

WORLD'S END

Written By

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Based on the Icelandic Miniseries "Heimsendir (World's End)"

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INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE on HENRY MUELLER'S sleeping face. Then we hear, in the distance, the roar of an elephant, and Henry's eyes open, and he looks terrified. Henry is 41, single, a high school English teacher.

INT. BATHROOM -- A FEW MOMENTS LATER

In a t-shirt and boxer shorts, Henry shuffles into his bachelorish/dirty bathroom. He lowers his shorts, sits down, but before there's any activity, he glances to his left and sees that the cardboard tube of toilet-paper is naked.

HENRY

Oh, no.

INT. BEDROOM -- A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Henry, not happy, is shaking an empty tissue box in his bedroom. With urgency, he hurries down the short hallway to the kitchen, on the hunt for a toilet-paper substitute.

A PAPER-TOWEL HOLDER over a cluttered sink shows a bare cardboard tube, a quickly opened kitchen drawer reveals an EMPTY PLASTIC WRAPPING that once held napkins. He lifts up an OLD NEWSPAPER from the kitchen table, considers it -

HENRY

(under his breath)

No, too thin...Oh, god.

His eyes dart about, then he notices the COFFEE-MAKER. He has a thought, opens a cabinet, and there's a plastic bag of coffee-filters with ONE FILTER left. He takes out the filter and looks from it to the coffee-pot, uncertain, making a decision - morning coffee or morning bowel evacuation? Then -

HENRY (CONT'D)

Fuck it.

And he walks off quickly with the filter to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY, LATER

Henry, now in rumpled jacket and tie, wearing glasses, is in front of his bathroom mirror, brushing his teeth. He finishes and notices a very long hair protruding from his ear, which he extends/uncurls to its full, extraordinary length.

HENRY

Jesus...

From the medicine cabinet he takes out a small, rusty pair of scissors. With trepidation, he approaches the long, antenna-like hair, and at the very moment that he's about to snip the hair, a car outside honks, and he cuts the lobe of his ear -

HENRY (CONT'D)

GOD-DAMMIT!!!!

EXT. NEW PALTZ HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY, A LITTLE LATER

Henry's car pulls quickly into the faculty lot and he gets out. A BAND-AID is awkwardly affixed to his ear-lobe.

He's carrying a large, stuffed manila folder, which, as he walks rapidly, leaves behind a trail of student papers. He realizes this and has to double back. The wind rustles the papers away from him.

He chases down a paper, stabs at it with his foot, misses, and then does get his shoe on it, triumphantly.

He bends down to pick up the paper, and as he does so, pain shoots into his lower-back. He reaches behind with his hand in the classic pose of back-pain, and he crumples downward, his head on the ground like a Muslim praying.

INT. NEW PALTZ HIGH-SCHOOL HALLWAY -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

In a corridor of squealing teenagers, Henry, limping because of his back, slides along the wall of the hallway, clutching to his chest his large folder of papers. Oversensitive, the students' shrieks seem to go directly into his lower-back, causing him to flinch and twitch, and he ducks into the -

INT. FACULTY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where he makes his way to the coffee-pot. It's empty. He hears the cackling laugh of a female colleague. He turns to look at her and the man beside her is chewing a bagel in a grotesque manner. Everything is hurtful to Henry this morning, verging on the horrific.

MALE TEACHER

Start a new pot, Henry.

Henry nods. He takes a FILTER from a plastic bag and then freezes, catatonically, recalling how his day had begun.

All sound in the room goes away. He stares at the FILTER, its *sea-shell* like ridges. Then he hears the roar of the ocean and the filter morphs into a large SEA-SHELL and -

EXT. BEACH -- HALLUCINATION

We're on a beach. An eight year-old boy, Henry from the past, is holding the sea-shell by the water's edge. Then he hears -

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Henry? Henry?

He turns. It's a buxom, middle-aged woman in a 70's bikini. She has a deep tan, overly freckled breasts. Henry's adult voice, full of wonderment, comes out of the boy's mouth.

HENRY

Mom? -

The woman smiles and removes her right breast from her bikini cup. The unsheathed area around the nipple is exceedingly white. She squeezes her breast, proffering it to Henry.

MOM

Here you go, dear -

Young Henry begins to reach for it, lips parting -

INT. FACULTY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Henry snaps out of it. His back is turned to his colleagues, so they didn't notice. With shaky hands he begins to put coffee into the filter. As he does so, he is tapped on the shoulder, startling him, causing him to spasmodically bobble the filter, spilling the grounds.

The person who startled him is PHYLLIS (late 30's), a good-looking woman/fellow teacher. He and Phyllis look at the spilled coffee. Then -

PHYLLIS

I need to talk to you, Henry.

INT. HENRY'S CLASSROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Henry and Phyllis enter his classroom, she shuts the door. He limps to his desk, she follows.

PHYLLIS

Why are you walking like that?

