

depressed roomies

a pilot by

Charlie Kaufman

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

IT'S A TENEMENT APARTMENT WITH "COLLEGE" DECOR: SAGGING COUCH COVERED IN A PATTERNED SHEET, "OLD TRUNK" COFFEE TABLE, CINDERBLOCK BOOKCASE. ALAN, MID-TWENTIES AND HOLLOW-EYED, PACES WHILE TALKING INTO A HAND-HELD TAPE RECORDER. THERE IS A CONSTANT "CLOMPING AND DRAGGING" SOUND COMING FROM THE APARTMENT OVERHEAD.

ALAN

Alan: an Oral Biography,
chapter (calculating) three
thousand and eighty-one.

Alan, born on August 14, 1968,
is ugly, stupid, vile,
pretentious, unemployed ...
smelly ...

ARTHUR, ALSO MID-TWENTIES AND A LITTLE OVERWEIGHT,
ENTERS CARRYING A BAG OF GROCERIES.

ARTHUR

Hey, Alan.

ALAN

(into recorder) Enter Arthur,
weary from another day spent
in a needy, and dare I say,
desperate pursuit of money.

ARTHUR

Please leave me out of your
self-indulgent rant.

ALAN

Ooh, I *like* that! (into recorder) Alan is self-indulgent. He grew up in Queens, New York.

ARTHUR

(taunting) Oh, Alan, look where I've been.

ARTHUR TURNS AROUND HIS GROCERY BAG TO REVEAL A *GRISTEDES* LABEL.

ALAN

(grabbing Arthur's lapels) My God, who'd you have? Who, who, who?

ARTHUR

Name-tag *Rosa S.*, checkout girl extraordinaire

ALAN

(backing away) She said, "Hi. How are you today?" to you, didn't she?

ARTHUR IS UNPACKING HIS GROCERIES AND WRITING "ARTHUR" ON EACH ITEM BEFORE PUTTING IT AWAY.

ARTHUR

It would seem so.

ALAN

You bastard.

ARTHUR

There's a little book called
"How to Win Friends and
Influence People", my boy.
You should give it a look-see.

ALAN

Please don't try to suck me
into your cult.

ARTHUR

Fine. Remain friendless and
uninfluential.

ALAN

Thank you I will. (into
recorder) Still helplessly in
love with check-out girl Name-
tag *Rosa S.* Would marry same
if only she'd ask me, "Hi, how
am I today."

ARTHUR

I may marry her first. You see, I'm winning her friendship and influencing her right now, even as I unpack. That's the thing about winning friends and influencing people, Alan, you can practice it wherever you happen to be. The subway, dining with the boss, at a pep rally.

ALAN

Are you even speaking English now? Because ...

ARTHUR

Fine.

ALAN

Fine. (falling back onto the couch) I'm depressed. (beat) Why are you writing "Arthur" on those roach motels?

ARTHUR

They're *my* roach motels.

ALAN

And my roaches are not allowed to get stuck in your motels?

ARTHUR

Look, I just want to make it
clear that I purchased them.

ALAN

Do I keep you from using the
trash receptacle that I
bought? Should I write "Alan"
on the garbage can?

ARTHUR

Well I can't think of a more
fitting monument.

ALAN LUNGES AT ARTHUR. THEY WRESTLE ON THE FLOOR FOR A
WHILE. THEN THEY LOSE INTEREST, UNTANGLE THEMSELVES,
AND GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS: ARTHUR PUTTING AWAY
GROCERIES, ALAN STARING OUT THE WINDOW AT THE STREET
BELOW.

ALAN

(under breath) Oh baby, marry
me, marry me, marry me ...

ARTHUR

(running to window) Where?
(sees who Alan is watching) Oh
yes! Yes indeed! Marry *me!*
Marry Arthur!

THEY CRANE THEIR NECKS UNTIL SHE IS GONE. THEY SIGH.
ARTHUR GOES BACK TO HIS GROCERIES.

ALAN

She hated me. Even from all
the way down there she thought
I was ugly and unpleasant
looking.

ARTHUR

If you're fishing for
compliments, I'm not biting.

ALAN

Fine. Who cares?

ARTHUR

Not me, that's who.

ALAN

Fine. (beat) You know, I'd
tell you if I thought you were
unpleasant looking, if you
asked.

ARTHUR

I'm not in need of that
service at this time, thank
you very much.

ALAN

I'd say you're a little
curious.

ARTHUR

Not even. By the way do you hear a "Clomping" or is it simply my heart as I envision sweet Rosa naked on her back, looking up at me and moaning, *ad infinitum*, Hi, how are you today, Arthur?

