary as Oliver looks on. Hal pulls the lap-top to himself and reads what he has dictated...

HAL
Eventually Jesus grew old. He could no longer walk far and he could no longer preach in a loud voice. One day he announced to his apostles that he was departing. The three disciples prayed with him, gave him water, bathed and fed him. After gasping for breath for several days, one morning, just as dawn came, Jesus passed away.

OLIVER
You re-wrote Jesus' death?

They all laugh.

HAL
It was so violent, we need new stories.

Oliver goes over and kisses Hal on the head.

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM

Oliver enters and sees Hal and Andy taking a nap together on the day bed. Hal wakes up and waves at Oliver.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER V.O.
For the first time I saw him really
in love.

Oliver waves back at his father.

ANNA V.O.
He sounds amazing. But that must
have been crazy for you.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM

Anna hugs and kisses Oliver. She's both overwhelmed by his need and sympathetic to all that he's lost.

LATER THAT NIGHT: The room is dark, Oliver is asleep. Anna is nervously awake. She quietly gets out of bed, puts her pants on, and sneaks to the door. Arthur wakes up and hops to her wanting to follow.

ANNA
Stay here.

She starts to close the door, Arthur scratches, she tries again, he scratches. She opens the door, Arthur trots out into the hallway - Anna catches up with him.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

A troubled Anna walks down the hallway with Arthur.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM

A dark empty ballroom, filled with tables. Anna sits in the dark and smokes.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Oliver wakes up, slowly figures out that Anna is not in bed.

OLIVER
Anna?

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

Oliver, now in clothes, sleepily looks for Anna.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM

Oliver enters the ballroom, Arthur trots to him. He see's Anna across the room - full of heavy feelings. He sits by her.

ANNA
I couldn't sleep, I wanted to walk around...

Oliver's petting Arthur. He's confused and hurt.

ANNA
You've lost so much. What if I can't make up for that?

OLIVER
If this is too much, then we should just stop.

Oliver gets up and starts to leave, Anna's surprised. She catches up with him puts her arms around him from behind.

ANNA
Wait, wait.

She forces him to stay there.

ANNA
I don't want to stop.

They hold this pose in silence for a beat, then, surprisingly, he hoists her over his shoulder, and carries her back to their room. She laughs, they've made it past this trouble.

CUT TO PAST

EXT. LARGE PARKING LOT - DUSK

Andy shouts...

ANDY
Ready?

Andy has a set-up of large fireworks ready to go, Hal and twelve friends stand by, Oliver's behind.

EVERYONE BUT OLIVER
YES!

Mock enthusiasm.

OLIVER
No!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The fireworks go off.

BOOOM BOOOM BOOOM BOOOM

IT IS INCREDIBLY LOUD. Big fireworks explode, the guys laugh and HOLLER. Hal raises his arms up in the air in celebration.

HAL

Again!

EVERYONE

AGAIN! AGAIN!

As Andy lights up some more.

BOOOM BOOOM BOOOM BOOOM

Oliver covers his ears, he yells out...

OLIVER

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!!

He's still yelling after the explosions stop.

The guys, all sensing the insanity laugh and yell back at him.

GUYS

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!

Oliver's laughing now - the noise, the absurdity. Hal and Oliver make eye contact. Hal yells less strongly than the others but trying...

HAL

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!

They keep eye contact. They are bonded, happy, out of their normal confines. Oliver comes to Hal, yelling again.

OLIVER

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!

HAL

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!

OLIVER

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!

HAL

FFFFFUUUUCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!!!

CUT TO LATER: All the guys spread out across the parking lot looking for Arthur who must of fled during the explosions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EVERYONE
Arthur! Arthur... Arthur...

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM MORNING

Arthur runs towards camera chasing a tennis ball that Anna threw for him. He runs back and jumps onto the bed, waking Oliver. He's sleepy, she's happy, wants him to wake up.

ANNA
Ah, you're awake! Arthur says it's time to get up, he says he has the day off.

OLIVER
He talks to you too?

ANNA
Yeah.

OLIVER
Your English is not so perfect. And he said ten minutes.

INT. MOONLIGHT ROLLER RINK - NIGHT

Hard cut Oliver and Anna roller-skating to carousel music. They're having a great time being terrible at it.