HENRY

I had back spasms in the parking lot. My spine is dissolving.

PHYLLIS

You always say that.

HENRY

And I haven't had any coffee. I can't think straight -

He sits down, opens a drawer, and removes a huge bottle of MOTRIN. She sits intimately on the edge of his desk, notices his band-aid. He dry-swallows two Motrin, chokes, gags.

PHYLLIS

Why no coffee?

HENRY

I don't want to go into it.

PHYLLIS

Oh...And what happened to your ear?

HENRY

I had this long ear-hair. Like a cat's whisker. And I had some rusty scissors -

PHYLLIS

Never mind. Listen, I have some weird, bad news.

HENRY

Oh, no. What?

PHYLLIS

I'm sorry but my husband was cheating on me when I was cheating on him and he picked up herpes.

HENRY

Herpes?

PHYLLIS

I know. You never hear about it any more. But it's making a comeback.

HENRY

Really? Do you have it?

PHYLLIS

I tested positive for exposure which means you could have it.

HENRY

What?!?

PHYLLIS

I'm really sorry.

HENRY

Does this mean you were having sex with your husband when...you know?

PHYLLIS

Yes. I had to keep up appearances.

Henry is silent, pierced. Phyllis gets off the desk.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

So you should get yourself tested. You won't sue me will you if you have it?

HENRY

Sue you? I'm still in love with you!

PHYLLIS

Don't be ridiculous.

The bell rings. She heads for the door, before opening it -

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry, Henry.

She gives him a forlorn look, then opens the door and leaves.

INT. HENRY'S CLASSROOM -- A LITTLE LATER

On the chalk-board: **WALDEN POND by Henry David Thoreau**. Henry is standing, reading from *Walden Pond*, and his glum 10th grade students sit before him. As he reads, BELLS from phones keep going off, causing him to grow increasingly upset...

HENRY

(reading, actual passage)
...*The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. (BELL). What is called resignation is confirmed desperation. (BELL). From the desperate city you go to the desperate country - (BELL). YOUR PHONES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE OFF, GOD-DAMMIT!*

He slams the book hard on his desk. Students recoil. He then uses his chair like a step and climbs onto his desk, *furious*.

HENRY (CONT'D)

If this book fell from my ass like an egg from a chicken, would you finally pay attention?!?

He makes a squatting motion and lets the book drop from his ass to the desk. He looks out at them. They're paying attention! He feels like a *brilliant*, charismatic teacher.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(manic, passionate)

So what Thoreau is trying to say is that we go through life in quiet agony...like prisoners in our own bodies...like clocks that keep track of time not in hours and minutes...but in despair!

He looks out at them, proud and wild-eyed, he's really getting through to them and then there's a text BELL -

HENRY (CONT'D)

(snaps)

FUCKING HELL!!!!

With that, he picks up the book and wings it at the classroom windows. The winging motion causes his back to give out, he SHRIEKS, grabs his back, tumbles off the desk, and the book shatters the window. Off the shattering, we cut to -

INT. PRINCIPAL WILLIAMS' OFFICE -- DAY, A FEW MINUTES LATER

PRINCIPAL WILLIAMS, early 60's, nice moustache, sits behind his desk. Henry is sitting in front of it. One of the lenses of his glasses is now cracked, from the tumble to the floor.

MR. WILLIAMS

I can't protect you any more, Henry. You crossed the line -

HENRY

It's not my fault. I didn't have any coffee this morning.

MR. WILLIAMS

That's no excuse -

HENRY

It's my students then. If I could just teach Honors English again! -

MR. WILLIAMS

That's out of the question.

HENRY

But the bright ones are more disturbed. I can reach them. I should be teaching *Mein Kampf*, not *Walden Pond*. They're not ready for life! They need to get their hands dirty -

MR. WILLIAMS

Mein Kampf will never be on our curriculum -

HENRY

That's what's wrong with American education - PC censorship!

MR. WILLIAMS

That's enough, Henry. You're going to have to take a medical leave.

HENRY

But I'd lose my tenure! You can't do this!

MR. WILLIAMS

I can. You're already on probation for what happened this fall.

HENRY

That was an aberration.

MR. WILLIAMS

It wasn't -

EXT. NEW PALTZ HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

Packed stands. Football game. A New Paltz rival is running back a kick-off for a touchdown. The runner is in the clear, sprinting, when out of no where HENRY comes charging across the field and tackles him. Henry, deluded, jumps up and down in joy, and then the team he sabotaged viciously gang-tackles him and he disappears beneath a swarm of bodies.

INT. MR. WILLIAMS' OFFICE -- DAY

HENRY

This is unfair! Teaching is everything to me.

(MORE)

HENRY (CONT'D)

I've given you my 20's and my 30's.
I've given you my PRIME!

Mr. Williams regards Henry, coolly. Then with disdain -

MR. WILLIAMS

Are you quoting "The Prime of Miss
Jean Brodie"?