ALAN

(pointing up) We have a new neighbor.

ARTHUR

I don't like him. He has a very hard foot.

ALAN

Remember how great it was when everyone moved out of this building except you and me?

ARTHUR

That infestation of rats was the best thing that ever happened to us.

ALAN

Finally, peace and quiet. Not counting the click click click of all those tiny toenails.

ARTHUR

A small price.

ALAN

But now!

ARTHUR

I need you to march right up
there and give him a piece of
our mind.

ALAN

Why me?

ARTHUR

Because it's your turn.

ALAN

Oh yeah. (turns to leave,
turns back) Why is it my turn?

ARTHUR

Because it's always your turn,
Alan.

ALAN

Right. (turns to exit, turns
back) But we have to talk
about that arrangement at some
point. Okay?

ARTHUR

At some point, yes.

ALAN EXITS.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That book is a godsend.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ALAN KNOCKS ON AN APARTMENT DOOR. THERE IS A NOISY CLOMPING, AND THE SOUND OF A DOOR UNBOLTING. THE DOOR OPENS TO REVEAL ROD, AN ENORMOUS, IMPOSING, BEARDED YOUNG MAN WITH A WOODEN LEG. ALAN SMILES.

ROD

Yes?

ALAN

(thinking quick) Welcome
Wagon!

ROD

Oh, please come in.

ALAN

Actually, I don't have any of
your prizes with me. This is
the pre-welcome introductory
visit, the one where we say
"welcome!", then go away, soon
to return with prizes and
valuable gifts.

ROD

Would you like some tea. It's
a mess in here, but I could...

ALAN

No! Must be going! Soon to
return!

ALAN HURRIES DOWN THE HALL.

ALAN (CONT'D)

With valuable prizes!

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

ALAN ENTERS, OUT OF BREATH. HE CLOSSES THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. ARTHUR IS CANNING FRUIT AND CHANTING. THE CLOMPING CONTINUES.

ARTHUR

Well? (sing-songy) I don't
not hear him.

ALAN

He's about a hundred feet
tall, Arthur. And he has a
wooden leg.

ARTHUR

Did you or did you not tell
the behemoth to be quiet?

ALAN

He has a wooden leg. He's
appendagely-challenged. You
can't tell a cripple to be
quiet. There are ordinances.

ARTHUR

Hmmmmmm. What if we asked him
nicely to sit in one place
from the hours of 10 PM to 7
AM daily?

ALAN

(anxiously) Is it my turn
still?

ARTHUR

Look, we'll invite Mr. Leg to
dinner. I'll bake my world
famous Cornish pasties. *Then*
you'll ask him.

ALAN

(sighing) Okay. Make a list.
I get to shop. I have a new
plan how to make Rosa like me.

ARTHUR

Do tell.

ALAN

I buy tampons, like they're
for my girlfriend, see. Women
love a man who's willing to
buy tampons for his
girlfriend. I learned that
watching Sinbad.

ARTHUR

The comedian or the sailor.

ALAN

The comedian.

ARTHUR

Sinbad the comedian, huh?
 He's good and I'm guessing
 quite knowledgeable about the
 ladies. (beat) You double-
 crossing bastard! I'll teach
 you to steal my girl!

ARTHUR LUNGES AT ALAN. THEY WRESTLE ON THE FLOOR FOR A
 BIT, LOSE INTEREST, GET UP.

ARTHUR

(making a list) Let's see... a
 pound of butter, unsalted...

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A TABLE IS SET, RATHER FORMALLY FOR THESE SHABBY
 SURROUNDINGS, IN THE CENTER OF THE ROOM. ALAN, ARTHUR,
 AND ROD ARE EATING.

ROD

Delicious pasties, Arthur.

ARTHUR

Rod, you make me blush. (holds
 up glass) A toast!

ALAN AND ROD LIFT THEIR GLASSES.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

To our new neighbor Rod. May
 his apartment be blessed with
 happy and productive times.

ROD

Amen!

THEY CLICK GLASSES AND DRINK.

ARTHUR

(another toast) And may he sit
in a chair and lie comfortably
in bed every night from 10 PM
to 7 AM the next morning.

ROD

You said it! Hey, wait a
minute. I don't get that
toast.

ALAN

It's Icelandic. It doesn't
translate well.

ARTHUR

Rod, it's just that, with the
leg and all, it's a little
distracting to ... *Alan*, who's
a writer.

ROD

You don't approve of my leg,
Alan?

ALAN

(glaring at Arthur) It isn't
that, Rod. I love your leg,
very much. It's got a
beautiful grain. But it ...
clomps, sort of.