Oliver and Anna join Elliott and Shauna on the side of the rink. Arthur is half hidden in a duffle bag at their feet.

OLIVER
You okay? (to Anna) You did really well.

ELLIOTT
Yeah, I can't believe that was your first time.

OLIVER
(To Arthur) You watching all the humans going around and around.

The manager of the rink suddenly arrives, upset.

MANAGER
Excuse me. There's no dogs allowed in the building. You need to remove him from the premises please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER

If I leave him on his own, he loses all control.

MANAGER

I'm sorry. There's no dogs allowed in the building.

OLIVER

Yeah, but if I leave him in the car, he cries, he howls. I can't leave him in the car.

ELLIOTT AND SHAUNA

C'mon, it's her first time!

ANNA

(angrily)

A ca vas! C'est bon!

MANAGER

I don't know what she's saying but I don't like it.

OLIVER

She is just talking in French. She's saying it's OK, it is such a small dog.

MANAGER

You need to remove the dog from the premises or I'm going to have to call the authorities.

OLIVER

You're gonna call the authorities?

ELLIOTT AND SHAUNA

Fuck it, steal the skates, just leave.

ANNA

Dans ce pays! On ne peut pas amener un chien. On peut rien faire. Mais c'est con...

EXT. MOONLIGHT ROLLERINK BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Oliver, Anna and Arthur make their way out the door and down the street in their skates.

INT. MAIN HOTEL HALLWAY

They roll down the main lobby hallway, Arthur running behind, dodging people as they go.

INT. UPSTAIRS HOTEL HALLWAY

They struggle to skate down the hotel hallway, past a maid.

OLIVER
Sorry, excuse us, sorry.

They enter Anna's door.

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Oliver, Anna, Arthur enter on their skates. Still very playful, they skate around the big room. The phone rings. Anna's face falls, they both know it must be her father. She musters on trying to have a good time. Oliver goes and unplugs the phone.

OLIVER
He shouldn't do this to you.

The phone in the next room keeps ringing. He awkwardly skates to it and unplugs it. He returns.

Oliver skates to her concerned.

ANNA
Even if we don't answer, he's still in here (points to her head). I go somewhere else, he's still here.

Oliver can relate.

OLIVER
Your leaving soon?

ANNA
Yeah.

OLIVER
I think you should come to my house and move in with me.

ANNA
Would you want a strange girl like me?

OLIVER
Yeah, a lot.

She's very moved.

ANNA
Do you cook?

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Yes (not so sure).

She laughs. She almost cries as she thinks this over. She skates to him, puts her arms around him.

ANNA
I would love that.

They kiss.

OLIVER
But now I'm going to have to kill you for sure now.

ANNA
Why?

OLIVER
Cause I'm falling in love with you.

The sound in the room fades down, Oliver's narration fades in over the shot of them embracing in their skates.

OLIVER V.O.
Anna and I are in a relationship in 2003.

STILL PHOTOS OF THE SUN IN 2003, THE STARS, LIVE ACTION SHOT OF OLIVER AND ANNA EATING, TALKING AT NIGHT IN BED:

OLIVER (V.O.)
This is what the sun looks like and the stars. This is what it looks like when we eat. When we tell each other the stories in our heads.

THEN STILL PHOTOS OF L.B.J., GEORGES POMPIDOU, THEN SUN IN 1971, ANNA'S CAT, ANNA'S PARENTS IN THE 70'S, ANNA'S POSTCARDS OF PARIS-LONDON-BERLIN-NEW YORK CITY:

OLIVER (V.O.)
I was born in 1965. Anna was born in 1971. This is what the sun looked like. Her pets. Her parents. She left home when she was 16. She lived here and here and here.

NOW STILL PHOTOS OF FOUR DIFFERENT YOUNG MEN, 3 DRAWINGS OF OLIVER'S X'S:

OLIVER(V.O.)
She had three serious relationships. She left all of them. I had four serious relationships. I left them too. Or let them fall apart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STILL PHOTOS OF W.W.2 GI'S SEEN BEFORE, AND THE PUBLIC MENS ROOM SEEN BEFORE. LIVE ACTION SHOT OF ANNA FEELING TROUBLED, LIVE ACTION SHOT OF ANNA WALKING BY THE RIVER LOOKING INTO CAMERA HAPPY.