HENRY

(a little ashamed)
Not consciously. But what if I was?
Didn't it win an academy award?

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Henry, destroyed, staggers down the hallway, which is devoid of students. Then Henry hears the great trumpeting blast of an elephant - the noise he heard when he woke up this morning. He turns and sees an ELEPHANT at the far end of the hall. It charges. Frightened, Henry takes off, sprinting...

EXT. NEW PALTZ HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY, A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Near the football field, the elephant is chasing Henry at some remove, and as he runs, Henry is taking off his clothes, tossing them into the air, hoping inanely that this will help him run faster, but it's also an act of shedding, a cathartic peeling of all that has happened this day - coffee filter, ear-snipping, back spasms, herpes news, getting fired...

EXT. NEW PALTZ HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY, A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Henry, naked, is on the ROOF of the school, standing on the edge - is he going to jump? The American flag swirls on a pole in the foreground. Students and teachers are gathered, pointing up. Sirens can be heard.

CLOSE on Henry's frightened face. He looks quite mad now, as cracked as his glasses. The band-aid is on his ear. Policemen emerge from behind Henry. He turns, frightened.

EXT. WINDING CATSKILLS ROAD -- MORNING, THE NEXT DAY

A POLICE CAR, with HENRY in the back seat, makes it way along the beautiful road. It passes a GREEN SUBARU. ALFIE, 14, is in the back seat, sitting behind the driver. HENRY and ALIFE meet eyes. He stares at her, seems to implore her, like he's asking for help. She doesn't know what to make of it. The police car speeds off.

INT. SUBARU -- CONTINUOUS

LOUIE HASTINGS, mid-30's, is driving. He's a roly-poly sweet fellow, an ex-smoker who sometimes drinks too much. In the back is ALFIE. She is listening to music - has ear-buds in. Louie looks at her in the rear-view mirror.

LOUIE
Listen, Alfie, I'm sorry -

ALFIE
(adjusts her music)
What?

LOUIE
I just want to say I couldn't let everyone down. We're short-staffed because of the holiday -

ALFIE
But you're letting *me* down.

LOUIE
We'll make it fun. We'll help people.

ALFIE
Helping crazy people is not fun.
It's sad.

Louie doesn't know what to say to that, and Alfie puts her music back on and stares out the window. We go to the exterior and pull way back and see the beautiful rolling hills surrounding Louie's car and the police car in front.

EXT. WINDING CATSKILLS ROAD -- MORNING, A LITTLE LATER

The POLICE CAR makes a turn onto a road which has two signs: **KINGSLEY HOSPITAL** and **DEAD END**. But the word 'dead' has been crossed out by a graffiti artist and replaced with "world's" so that the sign now reads **WORLD'S END**.

Further up the police car passes HILDY (late 40's). She wears a long dress & has a stricken, apocalyptic look on her face.

She sees HENRY and they meet eyes: a connection. Then she trails, with her haunted eyes, the receding POLICE CAR.

EXT. KINGSLEY HOSPITAL -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

The POLICE CAR approaches the MAIN HALL of KINGSLEY. The buildings of the hospital, except for a large addition to the main hall, had once been a summer camp called Swiss Meadows.

There are cottages, a large pond, a decrepit tennis court, a vegetable garden, an old swimming pool filled with debris, and a good-sized chicken coop. Waiting outside the entrance is LEO, a black man, late 20's. He's an attendant at Kingsley and a fitness fanatic, though he struggles with his weight because of food issues.

As the police car arrives, he's doing push-ups. The police car parks and two cops emerge. They remove Henry, who is in the same clothes as yesterday. He has a fresh bandage on his ear and looks very agitated. Leo approaches the police.

LEO

I'll take it from here. This is Mr. Mueller, right?

POLICEMAN

Yeah, that's right.

Leo takes Henry by the elbow, starts guiding him towards the front door of the hospital.

LEO

You doing ok, Mr. Mueller?

The cops head back to their car. LOUIE and ALFIE pull up in the SUBARU and get out of the car.

HENRY

No, I'm *not* doing ok. I need to speak to someone. I want to be released immediately.

LEO

Ok, ok, buddy. Just easy does it. Everything's going to be all right.

HENRY

Don't talk to me that way. I'm not a child.

Leo smiles, he's used to patients being upset, and -

INT. KINGSLEY HOSPITAL -- CONTINUOUS

Leo and Henry enter the main hall/day-room. Henry's eyes widen at what he sees: about a dozen zombie-ish patients are either standing or sitting. Two patients, a bit more alert than the others, STANLEY (30's) and OLIVER (50's) play chess. KARL MAGNUS (40's), a diminutive black man wearing an ODD PADDED HELMET, is observing the game. They look at Henry.

LEO

This is the day room. Wait right here. Got to get your paperwork.

He leaves Henry standing there.

OLIVER

(to Henry)

Welcome. Do you play chess? Are you Jewish? What's your diagnosis?