ROD

Let me tell you boys where I
 earned this "clomping" leg. A
 little place called Nam.
 Defending you sons of bitches
 and your right to be hippie
 draft dodgers and attend Kent
 State. Now you want to
 selfishly deny me my only
 remaining pleasure of ... (at a
 loss) noisily limping back
 and forth above people's
 heads? Shame on you!

ALAN AND ARTHUR ARE SILENT, SHAMED. FINALLY:

ARTHUR

Aren't you a little young to
 have been in Vietnam, Rod?

ROD

(nervously) Did I say
 Vietnam? I meant ... Korea?

ARTHUR

Oh.

ALAN AND ARTHUR EXCHANGE GLANCES.

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

THE LIGHTS ARE OFF. ALAN AND ARTHUR ARE BOTH IN TWIN
 BEDS. ROD CAN BE HEARD CLOMPING OVERHEAD.

ALAN

I'm depressed. My neck hurts.
Would you rub it?

ARTHUR

He's lying about the war, you
know.

ALAN

So maybe he lost his leg under
embarrassing circumstances.
That doesn't give us a right
to make him sit in a chair for
nine hours every night.

ARTHUR

Then what's your brilliant
idea, brilliant-idea-boy? We
buy tampons in front of him?
Sinbad the comedian says
cripples love guys who buy
tampons in front of them.

ALAN

No. And shut up about Sinbad
the comedian. Maybe tampons
is the kind of thing that only
works on African-American
women. (beat) How about we
trade apartments?

ARTHUR

Brilliant, brilliant-idea-boy.
Keep in mind that we still
have a gloriously vacant,
gloriously *quiet* apartment
next door to us down here,
something Rod does not have,
up there. I will not give *that*
up (eyeing Alan) ... without a
fight.

ALAN LUNGES AT ARTHUR, THEY WRESTLE, ROLL OFF THE BED,
GET DISTRACTED.

ALAN

All right, then you come up
with something better.

ARTHUR

Simple. We carpet Senor
Stump's apartment.

ALAN

Brilliant *plus*. I'm
unemployed. You make 243.38 a
week selling your soul to
industry.

ARTHUR

I know how we don't have to
pay a penny for the carpet.

ARTHUR

(beat) If you're waiting for me to tell you you're not all ears, I'm not biting.

ALAN

I meant, I'm *listening*.

ARTHUR

Oh. (spreads his arms) Cousin Eddie, the carpet king!

ALAN

No. I despise my cousin Eddie. When we were kids, he used to strip me naked and hold me in a full nelson for hours.

ARTHUR

How delightfully latent of him!

ALAN

You're saying Eddie's gay?

ARTHUR

Isn't everybody? I mean, except us.

ALAN

I guess. But he's married.

ARTHUR

(waving him away) Yes yes yes.
Two hours of (baby voice) "Oh
Eddie, how do you selly-welly
dat big bad carpet-warpet", a
couple of minutes feeling his
biceps, and we'll have the
poor love pleading to shower
us in free carpet.

ALAN

And installation?

ARTHUR

(knowingly) Oh yes.

FLIP TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT NIGHT

ALAN, ARTHUR, EDDIE, BALDING AND 30, AND ESZTER,
EDDIE'S BEAUTIFUL AND HAUGHTY CZECH WIFE, ARE EATING AT
THE DINING ROOM TABLE. EDDIE LOOKS AROUND AT THE DIGS.
THE CLOMPING RUNS THROUGHOUT THE SCENE.

EDDIE

You guys are artists, right.
This is the way artists live.
Am I right?

ALAN

No, not really, Eddie.

ARTHUR

I temp for an oral
surgeon. (coquettishly) God,
Eddie, I'm in people's mouths
all day!

EDDIE

(oblivious) 'Cause I tell you,
I love artists. I'm in the
carpet game. And it might
surprise you East Village
types to learn that my work is
also artistic. Isn't that
right, Eszter?

ESZTER

Is endless excitement.

ARTHUR

(sidling up to Eddie) Oh,
carpet is so interesting,
Edwardo! Tell me more!

EDDIE

Well I work with color,
texture, patterns, *pile*. You
name it ... shag or no shag.

ARTHUR

(flirty) I'd love to see your
swatches sometime, Eddie.

EDDIE

(pleased) Really? We also carry linoleum. Say, what the hell is that clomping?

ALAN

That's our neighbor Rod. He has a wooden leg.

ARTHUR

No big deal. (suddenly, weeping into hands) Oh God! I hate to complain. He's a war hero and all, but...