OLVIER (V.O.)

We didn't go to this war. We didn't have to hide to have sex. Our god fortune allowed us to feel a sadness that our parents didn't have time for and a happiness that I never saw with them.

NOW LIVE ACTION SHOT OF OLIVER AND ANNA TALKING AT NIGHT, LIVE ACTION SHOT OF OLIVER AND ANNA RUNNING BACKWARDS IN PRETEND SLOW MOTION. THEN ANNA'S EYES LOOKING INTO CAMERA, HER EAR, HER FEET, ANNA SAYING "I LOVE YOU".

OLIVER (V.O.)

We didn't know how we learned the stories in our heads but sometimes they stop running and I can really see Anna's eyes in 2003. Her ears. Her feet. This is what it looks like when she says, I love you, in 2003.

LIVE ACTION SHOT OF ANNA CRYING WITH OLIVER, LIVE ACTION SHOT OF OLIVER HUGGING HER AND ANNA SAYING SOMETHING WE CANNOT HEAR.

OLIVER (V.O.)

This is what it looks like when she cries. When she tells me there's always a new empty room waiting for her. They used to make her feel free. Now they make her feel the opposite of free.

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY

Oliver's at his desk, looking at photos of himself and his mother at a museum exhibit from the 70's. We see young Oliver and Georgia, an exhibit of stuffed animals, a quote on a wall. Oliver goes to his notebooks, looks through them till he finds a small rainbow sticker. He puts it on the table and thinks...

CUT TO PAST

EXT. HAL'S DINNING ROOM

Oliver's helping Hal take his medication, Hal deals with is mail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Next one.

HAL
Lord.

With each swallow he pings a glass with a fork. Hal opens a letter from a gay rights organization, he hands Oliver the rainbow sticker we just saw.

HAL (CONT'D)
Here, that means gay pride.

OLIVER
Yeah, everyone knows that, here.

He gives Hal another pill, another reluctant difficult swallow, another ping.

HAL
No they don't.

OLIVER
Everyone knows about that Pop.

HAL
Don't be ridiculous.

Hal's hiding something, he doesn't look Oliver in the eyes when he asks...

HAL
Did you know, about me?

Oliver shakes his head no.

OLIVER
No, I just thought you and mom weren't in love.

HAL
We loved each other.

OLIVER
But you were gay that whole time.

HAL
I learned how not to be.

OLIVER
For 44 years?

HAL
I knew I was gay, though, at dinner parties I was looking at the husbands not the wives.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL (cont'd)
I couldn't have survived if I
didn't know that. I just chose not
to follow those instincts.

OLIVER
What about sex? You guys had sex?

HAL
She didn't think I was the greatest
lover, but we made do. Look, I
liked my life, the museum, our
house, that's what I wanted.

OLIVER
And mom? You wanted mom too right?

Frustrated and angry, Oliver takes the pill tray into the
kitchen, leaving Hal behind.

HAL
Yes, stop that.

HAL
She proposed to me you know.

This draws Oliver back into the room.

HAL
I said - look I love you and we're
great buddies but you know what I
am. And then she says, that doesn't
matter. I'll fix that.

Oliver's never heard this part of the story before.

HAL
I thought. Oh, God. I'll try
anything.

SCREEN FILLS SOLID **PINK**.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Sex.

SCREEN FILLS SOLID **RED**.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Life.

SOLID **ORANGE**.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Healing.

SOLID **YELLOW**.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Sunlight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREEN.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Nature

TURQUOISE.

OLIVER (V.O.)
Spirit.

WE SEE STILL PHOTOS OF THE FIRST GAY PRIDE FLAG, THE 1977 SAN FRANCISCO GAY PRIDE PARADE.

OLIVER (V.O.)
The first Gay Pride flag was made in 1978 by a man named Gilbert Baker. He gave a meaning to each color.

NOW STILL PHOTOS OF CARTER, A LEGO FIGURE, SUPERMAN, PETS:

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This man was President. This was invented, this is what movies looked like. Pets.

HISTORICAL FOOTAGE OF HARVEY MILK'S BODY BEING CARRIED AWAY ON A STRETCHER.