Henry doesn't answer, just looks away, as if by looking away he can deny where he is. Then an enormous mountain of man, BOB, wearing a robe, lays a heavy hand on Henry's shoulder.

BOB

(low grumble)

Cigarette?

Henry is almost ready to cry - where has he landed?

INT. LOUIE'S COTTAGE ON THE GROUNDS -- DAY

In a small apartment-like cottage, ALFIE enters a tiny bedroom and throws herself onto a neat bed. Louie follows her and stands in the doorway.

ALFIE

I don't want to be here. I want to spend the weekend with Sheila.

LOUIE

You can't stay there over night. Her father gets drunk.

ALFIE

So do you.

LOUIE

But never in front of you.

ALFIE

How do you know? Sometimes you black-out.

LOUIE
I don't black out!

ALFIE
I'll say it again: How do you know?

LOUIE
(flustered)
I...This isn't about my drinking.
Why do you need to be with Sheila
all the time? It's not healthy.

ALFIE
We're thinking of becoming
lesbians. It'll help us get into a
good school, like Brown.

LOUIE
First of all, we can't afford
Brown, and, secondly, you're too
young to know if you're a lesbian.

ALFIE
No, I'm not. Some kids come out in
the third grade -

Just then SUZANNE, Alfie's mother/Louie's ex, appears in the doorway. Suzanne is in the starched white uniform of a nurse.

ALFIE (CONT'D)
Mom, tell Dad I don't want to be
here. I want to spend the weekend
with Sheila -

SUZANNE
It's not my custodial time, Alfie.
Your father is in charge until
Tuesday. We have to obey the court.

ALFIE
(beat, looks at them)
I'd like to be a normal person but
this divorce is making that very
difficult.

INT. HENRY'S ROOM -- DAY

Leo shows Henry into a room with two beds, a shelf with some books, a desk, a closet, and its own bathroom.

LEO
The doctor will be with you real
soon.

Leo smiles at Henry and leaves. Henry, at a loss, stares at the two NARROW BEDS and then the beds MORPH into COTS and the room morphs into a BOY SCOUT CABIN and standing by one of the cots is a Boy Scout LEADER, a nasty, cruel teenager in uniform. Near him are a dozen young 8 year-old Boy Scouts.

The blanket is pulled back from the cot, revealing a WET SHEET. The LEADER points at the sheet and asks cruelly -

TEEN-AGE BOY SCOUT LEADER
Did you wet your bed, Mueller?

The camera swings and standing where Henry was is the YOUNG HENRY from the earlier hallucination.

YOUNG HENRY
(Henry's adult voice)
I...I...I want to go home.

The LEADER looks at him without pity.

TEEN-AGE BOY SCOUT LEADER
Get him, boys. Kill him.

The other boys with sneering, unkind faces advance on frightened YOUNG HENRY, like something out of LORD OF THE FLIES, and as they approach, we hear -

YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Hi -

Henry comes back to reality, turns, and in the doorway is a beautiful young woman standing there, coquettishly. This is MAGGIE (late 20's). She pushes her hair, which is blonde, showing dark roots, out of her eyes.

MAGGIE
Are you new?

Henry doesn't know what to say. She steps in, advances towards him. He backs up, a little alarmed.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Do you think I'm pretty?

HENRY
Uh...yes...but -

MAGGIE
You can kiss me, if you want.

She steps very close to him. Henry stares at her, scared. She reaches up and touches his bandaged ear, tenderly.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You look like a dog I had. Its ears
got snipped -

Then she goes to kiss him. At first he resists and then he gives over to it. She's beautiful. Then she parts from him, looks at him seductively, lifts up his left hand as if to put it on her breast and then savagely BITES his hand in the meaty part between thumb and forefinger.

HENRY

AGGGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Maggie smiles and then -

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Help! Help! HELP!!!!

She hits her face hard with both her open-palmed hands, repeatedly. Henry recoils. LOUIE comes running.

LOUIE

Maggie! What's going on?!?

MAGGIE

He...he assaulted me!

HENRY

I didn't. I swear!! She bit me! She didn't break the skin but -

LOUIE

Maggie, did it *really* happen this time? Tell me the truth.

Maggie stares at Louie. She has issues but she's not a liar.

MAGGIE

No -

Then her face screws up in pain and she goes running out of the room. Louie turns to Henry.

LOUIE

I'm very sorry about that. She's not a bad girl.

Henry is silent, overwhelmed, doesn't say anything.

LOUIE (CONT'D)

Have you spoken to the Doctor yet?

HENRY

No. I need to. Please.

LOUIE
I'll go get him.

He steps towards Henry, offers his hand. He's warm, kind.

LOUIE (CONT'D)
I'm Louie.

They shake. Louie smiles reassuringly and then leaves. We follow him out to the hallway and -

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

BOB is standing there.

BOB
Cigarette?

LOUIE
Not time yet, Bob.