ESZTER

(oblivious of Arthur's scene)
In Czechoslovakia I had wooden car.

ARTHUR

(to Eszter) Excuse me, I'm weeping here. Does anyone care?

EDDIE

Pity about his leg. That's a hard thing for a man to lose.

ESZTER

Easy for woman to lose leg?

ARTHUR

Hello? Anybody?

EDDIE

Oh jeez, my wife the women's
libber! (as to a child) It's
harder for a man to lose a
leg, Eszter.

ARTHUR

(to Alan) Quick, they're
digressing, bring up his
biceps.

ALAN

You.

EDDIE

(to Eszter) A guy's got a
tougher life to begin with.
So Imagine if he has to live
it with a tree trunk strapped
to his hip. What's a broad
got to do, eat bon-bons?

ARTHUR

Wow, Edwardo, gorgeous biceps!

EDDIE

(pleased) Really?

ESZTER

Men don't have to give birth!

EDDIE

And what does that have to do
with the price of beans in
China?

ARTHUR

Did I mention, Eddie, that I
really enjoy your muscles?

EDDIE

(making a muscle, to Arthur)
Like a feel, Art?

ARTHUR

(feeling it) Goodness! so big
and hard! Do you pump?

ESZTER LOOKS DISGUSTED.

ESZTER

Women objectified in
patriarchal society that
values only their physical
attractiveness.

EDDIE

(to Eszter) End of discussion.
(to Arthur) Naw. It's all
from hauling carpet, really.
(to Eszter) See? Somebody
likes my body.

ESZTER

Good. Maybe you and Arthur run off together. Someone else shave Eddie's back for a while.

ARTHUR

(still feeling Eddie's arm)
Well I'm impressed. Feel, Alan, while I get the canapes.

ALAN

No.

ARTHUR

(threatening) Feel, Alan, while I get some more canapes.

ALAN TAKES OVER FEELING EDDIE'S ARM. ARTHUR HEADS TO THE KITCHEN.

EDDIE

So what do ya think, Alan?

ALAN

(half-heartedly) You're a lucky girl, Eszter. Boy, if I were a girl, I'd steal this fella right away from you.

EDDIE

(pleased) Really?

ALAN

(sort of into it) You bet.
And when I got you, I'd spoil
you rotten, you li'l monkey.

EDDIE

Hot dog! Canapes every night?

ALAN

(suddenly nervous) You'd have
at ask Arthur about that.
Arthur?

ARTHUR ENTERS WITH TRAY OF CANAPES.

ARTHUR

Yes?

ALAN

Canapes every night if we
stole Eddie away from Eszter?

ARTHUR

Of course.

ARTHUR PICKS UP A CANAPE AND FEEDS IT TO EDDIE.

ALAN

Let me feed him one.

ALAN NERVOUSLY POPS A CANAPE IN EDDIE'S MOUTH.

ARTHUR

Let me feed him another
...(glancing at watch) Jeez, I
gotta work tomorrow.

ARTHUR STANDS AND SCREAMS AND PULLS AT HIS HAIR.

ESZTER

Perhaps we overstay welcome,
Eddie.

EDDIE

Naw. It's performance art,
honey. Am I right, Arthur?

ARTHUR

No, Eddie. It's the noise, the
noise from above! And me with
such a *delicate* constitution.
Do something, Eddissimo.

ALAN

Poor Arthur. If only there was
some way to dampen that noise
from above. A floor covering
fabric of some sort, perhaps.

ALAN AND ARTHUR GLANCE OVER AT EDDIE. EDDIE IS BLANK.

ARTHUR

You mean some type of...
cushiony substance to put on
Rod's floor? ... Maybe a
thick, woven *cloth* to muffle
the ... (looks at Eddie,
sighs)... some type of *lawn-*
like...fibrous...cushiony
...floor-covering like ...

ARTHUR PUTS HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS. EDDIE LOOKS BLANK.

ALAN

Ooh, I know, Arthur! How
about, say, *carpet* or
something?

EDDIE LOOKS BLANK.

ARTHUR

Ooh, you mean, like, what
Eddie sells?

EDDIE LOOKS BLANK

ALAN

You mean, Eddie, my cousin,
sitting right here ... *now*?

EDDIE

(idea) Hey, I know, how about
I deck the son of a bitch for
you!

ARTHUR

Great idea, Eddie! But
wouldn't it be even better if
you carpeted Rod's apartment
for us and absorbed the cost
yourself?

EDDIE

(thinking, then magnanimously)
For my cousin and my cousin-
in-law? You got it, fellas!

ESZTER

Eddie, we cannot give free ...