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
On November 27th, 1978. Harvey Milk was shot and killed.

STILL PHOTOS OF THE MUSEUM EXHIBIT OF STUFFED ANIMALS.

OLIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
One week later, my father opened his annual Museum Christmas Exhibit. He collected stuffed animals from people in the community, and put them on display. My father printed a quote from The Velveteen Rabbit in large type on the wall...

NOW A STILL PHOTO OF THE QUOTE ON THE WALL OF THE MUSEUM.

OLIVER V.O.
...'The stuffed rabbit asked - What is real? And the Horse said, "Real isn't how you're made. It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long long time not just to play with, but really loves then you become real..."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOW WE SEE HISTORICAL FOOTAGE OF GAY MEN BEING LOADED INTO
PATTY WAGONS BY THE VICE SQUAD IN THE 1950'S:

OLVIER (V.O.)
...And the rabbit asked, 'Does it
hurt?' And the horse said,
'Sometimes.' 'Does it happen all at
once like being wound up, or bit by
bit?'...

THEN HISTORICAL FOOTAGE OF CASTRO STREET DURING THE 1977 GAY
RIGHTS PARADE:

OLIVER (V.O.)
...'It takes a long time. That's
why it doesn't happen to people who
break easily...

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM

Oliver enters to find Hal and Andy dancing humorously to loud
opera music. Hal dances free, without restraint, full of
life.

OLIVER (V.O.)
...Generally by the time you are
real, most of your hair has been
loved off, and your eyes drop out
and you get loose in the joints.
But these things don't matter at
all because you are real and you
can't be ugly, except to people who
don't understand.'"

The music blares as Arthur greets Oliver. Hal comes to
Oliver, Andy continues to dance.

HAL
Andy's moving in.

OLIVER
Yeah? Is that a good idea?

Hal hugs Oliver.

HAL
Just be happy about it.

Oliver can't just be happy about it.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE

HARD CUT TO: Oliver's design for The Sads tacked on his wall - a clumsy drawing of a man and a woman with the caption:

"First couple too in love to feel sad."

Reveal a Sads band member looking at the design in disbelief. The rest of the band looks at Oliver's wall of designs - there are no portraits of them. We cut into the meeting mid melt-down.

OLIVER
This is the idea, is that it's the
history of sadness.

Oliver spreads out an impossible long CD panel design.

OLIVER
Here, this could be your...

The panels go on and on.

OLIVER
Your gonna need a big CD box.

JUMP CUT: Later, Oliver's still trying to talk the band into his idea.

Four billion years ago, Earth
begins. And the idea is that
sadness has not been created yet.

JUMP CUT: Oliver and the RECORD COMPANY REP now alone.

OLIVER
I'm sorry.

RECORD COMPANY REP
I'm sorry too.

They shake hands and she leaves.

JUMP CUT: Oliver's now alone with Arthur in his lap.

OLIVER
Well, that went well.

ARTHUR SUBTITLE
Are we married yet?

EXT. OLIVER'S HOUSE

Oliver's car stands in front of his house. He gets Anna's suitcase out of his car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Come on Arthur.

INT. OLIVER'S FRONT DOOR

They enter his house, it's her first time there. She's nervous, but tries to get over it.

OLIVER
This is the living room.

He leads her into the dining room.

OLIVER
Dining room.

Oliver points to a photo of his parents when they were in their 50's.

OLIVER
There are my parents. My mom. Hal,
Georgia, this is Anna - Anna - Hal,
Georgia.

Anna's overwhelmed feeling increases, she continues to try to roll with it.

ANNA
Hello.

INT. OLIVER'S STAIRWELL

Oliver continues his tour, leading her up the stairs to his room.

OLIVER
These're the stairs.

ANNA
Yeah?

OLIVER
They go up.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

They enter, Anna's churning, he shows her some drawers in his dresser that he emptied out.

OLIVER
I emptied these for you. I'll get
your case.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anna looks around, not able to deal with the intimacy, stability and generosity.

OLIVER
Are you okay?

She want's to be, she hides it all by initiating sex with him, physical and fast.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

They sleep.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Oliver wakes up, he figures out he's alone again. Feelings he was trying to overlook come to the surface now.