Louie keeps walking. A patient passes him, walking backwards. Then MARTIN (late 20's) wearing a tweed jacket and tie passes him. He addresses Louie like a colleague, nods at him -

MARTIN
Louie -

Louie nods back and the camera reverses and we follow Martin.

INT. HENRY'S ROOM -- DAY

Henry is pacing, nervous and agitated. Then MARTIN enters, goes right to Henry with a big welcoming smile on his face.

MARTIN
Henry? Sorry I'm late -
(offers his hand)
Martin Spencer Johnson.

Henry assumes, because of Martin's coat and tie, that he is the doctor. Henry over-pumps his hand, he's a bit manic.

HENRY
I'm so glad you're here. There's
been a terrible mistake.

MARTIN
A mistake?

Martin disengages his over-pumped hand, sits down on his bed.

HENRY

Yes, at the hospital in New Paltz, they thought I tried to cut off my ear like Van Gogh. But I didn't.

MARTIN

Oh, Van Gogh -

HENRY

I do admit I've been under a lot of pressure at work - I have several hundred unmarked papers - but I really shouldn't be committed. You can see that, right?

MARTIN

Right...

Henry sits down across from Martin on the opposite bed.

HENRY

So you agree?

MARTIN

I agree.

HENRY

Really?

MARTIN

Really.

HENRY

Such a relief. Thank you.

MARTIN

Thank you.

Reassured, Henry relaxes, crosses his legs, and so does Martin. Henry then smiles at Martin and runs his fingers through his hair. Martin does the same exact thing. This time Henry catches on that something is off.

HENRY

Are you copying me?

MARTIN

What?

HENRY

Are you copying me?!?

He stands up. Martin stands up.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Who are you?

MARTIN

Who are you?

Henry, flustered, notices a FRAMED PICTURE on the bookshelf - it's MARTIN HOLDING A CHICKEN. Henry picks up the picture.

HENRY

You're not the doctor!

MARTIN

Give me that!

Martin lunges at Henry to get the picture. They pirouette around the room, slapstick fighting. Suzanne enters.

SUZANNE

What's going on in here!?!

Martin stops tussling, turns to Suzanne. He's stuttering and confused -

MARTIN

Hhhh...he...I...mmmmm my pppicture-

Suzanne, impatient, SLAPS Martin across the face and shouts at the same time -

SUZANNE

GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF, MARTIN!

Martin, aghast at this abuse, looks at her with wounded eyes. Henry is shocked, and then Martin forcefully grabs the photo from Henry's hands, pushes him to the bed, and runs out of the room, looking hysterical. Henry, sprawled on the bed, his face red from the tussling, cries -

HENRY

IS EVERYONE HERE MAD?

INT. HOSPITAL, THE CAGE -- DAY

The CAGE, where medications are kept, has a window, where LOUIE sits, doling out cigarettes to patients, who are lined up in the hallway outside. Behind Louie, LEO is doing push-ups with JIMMY, a skinny, fellow attendant, on his back.

LOUIE

(to a patient)

Here you go, Frank.

Then ASTRID (mid-30's), a childlike woman wearing a child's winter hat w/ a pom pom, rolls up to the window in a wheelchair and Louie passes her some GUMMY BEARS, which are just for her.

ASTRID

Thanks, Daddy!

She rolls off. As she does, Louie hears a loud grunt from Leo. He turns and sees that Leo has collapsed with Jimmy still on his back. Jimmy, bored, is picking his nose, but when he sees Louie turn, he disengages his finger.

LOUIE

Would you guys cut that out! It's not professional.

LEO

But every second I'm not working out I'm getting fatter. I'm in a race against time.

JIMMY

You're not fat! You have body-image distortion. I wish you'd get some counseling.

With Louie distracted by those two, BOB reaches through the window and takes a whole CARTON of cigarettes.

LOUIE

Oh, shit -

He quickly stands and exits the cage, grabbing his mug of coffee. BOB, carton in hand, is shuffling down the hallway.

LOUIE (CONT'D)

Bob?

Bob turns. He's very out of it and very large.

BOB

Cigarette?

LOUIE

Sure. Can you hold this?

He offers Bob his mug of coffee. Bob, confused, takes it.

LOUIE (CONT'D)

And can you hold this?

Louie un-clips his large set of keys and holds it out to Bob. Bob can't hold the keys, the mug, and the carton, so Louie, smartly, relieves him of the carton, hands him the key-ring, opens the carton, removes a single cigarette, and in a neat magician-like exchange, takes from Bob the keys and the mug and gives him the single cigarette.

Bob having gotten a cigarette, turns, starts to walk off, and mutters with pleasure -

BOB
Cigarette.

INT. MARTIN'S ROOM -- DAY

Henry is staring out the window, forlorn. He sees ALFIE go walking by. She's holding her phone. Henry opens the window. It only opens a crack and he squeezes his face through that.

HENRY
Hey! You there!