ALAN

(shoving tray in front of
Eszter) More food, Eszter?

ARTHUR

(fast, in Eddie's ear) That
includes installation, right?

EDDIE

Don't worry your pretty little
heads about it.

ALAN AND ARTHUR SMILE.

ALAN AND ARTHUR

(chirpy) Thank you, Eddie!

THEY EACH KISS HIM ON THE CHEEK. EDDIE BEAMS. ESZTER
STORMS FROM THE ROOM.

EDDIE

Broads.

ARTHUR

Broads.

ALAN

Broads.

EDDIE HANDS OUT CIGARS, PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND ALAN AND
ARTHUR.

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

THE LIGHTS ARE OFF. ALAN AND ARTHUR ARE IN BED. THE
CLOMPING CONTINUES.

ALAN

I can't sleep. It's stuffy in here. I'm depressed. Are you awake, Arthur?

ARTHUR

No.

ALAN

Arthur, I'm worried. I think I might've *enjoyed* feeling Eddie's muscle. I liked the way he looked at me. It made me feel, I don't know, *pretty*.

ARTHUR

I'm in love with Eddie's wife.

ALAN

(too fast) Me too. (wistfully)
I'm going to marry that girl someday.

ARTHUR

I claimed her first, you bastard. You can marry Eddie.

ALAN

You marry Eddie!

ARTHUR

Right, that's just what I want to do, marry into *your* family.

ALAN

Like we'd have you!

ARTHUR LUNGES FOR ALAN. THEY WRESTLE ON THE FLOOR. THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. ALAN AND ARTHUR STOP FIGHTING.

ARTHUR

Angry downstairs neighbor.

You get it. Your turn.

ALAN SIGHS, GETS UP.

ALAN

Right. But remember we still
have to discuss this
arrangement.

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ALAN SWITCHES ON THE LIGHT, OPENS THE FRONT DOOR. CONTINUOUS "CLOMPING" UPSTAIRS.

ALAN

I'm sorry about the noise
again, Mrs. Johnst...

IT'S EDDIE.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Eddie, what are you doing
here?

EDDIE ENTERS. ALAN CLOSSES THE DOOR. EDDIE STARTS TO WEEP.

EDDIE

I left Eszter. We had a
fight.

ARTHUR ENTERS TO HEAR THIS.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Hi, Arthur (pulls a bouquet of
flowers from behind his back)

These are for you.

ALAN

(hurt) Of course Arthur gets
the flowers.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S BEDROOM - THE FOLLOWING EVENING

ARTHUR IS ADJUSTING HIS TIE. ALAN SITS ON THE BED,
BOUNCING UP AND DOWN. ROD "CLOMPS" UPSTAIRS.

ALAN

This is just till we get the
carpet installed.

ARTHUR

I can't believe I actually
have to *date* your cousin.

ALAN

It was all your stupid plan,
Arthur.

ARTHUR

But I didn't expect him to
actually leave his wife for
me. Not that I'm not
flattered.

ALAN

Well, I admit I'm jealous that
he chose you. I mean, not
that I'm interested, but
everybody enjoys that vote of
confidence. I guess I'm not so
pretty after all.

ARTHUR

Stop fishing, Alan.

ALAN

Fine. (then:) You're right.

I'm pathetic.

ALAN LOOKS AT ARTHUR, HOPING HE'LL DISAGREE.

ARTHUR

I refuse to be dragged into
this.

ALAN

Fine. (then:) Oh, you're
right, Arthur! I will sit
down and read your book
tonight. I'm going to stop
being so dependent on other
people's opinions.

ARTHUR

Now you're talking, Alan.
Good for you.

ALAN

(beat) So ... you're, like,
proud of me for taking this
step?

CUT TO:

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - EVENING

ARTHUR AND EDDIE SIT AT SMALL ROMANTIC TABLE FOR TWO.
EDDIE IS WEARING A WHITE SPORTS JACKET. ARTHUR HAS A
CORSAGE PINNED TO HIS LAPEL.

EDDIE

Do you like the corsage?

ARTHUR

Yes. It's beautiful.

EDDIE

I was frantic trying to pick out the right one. I don't know flowers. But I'm gonna learn, I swear it! I'm gonna learn every stinking one for you.

ARTHUR

You did fine, Eddie.

EDDIE

It's called Baby's Brain, I think. It's pretty, right? Am I right?

ARTHUR

Yes, it's very lovely.

EDDIE

I'm coming on too strong, right? I don't know how to do this, Arthur. I've never felt this way before. I'm ashamed.