INT. OLIVER'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Oliver comes into the living room finds Anna on the couch. Feelings of hurt and mistrust well up in him.

Nervous at Oliver's look, feeling in trouble, she tries to reconnect.

ANNA
You OK?

OLIVER
Are you?

ANNE
I couldn't sleep, I didn't want to bug you.

Oliver can't overcome his mistrust of her and the whole situation. She tries to defend herself, honest and vulnerable.

ANNA
I was nervous, and excited. I kept thinking, maybe I'm not so lost.

OLIVER
Why were you crying yesterday?

They're miles apart.

INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY

Oliver deep in thought, something building in him...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO PAST

REPEAT MEMORY: Young Oliver watches his mother and father go through the motions of kissing.

CUT TO PRESENT

EXT. OLIVER'S HOUSE- NIGHT

Oliver and Arthur stand outside his house at night.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

Oliver notices Anna's drawers are still empty.

INT. OLIVER'S DINING ROOM

They eat, their connection is broken. Oliver is moody and distant.

ANNA
You okay?

OLIVER
Yeah.

CUT TO:

INT. OLIVER'S KITCHEN ROOM - MORNING

Oliver alone in the kitchen, brooding. Anna enters in her Kimono.

ANNA
You seem so unhappy with me.

OLIVER
Well are you happy here?

ANNA
Maybe I'm not perfect at it. I
don't really know what I'm doing...
but I want to be here.

He's silent, distant, confused. She's hurt by his silence and mistrust and leaves.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

WE SEE BUT DON'T HEAR: Oliver and Anna talking/arguing through a series of jump cuts. The sound comes back for the last line.

OLIVER
I don't know Anna. I don't think
this is what I am supposed to feel
like.

Anna looks crushed and surprised.

ANNA
Okay. I will go back to New York
then.

She gets up to go.

EXT. OLIVER'S HOUSE DAY

A cab is picking her up, Anna looks back up at Oliver's house, hoping something will happen, nothing does, she puts her suitcase in the trunk and gets in.

INT. OLIVER'S LIVING ROOM DAY

Oliver paces by his door. He rests his head against the door, lost in a confused sadness, we cant tell he's crying.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Oliver's POV as he pushes Hal's wheelchair down a cold hospital hallway.

INT. DOCTORS' OFFICE - DAY

Inside a small doctor's office, Hal, Oliver and Dr. Long have a meeting.

DR. LONG
Hal, you don't need to come in for
any more treatments.

Stoic and irreverent, Hal feigns surprise.

HAL
Have I done something wrong?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. FLASTER

It's best that you stay home.
Hospice can help you more now, any
more treatments would just -- cause
more pain.

HAL

I see.

DR. LONG

I'm sorry, I wish we could do more.

HAL

You did an excellent job Dr. Long.
Thank you... for... For coming to
the party.

Oliver's devastated.

INT. HAL'S HOME - DAY - LATER

JUMP CUTS: From Hal and Oliver's POV we jump through time as
two men deliver and set up a hospital bed in Hal's living
room. And the nurse puts sheets and a blanket on the bed.

EXT. HAL'S STREET - DAY

Oliver wheels Hal's chair in outside the house, taking him to
see a view of the canyons. Hal's face reveals he's finally
stopped denying the end is near.

INT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Oliver and Hal sit side by side in his new hospital bed, it's
dark and quite and Oliver has his hand in Hal's.

HAL

You always wanted to hold my hand
when you were little. I couldn't,
you know. I was afraid it would
look funny. I wanted to be close,
you know and my father certainly
was never close with me. God, I
hope I wasn't like that.

OLIVER

I can barely remember you from when
I was little.

HAL

I guess I was at work.

CUT TO PAST

INT. MUSEUM OPENING 1978

Young Oliver walks behind Georgia as she meanders through the crowd, feeling alone. She turns and finds Oliver on her tail. A fancy woman is talking pretentiously about a painting. Georgia's critical and amused, she sidles up to the woman and gently places her head on the woman's shoulder.

FANCY WOMAN

Oh!

Georgia smiles at her, casually unnerving. Oliver pulls her away.

OLIVER

Let's go home.

CUT TO: Oliver and Georgia heading away through the gallery.

GEORGIA

What about your father? What will he possibly do without us?