She turns, looks at him, backs up. She's a little frightened.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Don't be scared. I'm not...a crazy person. But I need your phone to make a call.

ALFIE
No. I don't let anyone touch my phone. I don't like germs.

HENRY
My hands are clean. I promise.

ALFIE
I saw you this morning in the police car. You're probably a sociopath.

HENRY
Listen, that's a very good word - I have students your age - but I'm not a sociopath -

Just then LEO sticks his head in the room.

LEO
Dr. White can see you now.

Henry turns his head too quickly, banging his bandaged ear, slapstick-ishly, in the narrow opening.

HENRY
FUCKING COCKSUCKING HELL!

Alfie stares at him and then sprints away.

EXT. KINGSLEY HOSPITAL, CHICKEN COOP -- DAY

MARTIN is sitting in the chicken coop, looking very upset. He's holding and stroking a chicken, KIKI.

MARTIN
What do you think, Kiki? Is he dangerous? Will he cause me pain?

INT. DR. WHITE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Henry is sitting in Dr. White's office. DR. WHITE is behind his desk. He has a yellow pad for notes. He wears the same jacket and tie as Martin. He's pretentious, eccentric. There's something off about him, a wild gleam in the eye, but Henry thinks he's talking to a *doctor*, an *authority*.

DR. WHITE
...I believe you about your ear, Mr. Mueller. I really do. But what you have is a civil commitment. The authorities want you here.

HENRY
Isn't there *anything* I can do? I want to go home.

DR. WHITE
In a week, you can begin an appeal, but if you try to leave before that, you'd be arrested.

HENRY
My god. I'm a prisoner...

DR. WHITE
That's negative thinking. You're a patient. Not a prisoner. Why don't we talk a little? You seem like an intelligent man. I'd like to get to know you.

Henry smiles weakly at this compliment. Dr. White readies his pen for his 'intake' notes.

DR. WHITE (CONT'D)
So. How's your health? Any issues?

HENRY

Well...Athlete's foot for about three years straight, which does drive me crazy, I admit. Back spasms, stress-related hallucinations - which is nothing serious - and, well, I may have been exposed to genital herpes.

DR. WHITE

Really? Herpes is in vogue again, you know. I think I read about it in the *Styles* section of the Times.

HENRY

That's what my lover said! That it was making a comeback.

DR. WHITE

Yes. Is your lover male or female?

HENRY

Female.

DR. WHITE

Really? What's the first thing you notice about a woman?

HENRY

(beat, hangs his head)
Her breasts.

DR. WHITE

Don't be ashamed! I'm also a breast man. Those ass and leg men always lord it over us as if they were somehow superior, but put a nipple in my mouth and I'll produce a hard-on as firm as an Olympic baton!

Dr. White shoves his fist into the air, indicating a potent erection, and then writes on his pad: **BREAST MAN** and quickly draws TWO BREASTS. On the pad are other elaborate doodles: a HANDGUN, A PENIS, a SWASTIKA, many NOSES. *Is Dr. White mad?*

HENRY

An Olympic baton. That's quite -

DR. WHITE

Any *obvious* sexual problems?
Impotence? Premature ejaculation? A general revulsion towards the act?

HENRY

I've never told anyone this, but -

He stops. Should he open up?

DR. WHITE

(seductively)

You can trust me, Mr. Mueller.

HENRY

It's just that...well, when I'm about to have an orgasm, strange thoughts intrude, robbing me of any...joy.

DR. WHITE

That's a form of self-castration.

HENRY

Castration?

DR. WHITE

(suddenly stands, cheery)

Yes. Why don't we go for a walk? I think you're going to be with us for a while. But don't worry. Time is different here on the mountain.

EXT. KINGSLEY HOSPITAL -- DAY

Dr. White and Henry are walking on the grounds. Dr. White, full of himself, acting like a Victorian patriarch, has threaded his arm through Henry's.

DR. WHITE

....The way I run this place, Mr. Mueller, is that the staff live here, on two-week rotations, which gives us a family sort of feel.

HENRY

What about you?

Behind a tree, MARTIN, dressed like Dr. White, is spying on them as they walk. A look of great pain and jealousy is on his face. Unable to bear it, he slinks off, unseen.

DR. WHITE

I live here full time, like Tolstoy on his farm. We have a chicken coop, you know. Every morning, you'll have organic eggs.

(MORE)

DR. WHITE (CONT'D)

Not too many asylums or even bed
and breakfasts can make that claim.

He sits on a backless bench by the old debris-filled pool,
pats the space next to him. Henry sits beside him.

HENRY

I like organic eggs, but I do plan
to be out of here by next week.

DR. WHITE

(chilly)

That would be a mistake, Mr.
Mueller. You're not a well person.
You said yourself that you have
hallucinations. And back spasms.

HENRY

(defensive)

The hallucinations are mild, and
Oliver Sacks says they're perfectly
normal.