ARTHUR

(touching Eddie's hand) Don't be. You're doing fine.

EDDIE

It's like a whole new Eddie's been unleashed. It's scary to care so much.

ARTHUR

Right, so, uh, when's that carpet coming in?

EDDIE

Oh. Don't you worry. By the beginning of next week. I've ordered the three inch polyester pile. The war hero could turn a jack hammer on this crap and you'd sleep through it like that pea princess when there's no pea in her entire kingdom.

ARTHUR

But that's five whole days, Eddie. Li'l bitty Artie's having trouble getting his beauty rest *now*. Can't big strong Eddie call the factory and put a rush on?

EDDIE

No, but, (beaming) well, now's a good time, I guess. It was gonna be a big surprise, but ... I'm taking the apartment next door to you. And ...

ARTHUR

What?

EDDIE

I signed the lease today. And, you know, if you can't sleep at your place, you're welcome to stay over. Of course I'll sleep on the couch. If that's what you want.

ARTHUR

Eddie, honey, you don't want to move into my building.

EDDIE

Oh, but I do. It's just what I need. To begin rethinking all my previous assumptions. Brand new Eddie! I'm gonna decorate, too. I got a book. I'm thinking Southwestern. Loads of pottery everywhere.

ARTHUR

Did I tell you we had rats?

EDDIE

Did I tell you I think you're
sweet. (giggles) I can't
believe I'm talking this way
to man. It's so wicked.

ARTHUR

Did I mention Alan can be so,
so jealous?

EDDIE

Don't worry, baby, Alan's
scared to death of me. I used
to beat the crap outa him when
we were kids.

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

THE PLACE IS FILLED WITH BOUQUETS OF FLOWERS, BALLOONS,
STUFFED ANIMALS. ALAN IS PACING AND TALKING INTO HIS
TAPE RECORDER.

ALAN

Alan: an Oral Biography.
Chapter Three thousand and
ninety-four. Alan is
positive, good-looking,
charming, dynamic,
assertive...

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. ALAN OPENS IT. A MALE STRIPPER STEPS IN, SWITCHES ON HIS MUSIC, AND STARTS DANCING.

ALAN (CONT'D)

He's not home yet. Have a
seat.

THE STRIPPER SWITCHES OFF HIS MUSIC, SITS. ALAN PACES, GLANCES AT THE STRIPPER.

ALAN (CONT'D)

(into recorder) ...Alan is
completely heterosexual ...

ARTHUR DUCKS IN.

ALAN (CONT'D)

(to stripper) Go.

THE STRIPPER TURNS ON HIS MUSIC.

ARTHUR

(to stripper) Stop.

THE STRIPPER STOPS.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Thank you, it was lovely.

THE STRIPPER LEAVES.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(to Alan) Well?

ALAN

(hugging Arthur) Arthur, your
book has changed my life!

ARTHUR

Fine. What about the carpet?

ALAN

(indicating up) It's in!

ARTHUR

(listens, then:) Hallelujah!
I'm going over to Eddie's to
break up.

ALAN

Arthur, I asked Name-tag Rosa
S. for a date today.

ARTHUR

(out the door) Oh, buddy, I'm
sorry. We'll talk about it
when I get back.

ALAN

She said yes.

ARTHUR

(dead in his tracks) That's
not possible.

ALAN

It's all in my new attitude!
She's coming over for dinner
tonight. By the way, how do
you make those Cornish
pasties?

ARTHUR

I'm not going to tell you.

ARTHUR

Good. And may the best man
win Rosa, not to mention
influence her. (beat) By the
 way, you're looking a little
 ugly and unpleasant tonight,
 Alan.

ARTHUR CROUCHES AS IF HE'S GETTING READY FOR ALAN TO
 LUNGE AT HIM. ALAN JUST TURNS AWAY.

ALAN

You can no longer hurt me.

ARTHUR

(disgusted) You've changed.

ARTHUR EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

THE PLACE LOOKS LIKE ALAN AND ARTHUR'S, BUT IS
 TASTEFULLY AND EXPENSIVELY DECORATED IN A SOUTHWESTERN
 MANNER: NAVAJO RUGS, POTTERY, A STEER SKULL. THERE IS A
 KNOCK AT THE DOOR. EDDIE EXCITEDLY RUNS FOR IT. HE
 OPENS IT. ARTHUR STANDS THERE.

EDDIE

Hi! (hugs Arthur) Did you get
 the tiger lilies and mums and
 the daisies?

ARTHUR

Yes.

EDDIE

You hated them.

ARTHUR

No. They were fine.

EDDIE

What about that pretty dancing
boy?