INT. MUSEUM HALLWAY

As they're making their way out of the museum an formal older lady stops them.

OLDER WOMAN

Georgia? You leaving?

GEORGIA

Yes Mary, it's an emergency, Oliver's appendix has ruptured.

OLDER WOMAN

Oh dear.

They look at Oliver who's mortified.

GEORGIA

He's a very composed child.

OLIVER

Let's go.

Oliver pulls her away before she starts any more trouble.

EXT. STREET/INT. GEORGIA'S CAR

Georgia's in drivers seat, they're at a stoplight.

GEORGIA

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver points left and she turns...

GEORGIA
Aha. The infamous left.

Up a new street, they arrive at the next stop.

GEORGIA
And?

Oliver points left.

GEORGIA
Left again. Going in circles. I
like it.

Irreverent but heavy, they drive on.

INT. OLIVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME

Oliver and Georgia enter. She heads down the hallway to her room, Young Oliver follows behind. She walks down the hallway to her bedroom, enters and closes the door.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Oliver lies on his bed in the half darkness. He's been there a while, Arthur staring at him.

CUT TO PAST

INT. ANNA'S HOTEL

Oliver remembers Anna on her hotel bed the night they met, messing up his hair, kissing for the first time.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

Oliver feeling the most lost, can't help but look at Arthur who's staring him down.

ARTHUR SUBTITLE
We knew it wouldn't work even
before we met her.

Oliver get's this more than ever. Something changes inside of him, he picks up his cel phone and dials.

ANNA

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Anna? Where where you?

EXT. ELLIOTT'S HOUSE - DAY

Oliver arrives with Arthur in a hurry.

EXT. ELLIOTT'S DOOR - DAY

Oliver hands Arthur, a dog bed, and a bag of dog food to Elliott.

OLIVER
Hey.

ELLIOTT
Hey.

OLIVER
(to Arthur)
You're going to take care of
Elliott. I'll be back in a couple
of days.
(to Elliott)
Good luck.

ELLIOTT
Alright.

OLIVER
Okay? Thanks.

Elliott closes the door. Oliver heads back to his car and Arthur's howling begins. It's an incredibly sad and desperate howl. Oliver gets to his car, the howling doesn't stop, Oliver can't ignore it. Oliver get's out of the car, heads back to house to get Arthur.

EXT. OLIVER'S CAR - DAY

Oliver and Arthur drive up to a new house. Oliver looks at Arthur with guilt.

EXT. ANDY'S BACKYARD - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Oliver watches Andy cry as Arthur licks him all over.

ANDY
He remembers me.

It's true, Oliver's surprised.

EXT. ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Andy closes the door, Oliver walks the first ten feet, to his surprise, silence. He walks to the edge of the yard, silence. He tentatively gets into his car, silence. He drives away.

INT. TAXI CAB - NEW YORK - DAWN

Oliver sees the Manhattan skyline as they cross the bridge into Manhattan.

EXT. 2ND AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

Oliver crosses the cold New York avenue.

EXT. AVENUE B AND 10TH ST. - CONTINUOUS

Oliver passes a bodega with flowers - he pauses.

EXT. ANNA'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

Oliver now with a bouquet of flowers in his hand, looking for the right number, finds her building. On his way to the door, he has doubts about the flowers, he decides to throw them away.

Oliver rings her buzzer, no answers, a stranger leaves the building and he catches the door before it close, he enters.

INT. ANNA'S DOOR

Oliver makes it to her door, he knocks, there's no answer. He pulls out his phone and calls her.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM:

ANNA (V.O.)

Hey.

OLIVER

Hey. Look I'm so sorry... But I'm, I'm at your front door. I'm in New York.

Anna, still in bed, sits up and feels something.

ANNA (V.O.)

I'm in Los Angeles.

Oliver's flabbergasted she's not behind the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
You, you're in LA?

Anna laughs, but is touched.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
You said you were coming here?!

ANNA
Yeah, but I didn't leave.

OLIVER
Fuck. I'm in your building.

Anna laughs.

ANNA (V.O.)
Okay. See the window? Near the radiator?

Oliver looks around and sees the radiator - goes to look.

ANNA
There is a hide-a-key behind it.