DR. WHITE

Oh, God! Sacks! He's a con man and
a charlatan. What has he really
done to help people? Has he taken
an old summer camp and transformed
it into a beautiful working asylum?

He waves his hands proudly at the hoary grounds -

HENRY

I only -

DR. WHITE

Your problem, Mr. Mueller, is that
you're fighting going mad, which is
making you insane. You need to be
medicated.

HENRY

Oh, no. I'm against all medications-

Dr. White stands, offended. We can see that he can change on
a dime, that he's mercurial and also paranoid.

DR. WHITE

Are you questioning my judgment? Do
you think I'm unfit as a doctor?

HENRY

No, I'm sorry, I just -

DR. WHITE

(proud, defiant)

I studied at the Sorbonne, you know. I once saw the great analyst Lacan in a pissoir. No one else at the urinal knew who he was!

HENRY

But -

DR. WHITE

You're my patient now, Mr. Mueller. You haven't been doing a very good job of taking care of yourself. You need to be less...*willful*.

With that, he squeezes Henry's shoulder in a somewhat threatening way, and walks off. Henry is left to ponder the meaning of it all when suddenly an EGG comes crashing into his forehead. He flips backwards onto the ground, hits his head on a stone and passes out. MARTIN, the egg-thrower, goes running. Henry is left there, unconscious.

INT. MEETING ROOM -- DAY

DR. WHITE is having a staff meeting with LOUIE, SUZANNE, JIMMY, LEO, and CAROL (the other nurse). Out the window, unseen by everyone, except JIMMY who is facing the window, several PATIENTS have gathered.

DR. WHITE

...Henry, the new patient, says the ear-snipping was an accident. Naturally, I don't believe him.

SUZANNE

Of course not. He's probably a pathological liar.

LOUIE

I think it's too soon to make that call. He seems reasonable.

DR. WHITE

I don't think so. He revealed a morbid castration anxiety. But he's resistant to medication.

SUZANNE

I'll deal with him. He's already had a fight with Martin.

DR. WHITE

What? I don't want him upsetting
Martin.

Outside: BOB and four other male patients unfurl a large blanket. KARL MAGNUS, holding an unopened umbrella, sits in the middle of the blanket. MAGGIE is watching and stripping off her clothes. She's happy again. Others have gathered.

Jimmy raises his hand to get Dr. White's attention but is ignored.

SUZANNE

Don't worry. I'll medicate Mr.
Mueller. He'll be a well-behaved
boy for me.

DR. WHITE

Good. We'll play good cop bad cop
on this one.

SUZANNE

But I always play the bad cop.

DR. WHITE

(a little flirty)
That's because you like it.

Suzanne smiles, blushes. Louie doesn't like this. Outside BOB and the men pick up the blanket with KARL MAGNUS on it and they begin to toss him into the air and in mid-air he opens his UMBRELLA. MAGGIE, in bra and panties, is running around the men, urging them on. Jimmy can't take it -

JIMMY

Dr. White! We have a situation
outside. Karl Magnus is trying to
fly again!

Everyone turns and looks out the window -

EXT. HOSPITAL GROUNDS -- CONTINUOUS

KARL is being tossed higher and higher into the air. The other patients are clapping and ecstatic. Finally, in SLOW MOTION, Karl is very high up in the air, hoping that his umbrella will catch the wind.

For a moment he's PAUSED in mid-air with his UMBRELLA, like Mary Poppins or a Dali painting. Will he fly? Then he comes crashing down, hits the blanket, which is knocked from the hands of the men.

KARL is now gasping for breath, having landed on his back. The patients gather around him. The staff are now standing by the window.

EXT. GROUNDS OF THE HOSPITAL -- DAY

Henry is asleep on the ground, the egg having dried on his forehead. Then there's a shadow over his face. He opens his eyes, startled. Looming over him is HILDY. The sun is behind her, she seems luminous.

HILDY

Are you all right?

Henry is stunned by her beauty, and then she shifts, the sun is no longer behind her, and she is now her worn, tortured self. But Henry has a sense that he's seen something hidden. He removes a piece of shell from his forehead -

HENRY

Yes, I'm fine. I think I was
knocked out by an egg.

Hildy is not thrown by this information. Seems normal to her.

HILDY

That happens. I'm Hildy.

HENRY

Henry.

He stands and offers his hand. They shake.

HILDY

Can I show you something?

EXT. THE POND -- A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Hildy and Henry are sitting on the grass by the pond. He's picking some more dried egg-shell off his forehead.

HILDY

This time of day is best. The
light. You can almost feel good
about being alive.

HENRY

Yes...Thank you for bringing me
here. I love this.

HILDY

Me, too. Have you read *Walden Pond*?

HENRY

Are you joking?

HILDY

No. I never joke. I have year-round seasonal affect disorder. Also catastrophic depression.

HENRY

Oh...It's just that...well, I'm very familiar with *Walden Pond*.