ARTHUR

Eddie, we have to talk.

EDDIE

(sensing) No. I don't like
that sentence. I don't want
to have to talk.

ARTHUR

Eddie, this is just not
working for me.

EDDIE

Why? What? I can change. I
can be whatever works for you.
Let me be whatever works for
you, Arthur.

ARTHUR

Eddie, I'm heterosexual. I
like girls.

EDDIE

My God! (on one knee, insane)
Arthur, listen, Okay, what if
I got a sex change, honey? I
could do that. I would *be*
happy to do that for you,
baby. Think about it: *Ding-*
dong. (sniffs the air) *Mmmmmmm,*
estrogen! Eddie must be home!
Sure, the guys at the
warehouse would make fun of me
for a while, but that would
pass. And there's some cute
stuff in the new J. Crew
catalogue I think you'd really
like me in. Please.

ARTHUR

Eddie, this is not a pretty
picture you're painting.

EDDIE

You can't leave me now,
Arthur! You're the one who
brought this Eddie to the
surface. And I love you for
that, but you can't leave me
alone in this new world.

ARTHUR

I'm sorry, Eddie. You'll find
someone. (a thought) You know,
Alan has always had a big
crush on you.

EDDIE

He's my cousin, damn you!
That's sick!

ARTHUR

I'm sorry, Eddie.

EDDIE

You're a sicko! Get out!

ARTHUR EXITS. EDDIE SLAMS THE DOOR. EDDIE PACES, THEN
SLIPS A CD IN THE STEREO, AND CRANKS THE VOLUME.

CUT TO:

ALAN AND ARTHUR'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

ALAN IS DRESSED TO THE NINES. HE LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW.
ARTHUR SCURRIES BACK AND FORTH FROM THE KITCHEN TO THE
DINING ROOM TABLE, SETTING UP. PATSY CLINE SINGING
"FINGERPRINTS" BLASTS EAR-SHATTERINGLY THROUGH THE WALL.

ALAN

(yelling over it) I can't take
much more of this!

ARTHUR

(also yelling) It's better
than the clomping!

ALAN

I suppose!

ARTHUR

It's flattering in a way!

ALAN

(looking out the window) Oh my
God! Look! Rosa S. is here
already!

ARTHUR RUNS TO THE WINDOW.

ARTHUR

Where? (spotting her) Say,
that's some limp she's got!

ALAN

You know, I've never seen her
walk! She's always behind
that cash register!

ARTHUR

You don't suppose she has a
wooden leg do you?

ALAN

Who cares? A wooden leg makes
some girls even more lovable!

ARTHUR

I've found that too!

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWAY - MOMENTS LATER

ROSA, 25 AND CUTE, LIMPS UP THE STAIRS. SHE HOLDS A
SCRAP OF PAPER IN HER HAND, WHICH SHE IS STUDYING. ROD
IS LIMPING DOWN THE STAIRS, CARRYING A BAG OF GARBAGE.
HE LOOKS AT HER AS THEY PASS. ROSA DOES NOT LOOK UP.

ROD

Excuse me?

ROSA STOPS, LOOKS UP.

ROD (CONT'D)

I don't mean to pry, but do
you happen to have an
artificial leg?

ROSA

How dare you? You don't know
me.

ROD

(quickly pulling up his pant
leg) knotty pine.

ROSA

Oh. (beat, then timidly
pulling up her pant leg) Ebony
inlaid with cherry.

ROD

My God, it's beautiful. The
craftsmanship.

ROSA

(smiling, moved) Nobody's ever
said anything like that to me
before. Thank you. (beat) I
lost it skiing, in my
hometown, El Salvador.

ROD

I wouldn't have thought that
they have skiing in El
Salvador.

ROSA

(nervously) Did I say El
Salvador? I meant...

ROD, IN LOVE, PUTS HIS FINGER TO ROSA'S LIPS.

ROD

Shhhh. It doesn't matter.
(singing) I used to have but
one leg / Where most folks
they have two / But now I have
a second one / 'cause darlin'
I have you.

ROSA

I can't believe you know that!
It's my absolute favorite
Gimpy McGee song!

ROD

Bet no *two-leg* you ever dated
knew it.

ROSA

Not one.

ROD AND ROSA

(singing) Together we're one
 person / A human being
 complete / one heart, one
 mind, one soul, one dream / on
 one whole pair of feet.

THEY KISS.