INT. ANNA'S APARTMENT.

The door opens, Oliver tentatively enters the empty room. The apartment is very spare, barely lived in. A lone couch, clothes on a rack, a few personal photos taped to the wall.

OLIVER
Okay, I'm inside. Wow, there's like nothing here.

ANNA
No.

Oliver moves forward into the kitchen.

ANNA (V.O.)
This is my kitchen. It's where I eat.

Oliver follows her tour, while she's not there, it's strangely intimate.

ANNA (V.O.)
This is my bathroom. It's very fancy.

The bare, poor bathroom is not fancy.

ANNA (V.O.)
Outside my window...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Oliver walks and looks out her window.

ANNA (V.O.)
... That's my neighbor's roof. The
room at the end is my bedroom...

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM

Oliver enters her bedroom.

ANNA (V.O.)
That's my closet. Those are my
clothes and my pictures.

There is a single rack holding up some clothes. Her pictures
are taped to the wall. Oliver sits on her bed.

ANNA
Why do you leave everyone? Why did
you let me go?

Oliver thinks for a moment.

CUT TO PAST

INT. OLIVER'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

REPEAT MEMORY: Oliver watches his mother walk down the
hallway, very alone, and enter her bedroom - it feels like
some gesture of hopelessness.

WE HEAR OLIVER'S ANSWER OVER THIS IMAGE:

OLIVER (V.O.)
Maybe because I, I don't really
believe that it's gonna work. And
then I make sure it doesn't work.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S LIVING-ROOM - DAY

Hal lies in the hospital bed set up in his living room.
JUAN, a young handsome and probably gay hospice nurse is
gently helping him take his morphine. Hal looks at Juan with
love and affection. Oliver watches from the kitchen door.

HAL
Isn't Juan's hair wonderful.

JUAN
Thanks. I use this great mousse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL
Well it's terrific.

JUAN
Do you wanna try some?

Hal turns shy and young.

HAL
Oh, no.

JUAN
Just a little bit?

HAL
I don't think so.

JUAN
Come on. Just try a little bit.
It'll be fun.

HAL
(laughs)
Yeah?

JUAN
Yeah.

HAL
How do you do it?

JUAN
Okay, I'm going to show you how.

Juan steps away and grabs his mousse, puts a little in his hand and sits back down on Hal's bed. He begins to spread it gently through wisps of Hal's white hair. Oliver watches Hal close his eyes, and deeply enjoy this simple affection and camaraderie with another gay man.

JUAN
There.

HAL
Is that it?

Hal looks into camera which is Oliver's POV.

HAL
How do I look?

Oliver's filled with love, happiness, regret.

OLIVER
Great. You look great.

CUT TO PRESENT

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM

Oliver's still on her bed, his heart and mind is somewhere else.

CUT TO PAST

INT. HAL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Hal's unconscious on his hospital bed. Some of Hal's friends gather around his hospital bed as Hal's gay priest gives him his Last Rites - Oliver and Juan watch in disbelief in the background.

INT. HAL'S KITCHEN - LATER

Oliver's alone in the kitchen, his head on the table - asleep. Juan walks to him and wakes him.

JUAN

Oliver. He's gone.

Oliver gets up. He can now see to the hospital bed, Hal's lifeless profile. Oliver is lost.

Oliver goes to Hal, puts his head on his chest and cries.

CUT TO NARRATED SEQUENCE

CUT TO BLACK

OLIVER (V.O.)

Once you make the call, you have less than an hour before two men come and place the body into a bag.

WE SEE STILL PHOTO OF A CHECK TO THE NEPTUNE SOCIETY, A JAR OF PEANUT BUTTER, A METAL ASH CONTAINER.

OLVIER (V.O.)

They charge 1485 Dollars for cremation and deliver the remains in a small metal container, the size of a jar of peanut butter. You will need to get a death certificate.

NOW HAL'S DEATH CERTIFICATE, CREDIT CARDS, PHONE BILLS, INSURANCE STATEMENTS, MORTGAGE STATEMENT, TAX FORM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER (V.O.)

You will need to make copies and send them to cancel every credit card, phone account, utility, gym membership, every insurance policy, mortgage, to settle their taxes.