HILDY

I always think of it when I sit here. This pond is the best thing about this place. Also, the free-range eggs are very good.

Henry suddenly stands, paces, removes a piece of shell from his forehead.

HENRY

Yes, I keep hearing about them. And what's odd is that just yesterday I role-played a free-range chicken laying an egg...*while teaching Walden Pond!* There's something going on in the cosmos!

HILDY

It's probably a sign that you're meant to be here.

HENRY

But I have to get out! I'm being held against my will!

HILDY

(stands up)

I understand...

She impulsively takes his hand and holds it in both her hands to reassure him, comfort him. She's like a necromancer, but also a good witch, a shrew out of Shakespeare who urges men into action by whispering to them...

HILDY (CONT'D)

But you know, you could be king of this place. You have a noble jaw.

HENRY

(vain, flattered)

Really? Noble?

HILDY

Yes...I had a vision. You could rule this place, make it an Eden far away from the world.

HENRY

You have visions?

HILDY

Yes. Sometimes, they're right, sometimes they're wrong. That's the problem with the visions.

HENRY

(beat, then a gleam comes into his eye)

Do you really think I could be king?

Hildy nods madly, enthusiastically, and we close on Henry's SMILING face - his cracked glasses, his bandaged ear. *He could be king!*

EXT. HOSPITAL GROUNDS -- EARLY EVENING

Dr. White and Martin are playing badminton. After a few strokes of the birdie, Dr. White is bent over, out of breath. Martin jogs to him, concerned. We see their matching clothes.

MARTIN

Are you all right, Roland?

DR. WHITE

Yes, Martin. You were playing beautifully...Let's walk a little.

He loops his arm into Martin's and they start a slow stroll.

MARTIN

I saw you walking like this with your new favorite, Henry.

DR. WHITE

My new favorite? Don't be silly. You know that you're my favorite favorite and nothing will ever change that.

MARTIN

Really?

DR. WHITE

Of course. If I was Freud, you'd be my daughter. My most adored patient.

MARTIN

I'd like to be your daughter.

DR. WHITE

Of course you would. So don't worry about this Henry, but keep an eye on him for me. Make sure he doesn't try to cut off his ear again.

Martin smiles and they continue strolling in the twilight.

INT. CAFETERIA -- EVENING

HENRY and HILDY enter the cafeteria. They have the conspiratorial air of new friends. SUZANNE spots Henry. Hildy leads Henry to a table of people, including Karl Magnus, Stanley, Oliver, and Astrid. They sit.

HILDY

Everyone, this is Henry. He's special.

OLIVER

Yes, he looks special.

HILDY

He could lead us -

Just then Suzanne comes up, holding two cups of coffee, and leads Henry away. Hildy looks after them with concern.

SUZANNE

Henry, let's you and I talk and have a coffee. I haven't properly welcomed you to Kingsley.

HENRY

Ok, sure...

They sit down. She smiles. Sips her coffee. Henry sips his.

SUZANNE

So your first day. Not an easy adjustment, I know. But you had a good talk with Dr. White?

HENRY

Well...uh...He has a unique approach -

SUZANNE

He'll take very good care of you.
He's a brilliant physician.

He nods, not really believing her, takes another sip and starts to feel something. He looks into the coffee-cup and the dark liquid, with traces of white, begins to spin, looking like the WHEEL OF THE UNIVERSE. He looks at Suzanne. His terrified eyes say - What have you done to me?

INT. DOCTOR WHITE'S OFFICE -- NIGHT, LATER

Dr. White, in his shadowy office, is writing in a MARBLE notebook, furiously. Then, exhausted, he closes the notebook. Taped to the cover is a PHOTO OF MARTIN. Then he swivels in his chair and opens a cabinet, revealing a closed-circuit tv, which shows Martin brushing his teeth, wearing pajamas. A camera is hidden in Martin's room.

As Dr. White watches the feed, he removes from his desk-drawer a syringe and a rubber cord. He wraps the cord around his arm and watches Martin gargle and spit. Dr. White plunges the needle into his arm and his head tilts back, and we cut to Martin's room, the black and white image on the closed-circuit tv morphing into color -

INT. HENRY/MARTIN'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS NIGHT

Martin leaves the sink, goes to Henry, who is in bed, blanket up to his chin. Martin leans over him. Henry is clearly medicated behind his cracked lens.

MARTIN

Just want you to know that if you
try to steal Dr. White from me...
I will...*I will HATE you.*

He then gets into his own bed, turns off the light. Henry staggers out of bed, to the door, opens it. Then looks at Martin.

HENRY

Screw you. I don't want to be at
this summer camp anyway.

Then he looks down the hall to his right. Nothing. Then to his left - the ELEPHANT. Henry is stunned and then...he smiles! He beckons to the elephant, who comes to him.

Henry, smiling wide, gets on the elephant, whispers into its ear, and then they charge down the hall! The elephant trumpeting loudly! The End.