CUT TO:

ALAN AND ARTHUR'S LIVING ROOM - A BIT LATER

ALAN AND ARTHUR, STILL DRESSED UP, SIT AT THE
 ROMANTICALLY SET DINING ROOM TABLE. JUDY GARLAND
 SINGING "YOU MADE ME LOVE YOU" BLASTS FROM EDDIE'S
 APARTMENT. ALAN AND ARTHUR, EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE VERY
 DEPRESSED, MUST SCREAM OVER THE SINGING TO BE HEARD.

ARTHUR

Pass the pasties, please!

ALAN PASSES THE PASTIES.

ALAN

So what do you suppose
 happened to Rosa S.?!

ARTHUR

I don't know, maybe she got
 cold feet! I mean, cold foot!

ALAN

Don't you dare make a joke at
 the expense of the woman I'm
 going to marry!

ARTHUR

It's the woman I'm going to
marry, and I'll make a joke at
her expense whenever I damn
well please!

ALAN LUNGES FOR ARTHUR, AND THEY WRESTLE ON THE FLOOR.

CUT TO:

INT. ROD'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

THE PLACE IS CARPETED WITH AN INCREDIBLY THICK, BURNT
ORANGE SHAG CARPET. ROD AND ROSA LIE IN BED, UNDER
COVERS.

ROD

Remind me to check later for
splinters.

ROSA

(giggling and mock-slugging
him) You! (sighs) Oh, Rod,
I've never been so comfortable
with a man before. I feel
like I could tell you
anything!

ROD

Tell me everything.

ROSA

(beat) I have a secret dream.
I don't want to be a cashier
all my life. I always wanted
to be a ... dancer. A tap
dancer. Crazy, right?

ROD

Our dreams are never crazy,
Rosa. Except maybe if we eat
anchovies too late at night.

ROSA

I love you. (encouraged) I
wouldn't be the first one-
legged tap dancer! There was
Peg Leg Bates. He's a hero to
the people of El Sal ... my
homeland.

ROD

What can I do to help?

ROSA

I don't know. The problem is
I have no place to practice.

ROD

Here. Mi casa es su casa.

ROSA

(kisses him) You are so sweet,
but you have all this
beautiful carpeting.

ROD

Easy come, easy go, my
darling.

ROD CLIMBS OUT OF BED, BEGINS RIPPING UP THE CARPET.

CUT TO:

INT. ALAN AND ARTHUR'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

ALAN AND ARTHUR SIT IN THEIR PAJAMAS ON THE COUCH.
BARBRA STREISAND SINGING "CAN'T HELP LOVIN' THAT MAN"
BLASTS THROUGH THE WALLS. ARTHUR LOOKS AT HIS WATCH.

ARTHUR

(yelling) He's bound to get
over me soon!

ALAN

(yelling) Good, because
"Showboat" is not one of my
favorite musicals!

ARTHUR

(yelling) I need you to march
right over there and talk to
him!

ALAN

(yelling) Nope! This is your
mess, you fix it!

THE MUSIC STOPS SUDDENLY.

ARTHUR

There's no need to yell. See,
voila, he's over me. (a
little hurt) That was sort of
fast, actually, wasn't it?

ALAN

I'm going to bed.

ALAN STANDS AND HEADS FOR THE BEDROOM. SUDDENLY A LOUD,
RAPID-FIRE TAP DANCING ROUTINE BEGINS OVERHEAD. IT
CONTINUES THROUGH THE REST OF THE SCENE. ALAN AND
ARTHUR BOTH LOOK UP. ALAN PLOPS BACK DOWN ON THE COUCH.

ALAN (CONT'D)

I'm depressed.

ARTHUR

Even if he did lose his leg in
some war, which he didn't,
that doesn't mean we have to
put up with his tap dancing.
That goes way beyond
humanitarianism.

ALAN

He's good though.

ARTHUR

That's irrelevant. (whining)
Go speak with him, be a dear.

ALAN

Nope. Sorry.

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. ARTHUR HURRIES TO IT.

ARTHUR

Look, I'll deal with our angry
downstairs neighbor, if you
talk to Rod.

ARTHUR OPENS THE DOOR. A DELIVERY MAN STANDS THERE WITH
A BIG BOUQUET OF FLOWERS. ARTHUR TAKES THEM, CLOSES THE
DOOR.

ALAN

I thought you said he was over
you.

ARTHUR

I guess it's not that easy.
(Looking at note) They're for
you.

ALAN

(pleased) Really? (grabs them,
reads the note) "You always
were my favorite cousin."
That's sort of sweet. Think
maybe he likes me?

ARTHUR

(shrugs) Well, sure, if he
can't have *me*.

ALAN LUNGES FOR ARTHUR. THEY WRESTLE ON THE FLOOR.

FADE OUT.

THE END