A FAST SEQUENCE OF STILLS OF HAL'S MAIL PILING UP, THEN LIVE ACTION SHOT OF A HAND WRITING THE OBITUARY. STILL PHOTO OF A TRASH BAG, HAL'S PURPLE SWEATER.

OLIVER (V.O.)

You will have all their mail forwarded to your address. You will write their obituary. You run it with a photo in the paper for two dollars a word. You will wonder if it's right. You'll throw a lot of their stuff away. You'll bring a lot of their stuff to your house. This is the photo my mother kept in her bedroom.

A STILL PHOTO OF DOROTHEA LANGE'S FRAMED DAISY PHOTOGRAPH. THEN, MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF THE PHOTO WITH DIFFERENT HANDS AND DIFFERENT CONFIGURATIONS OF DAISIES FLASHES BY.

OLIVER (V.O.)

When I was a kid I thought that was my arm giving her daisies. Now I make a new mistake and think it's her arm giving me the daisies, saying, here, here's simple and happy. That's what I meant to give you.

EXT. ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Oliver arrives at Andy's door. Andy answers, Arthur's jumps up to see Oliver.

OLIVER

Hey.

ANDY

Hey.

OLIVER

Arthur...

Oliver picks him up, he gets all of Arthur's stuff, he's a little cold to Andy.

OLIVER

Thank you... Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDY

It's cause I'm gay, isn't it?

Oliver stops and looks back.

OLIVER

What?

ANDY

You never called or came to see me?

Oliver falters, not know how to say it, then...

OLIVER

No. No, it's because my father
loved you so much.

This hits Andy hard. Oliver turns to leave but can't. He
turns back, goes to Andy and they hug.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

Oliver and Arthur arrive, happy and relieved, Oliver jumps on
his bed and Arthur follows.

OLIVER

Arthur... hey. Hey, how've you
been?

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Oliver opens the front door to Anna.

OLIVER

Hey.

She's a bit tentative, but she's here and happy.

ANNA

Hey.

OLIVER

Come in, come in.

Arthur runs up and Anna bends down to greet him. They missed
each other.

Anna walks in and Oliver follows.

ANNA

The living room.

She heads to the dinning room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA
Dining room...

Oliver laughs nervously. In the dining room, Hal's old boxes are still stacked along the walls. Oliver leans forward and pulls something out of a box.

She looks at a personal ad application, with the picture of Hal in the open jean jacket we saw at the beginning of the film.

ANNA
Oh. Crazy picture...

OLIVER
Yeah.

ANNA
Can I read it?

OLIVER
Sure.

ANNA
I'm looking for sex with the hope it turns into friendship or a relationship. But I don't insist on monogamy.

CUT TO PAST

VARIOUS LOCATIONS

We see REPEAT SHOTS of Hal, and in every shot he's looking at camera. Hal telling Oliver he's gay, Hal napping with Andy and waving at Oliver, Hal after Juan put in his hair mousse looking at Oliver, Hal showing Oliver his radiation tatoo...

ANNA (V.O.)
I'm an old senior guy, 78, but I'm attractive and horny. I'm an art historian, now retired.

MORE REPEAT SHOTS: Hal with Andy at the L.A. Pride picnic, Hal playing with Arthur on his couch.

ANNA (V.O.)
And in addition to art, I like houses, gardens, parties, and walking with my Jack Russell. I'm 5'11", 160 pounds. I'm trim, gray hair, blue eyes, hairy chest.

CUT BACK TO THE PRESENT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLIVER
Chest...

ANNA
(laughs)
Chest? I like giving and, and
what?

Oliver finishes reading for her.

OLIVER
I like giving and getting rubdowns
and then going into mutual soft
stuff.

They both smile.

ANNA
I have a nice house with food,
drinks, friends and me. If you
are willing to try an older guy,
let's meet and see what happens.

She looks at the photo again.

ANNA
He didn't give up.

They look at each other, more vulnerable and willing than
we've seen them.

INT. OLIVER'S HALLWAY

Anna walks down the hallway, Oliver follows her.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

Anna and Oliver sit side by side on his bed.

OLIVER
What happens now?

ANNA
I don't know.

OLIVER
How does that work?

They look at each other, they smile.

CUT TO MAIN TITLE

BEGINNERS